

EKAM SAT

1

K.R. Paramahansa

Astavakra- Gita
&
Avadhuta-Gita

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Preface

The Gita literature in Sanskrit is the spontaneous outpouring of the sages and seers that have realized the Self. It is the expression of their direct experience of the Divine - the Self, the Brahman, the *Atman* in whatever way IT is apprehended in their supreme consciousness. It is, therefore, no surprise that every Gita sets realization of the Self as its ideal. All of them point to one Truth, the only Truth - *Ekam Sat*.

The Bhagavad-Gita is the most widely known classic of *Sanatana-dharma*, translated and commented upon by hundreds of spiritual seekers in almost every language in the world. The Hindu monks who are the torch-bearers of the *Sanatana-dharma* have either translated and / or commented upon a few of the other Gitas in English. It may be that most of the Gitas remain to be given free translation and brief commentary in English for an easy understanding of their spirit, for the benefit of aspirants not knowing Sanskrit.

We have brought out a series of five volumes titled *Ekam Sat* containing free translation in English of each verse of all the available Gitas other than the Bhagavad-Gita, with brief commentary wherever necessary. The idea is that the translation is true reflection of the spirit of the verse (*sloka*) in Sanskrit as far as practicable and the commentary is consistent with the central thought of the Gita. The division of each Gita into chapters may be arbitrary, but indicative of the subject handled therein.

Ekam Sat 1 - volume one - contains a detailed exposition of Monism followed by the *Astavakra-Gita* and the *Avadhuta-Gita*. The translation of each *sloka* (verse) of the Gitas is rendered against the corresponding serial number of the verse in each chapter of the Gita concerned. Explanatory paragraphs are added to each translated verse, wherever considered necessary, to elaborate the essence of the content of the verse from the point of view of Monism.

Monism

The Gita literature in Sanskrit has been in the nature of solid support to the monistic *Vedanta* philosophy. The Bhagavad-Gita is one of the three main support bases of the *Vedanta* Philosophies, the other two being *Upanisads* and the Brahma-sutras. While the *Vedanta* philosophies are considered to be *Advaita* (Non-dualism), *Visista-advaita* (Non-dualism of the qualified Brahman) and *Dvaita* (Dualism), the commentators on the Bhagavad-Gita have turned and twisted its contents to suit their philosophical leanings and propensities in respect of each of the three *Vedanta* philosophies. It is for the reason that its text is not un-amenable to the exercise of exegetic ingenuity.

But the other Gita literature such as the *Avadhuta-Gita*, the *Astavakra-Gita* (*Samhita*), the *Vasista-Gita* (*Yoga-Vasistamu*) is an accredited exposition of monistic *Vedanta*, an emphatic assertion of Non-dualism. They do not admit of any misconception or misinterpretation of the fundamental stand-point or attitude of Monism. The Gita literature gives a candid presentation of the cardinal points of *Vedanta* Monism.

The thrust of the Gita literature is an unfolding of the ultimate truth which is the final objective of all philosophy, but which forever eludes its grasp. Philosophy can ordinarily produce an intellectual conviction, not direct realization, of the Truth. The *Vedanta* Philosophies - Non-dualism, Non-dualism of the Qualified Brahman and Dualism are no exception. For realization of the Truth, the seeker - the spiritual aspirant is to practise *sadhana* under the guidance of a *guru* divinely ordained, who has himself realized the Truth.

Vedanta philosophy, in general, admits a threefold criterion of Truth, namely authority (*sruti*), logic (*yukti*) and self-realization (*atmanubhuti*). Authority is equated with self-realization and is valid because it embodies the experience of realization of Truth by the seers, recorded in the *srutis*. Its acceptance is based on *faith* in what the seers have recorded as either their own experience or the experience of others similarly situated like them. The *Vedanta* is rational in the sense that it is not in conflict with the demands of reason. It, however, recognizes the limitations of reason, as by its very nature, it is to transcend reason to intuit directly the Truth. The mode of so intuiting the Truth is by attaining a supra-rational state of supreme consciousness beyond the realm of human consciousness.

Reason helps us in discrimination to a certain extent. In effect, it is a negative instrument and its findings are bound to be negative in character. It helps us to negate and discard what is not true. But it does not help for realization of positive Truth. For this purpose, it is inadequate and incompetent. Philosophy, on the other hand, relies upon reason as the only medium for its findings. As reason is operative within limits, it has not proved to be a dependable medium for positive findings that command universal acceptance. The limitation of reason for the *Vedanta* philosophy is all the more, as the ultimate Truth is realizable only in a state of supreme consciousness, beyond the realm of reason.

However, the *Vedanta* philosophy fully utilizes the resources of reason, while correcting and supplementing the results attained through reason by a supra-rational medium to arrive at positive revelations. The revelations of this supra-rational intuition satisfy the demands of reason as well. The acceptance of *Vedanta* as the perennial philosophy is due to the reconciliation of reason with supra-rational intuition. Undisciplined reason has a corrective in the supra-rational power of intuition in man. Where reason comes to a standstill, it transcends by the light afforded by the supra-rational medium. The falsity of everything – *neti* that presents itself as an ‘*other*’ to supreme consciousness is the conclusion deduced by the application of this principle. The philosophical literature of *Vedanta* is endowed with this presentation.

Advaita (non-dual) *Vedanta* satisfies the criteria of philosophy as it is based on reason and logic to the extent reason and logic hold sway. At the stage reason is to be transcended, it depends upon the supra-rational medium and the authority of the seers as propounded in the *srutis* for realization of the supreme Truth.

On the other hand, monistic *Vedanta* has uniformly discarded the world of sense and intellect, and all that revolves round the concept of dualism as an unmitigated illusion. There may be no logical justification from the temporal standpoint for such view. All attempts at rationalization of the world-appearance together with the ego are, for it, a confession of failure. The failure of logic is not due to the limitations of the human intellect, but an intrinsic defect that vitiates the very nature of objectivity.

This is the burden of the Upanisads and the works of Gaudapada and Sankaracharya that is occupied with the task of proving the unreality of the objective world by appeal to logic and authority alike. According to them, there are four levels of ‘being’ covering the world of action. They are the insignificant being, the apparent being, the pragmatic being and the Supreme or the Ultimate Being. The difference among the four levels of being is not merely epistemological, but ontological.

The significance of this classification into four levels of being is that each higher level transcends the lower. This transcending is not by abstraction, but by assimilation and absorption. The Brahman or the Supreme Being is described as swallower, devourer (*atta*) of the world. As the Brahman creates and maintains it, He destroys it, too.

Where does the world go when it is destroyed? It is absorbed and assimilated into the Brahman, as waves get absorbed and assimilated in the ocean. As such the Brahman alone is real and the objective world, apart from the Brahman, is unreal, as the ocean alone is real and the waves apart from the ocean are unreal.

The *Advaita* as well as Monism considers the Brahman as One and Indivisible. The Brahman is pure ontological being or Existence (*satta*). Being and Existence are one and the same. Being cannot be many. If It is more than one, It becomes a class and the world becomes the name of the class. The question whether It is one or more does not arise for ontological being. We can reasonably say that ‘to be one’ is to be one among

many. But ontologically, 'to be' is the act of being or existing. There is no duality both within and without the being. The Being is One - Only One Existence - *Ekam Sat*.

Though *Advaita* and Monism refer to the Supreme Self being One and Indivisible, there is difference in the degree of emphasis. *Advaita* is negative (Non-dualism is a negative word), logical, passive and philosophical while Monism is positive, emphatic, active and a state of spiritual experience.

The Gita literature related to monistic *Vedanta* has only one aim. The aim is realization of the Truth, the Self, the Brahman, the *Atman* in whatever way It is called. According to it, the Self alone is real and all not-self is appearance. The false identification of the Self with the not-self is the cause of bondage. Bondage is thus due to ignorance of the real nature of the Self. Freedom is attained on the dawn of self-realization when ignorance disappears in knowledge.

The disappearance of ignorance automatically entails the disappearance of not-self that is its product. The perception of the existence of an 'other' is the cause of all our anxiety and unhappiness. This perception is because of the consciousness of the body and the mind. When this consciousness is transcended and absorbed in the supreme consciousness, is the self realized. When the self is realized as the only Reality, difference and distinction vanish like mist before the sun, and freedom is attained.

As a matter of course, freedom is the very essence of the self. Freedom is not attained. It is only discovered and realized. Loss of freedom arises only when freedom is veiled. We feel miserable because we do not realize the freedom that is ours. On the other hand we feel that we are in bondage through ignorance. The impediment to self-realization and freedom is in our being in the domain of the body and the mind. It is our preoccupation with the world of objects that inevitably leads to conflict of interests and consequently to social evils and moral depravity. To get over the resulting barriers of separation between man and man, it is necessary to cultivate an attitude of detachment and nourish moral virtues of charity, forgiveness, sincerity, simplicity, love of truth and the like that will have an impact on taming the consciousness of the body and the mind, ultimately dissolving into the supreme consciousness of the Self.

This moral discipline liberates the mind from the sense-objects and diverts it inwards. The inward diversion of the mind will enable the aspirant to realize his independence and detach from the network of relations which constitute the phenomenal world. So long as the mind sees another self, there is bondage. Freedom consists in seeing nothing but the Self as and in everything. The Self is the Brahman, the undivided and undifferentiated Consciousness-Existence-Bliss. This is different from and beyond the ego, as the ego is consciousness limited to and distorted by the mind. As soon as a person is beyond the domain of his mind, he secures liberation from the ego and becomes Supreme Bliss.

'He who considers himself free is free indeed, and he who considers himself bound remains bound' is the formula that sets a person free from bondage to the

phenomenal world. If a person realizes with conviction and faith that it is his own self that sustains and illumines the universe, the whole universe belongs to him as something like a floating appendage to his being. The unity of the self with all that exists is realized. The multiplicity of selves is an equally unmitigated appearance. There is neither a plurality of objects nor a plurality of subjects. There is only one subject or rather no subject at all as the Self is Supreme Consciousness.

The self-existent Infinite Consciousness assumes, in the perception of ordinary human consciousness, the role of unlimited number of subjects through Its false identification with the ‘mind-organs (body) setup,’ which are the creation of *Maya* or *Prakrti*. *Maya* or *Prakrti* is not absolute evil, but is embodiment of both science and nescience, and reason and unreason. Science kills nescience, and reason kills unreason. In the process, by dispassion, the evil course is arrested and the practice of discrimination sets free the good course. This is the *raison d’etre* of moral discipline emphasized in the *Sastras*.

Every action has merit or demerit resulting from good or evil it produces. Ethical action includes disciplines for realization. The first is discrimination between the eternal and the non-eternal. The seeker is to discriminate at every level of action focusing whether the action leads to the grasp of the eternal being. If the objects of action relate to the transient or temporal beings, he is to withdraw from action related to them. This is ultimately to enable him to grasp the eternal being. The second discipline is detachment from all selfish pursuits, worldly and otherworldly. The third is cultivation of the six virtues, namely tranquility, restraint, renunciation, endurance, meditation and faith. The fourth is desire for liberation. These four disciplines of realization are known as *sadhana-chatustayam*.

Monism emphasizes the necessity of detachment. It declares that craving for the objects of the senses lasts as long as there is ignorance of the beauty of the Self. But the bubble of the worldly order is pricked as soon as the surpassing beauty of the Self is realized. In non-attachment to the objects of the senses is ecstatic bliss realized.

Monism attaches primacy to renunciation among all virtues. It is considered the most important and of three types – sacrifice, charity and penance. All the three are actions. They purify the soul – the self. They are obligatory actions to be performed without any attachment to the results thereof.

True renunciation is to be intense and like the sharp edge of a razor. It cuts the bondage of *Maya* easily and at once. It is not possible to renounce the world bit by bit. Such renunciation is to come about at once. When the seeker, while having everything in the world and lacking nothing, feels all to be unreal, he is said to have attained true renunciation.

Monism speaks of the Self as being the Lord of the universe, who is absolutely free from fear. This fearlessness is repeatedly emphasized in the *Upanisads*. Fear is the emotion of the mind. One does not realize the self unless one transcends the mind and its

associates such as the senses and the ego. With the mind transcended, fear dissolves into love which is the attribute of the self. The realized seeker is beyond the impact of life and of death, as he is one with the self. As is life of no concern to him, so is death. Of all the systems of philosophy, it is the *Vedanta* that makes us free from fear, be it of death or of tyranny.

Monism emphasizes the unreality of the outer world, both sentient and insentient. The realization of the unreality of the objective world is only a preparation for similar realization in respect of the inner, psychological world. The psychological world is as much an illusionary appearance as the objective world. The mind and the ego are mainly responsible for bondage. They obstruct the vision of the infinitude of the self. The intellectual and ethical worlds are also considered unreal. Even virtue is an obstacle to higher realization. The values of life only help harmonious social living so long as consciousness is relative. Even the intellectual, aesthetic and moral disciplines become a hindrance to the seeker for liberation as he advances in the course of his *sadhana*. Even the striving for liberation ceases before self-realization is attained.

Monism exhorts: 'It is verily through your ignorance that the universe exists. In reality you alone are. There is no *jiva* or *Isvara* other than you'. The absolute identity of the oneness of the Self and the negation of a second Principle, either spiritual or temporal, are the cardinal principles of monistic *Vedanta*. The values of life and the ethical disciplines are valid only provisionally in the lower plane of reality where the influence of *avidya* is in force. When *avidya* is destroyed along with its attributes, there is no cognition or experience of a second entity even on the phenomenal plane. In other words, the phenomenal world disappears with the cessation of *avidya*-the un-manifest.

The doctrines of *EkaJiva-vada* ('only one subject' theory) and *Ajata-vada* ('no creation at all' theory) also seek to emphasize the unreality of the phenomenal world and the reality of the Self alone as Being. Monism is in total agreement with these theories. The difference, if any, is only in emphasis as to the non-subjectivity of the phenomenal world, as in the case of difference in emphasis between Non-dualism and Monism.

Even when the apparent reality of the phenomenal world is admitted, it has only a relative validity to the lower level of intellect, arising from cognition. It is always recognized that the apparent (*pratibhasika*) and the conventional (*vyavaharika*) orders of reality are rather phases of unreality, as absolute reality is denied to them. They are unreal in the sense that they are not permanent and eternal as the Self is. It is not that the phenomenal world is *asat* (non-existent), but only unreal. All things other than the Self are only in appearance, no matter how persistent and consistent some of them appear to be. The phenomenal world does appear to exist.

The admission of provisional or apparent reality is not in conflict with the central doctrine of *Vedanta* that the Self Alone exists. The reality accorded to the phenomenal world is only apparent and vicarious as it is considered to be cognizable in the borrowed light of the Self. It has no existence what so ever apart from what appears on the substratum of the Self as waves and bubbles appear on the ocean. As waves and bubbles

are to the ocean, the phenomenal world is to the Self, appearing on the substratum, dissolving into the Self, reappearing on the substratum, etc in a cycle without end.

Sankara says, 'If you do not have a consciousness, then everything is dark and nothing in the universe exists'. This corresponds to the view of the modern quantum mechanics that unless you can observe a thing, it just does not exist. This is for the reason that there must be an interaction between the observer and the observed to complete a measurement. It is consciousness that fills the bill in the material world in the sense that it determines its existence. When the seeker is beyond the consciousness of the physical universe, it does not exist for him. It remains an illusion for him.

The Gitas propounding Monism are simple, straight and forceful. Their diction is eloquent ringing the sincerity, and the conviction of faith and truth of the authors. There is no recourse to logic or pedagogy, no trace of wavering allegiance, no intellectual elaboration and no weakness in its deliverance. It is the spontaneous outpouring of the direct experience of the Self by the seers. The Gita literature is, as a whole, superb poetry in *Sanskrit*, as it stirs and elevates the soul. Philosophically, the Gita literature provides a satisfactory explanation of the Supreme Being from the ontological and transcendental points of view.

Astavakra-Gita

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Introduction

The *Astavakra-Gita (Samhita)* is a treatise on monistic *Vedanta*, ascribed to a great sage Astavakra. Written in Sanskrit, it is in the nature of a dialogue between Astavakra and his disciple, equally enlightened, Janaka. The identity of these two seers is not known. There is a reference in the Vana-parva of the Mahabharata to the sages Astavakra and Janaka. There is no evidence that this dialogue was between those two seers mentioned therein. It may not be relevant either. What is profound is the content of the dialogue between the preceptor, the *guru* and the disciple, the seeker after Truth, which is in the nature of a classic delineating the contours of monistic *Vedanta*.

The *Astavakra-Gita* resembles an epic in its style and structure of composition. Like the *Bhagavad-Gita*, it has simplicity of diction, clarity of expression, forcefulness of language and is pregnant with thought. There is no involved philosophical discussion and directs the attention of the disciple all along to the Supreme Reality – the Supreme Self.

The *Astavakra-Gita* has been assigned to a period immediately after the Bhagavad-Gita and just before the rise of the great philosophical schools. It is an ancient classic, with the system of its thought having its moorings in the *Upanisads*. It may be that Gaudapada and Sankaracharya were inspired by its system of thought.

1. Self - Witness in All

The *Astavakra-Gita* is in the nature of a dialogue in ontology between Janaka, the disciple and Astavakra, the *guru*. The disciple is a seeker for attainment of the knowledge of the Self. He is well qualified to be the seeker with no attachment to worldly objects, with discrimination between the real and the unreal, with intense longing for liberation and with acquisition of the six cardinal moral virtues, namely, *sama* (tranquility), *dama* (restraint), *uparati* (renunciation), *titiksa* (forbearance or endurance), *samadhi* (meditation) and *sraddha* (faith).

Astavakra, the *guru* is the *yogi* that has realized the Self in his experience and is, therefore, in a position to guide the disciple into the knowledge of the Self that will help him attain It.

Janaka said:

1. Oh Lord! Tell me how knowledge can be acquired, how liberation can come and how renunciation is achieved?

The seeker seeks the knowledge of realization of the identity of the individual self with the Supreme Self. The liberation he seeks is freedom from ignorance, bondage and all possible limitations of the self. The renunciation he seeks to achieve is in the realm of action relating to sacrifice, charity and penance (*tapas*). These actions are to purify the soul (self) and obligatory in nature, to be performed without any attachment to the results thereof.

Astavakra replied:

2. If you aspire after liberation, my child, shun the objects of the senses as poison. Seek forgiveness, simplicity, kindness, contentment and truth as nectar.

The mind performs the function of receiving the impressions of the different senses and uniting them into phenomenal objects, and presents them as the sense for which pleasures and pains are objects to the 'I' consciousness. It is the 'I' consciousness that enjoys or suffers, and also appropriates the objects as its own or of another. The seeker is to shun the objects of the senses as poison to avoid their enjoyment or appropriation as his own. He is to cultivate forgiveness, simplicity, kindness, contentment and truth as nectar, as they are spiritual practices to uplift the self (soul).

3. You are neither earth, nor water, nor fire, nor air, nor space. In order to attain liberation, know the Self as the witness of all these and Supreme Consciousness Itself.

The five gross elements – earth, water, fire, air and space are considered to constitute the world of names and forms. Every object in the world is considered to contain all the five elements, though in varying proportions. But the seeker is to realize that he is not the body that is made of the gross elements.

The Supreme Self - the Brahman - is undifferentiated. The Brahman creates the relative world without being affected by the creative activity. This is because of the Brahman being the Witness Consciousness in relation to the created world. The Witness Consciousness relating to the Supreme Self is the Cosmic Mind that is the attribute itself. In order to attain liberation, the seeker is to know that the Supreme Self is the Supreme Consciousness, and the Witness Consciousness, too, of the world created of the five gross elements.

4. If you detach yourself from the body and abide in Consciousness, you will at once be happy, peaceful and free from bondage.

Individual consciousness creates events, occurrences, circumstances, etc. It releases creative energy. When one acts consciously, the act arises out of one's consciousness. Conscious action is a thought consciously put into action. Individual consciousness, therefore, relates to thought and deed. In other words it relates to mind and body.

The alternating levels of relative consciousness are waking, dream and deep sleep states. They are not real, as they come and go. The 'I' or *existence* that alone persists in all the three states is real. This is supreme consciousness, the *turiya* (fourth) state of consciousness of the seeker beyond the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep. This state is eternal and the other three states come and go in it. As the *turiya* state alone exists and as the three preceding states merge into it and disappear, the *turiya* state transcends itself and becomes *turiyatita* (the state beyond the fourth). When the seeker abides in this state of consciousness, he will at once be happy, peaceful and free from bondage.

5. You do not belong to the *brahmana* or any other caste. Nor do you belong to any station in life (*asrama*). You are not perceivable by the senses. You are unattached, formless and witness of all; be happy.

In the early Indian society, man's life was divided into four stages called *asramas*, to enable man to reflect on the purpose and ideals of life so that he was not carried away by the needs, duties and responsibilities of his daily life in family and society. The *asramas* are *brahmacharya* (student), *grihasta* (house holder), *vanaprasta* (retirement into forest) and *sanyaasa* (mendicant). The life of *vanaprasta* and *sanyasa* is primarily meant for reflection on the ideals of life and spiritual realization.

The caste system of India was a historical growth, but not a stratification of society according to a preconceived plan. One *Sanskrit* word for caste is *varna*

meaning color. The *Aryans* who had migrated to India in the pre-*Vedic* period, with their white skin could easily be distinguished from the local dark skinned races. Since the *Aryans* were far fewer in numbers than the original local inhabitants, they found it convenient to establish a social structure with religious sanctions that would safeguard their cultural and political superiority and adapted what could have been a kind of caste structure of the pre-*Aryans*. Accordingly they kept the religion of sacrifices for themselves. The priests in charge of religion were called *brahmanas*. The warriors were called *kshatriyas*. They kept part of the profession of trade to themselves and gave part to the local inhabitants. The traders were called *vaisyas*. Agriculture and other forms of manual labor were entrusted to the local inhabitants. The cultivators and the laborers were called *sudras*. Several sub-castes arose out of the mingling of the four.

While the functions associated with the *asramas* were called *asramadharmas*, the functions associated with the *varnas* were called *varnadharma*. There was an inter-relationship in the functions between the *asramadharmas* and the *varnadharma*. Although the four *asramas* or stages were recommended to all men, women and the fourth caste in general were dissuaded from taking to the third and the fourth stages. Old wives of old men accompanied their husbands to the forest in the third stage. But it was thought that women always needed protection and they were prohibited from going independently to the forest where no protection was available.

Since the fourth stage was hard and its follower had to live by him or herself, women were not allowed to take to it, even when their husbands took to the fourth stage, though there were exceptions. The fourth caste was prohibited from taking to these stages as it was thought, rightly or wrongly, that members of that caste were not capable of self-reflection, self-examination and self-control, and was immature both in intellect and in character.

But there were instances of men like Vidura and Suta who were saintly and even taught the higher castes about ethics, immortality, the nature of God and the like. For the sake of social stability and welfare, such saints and sages of the fourth caste did not violate the social injunctions.

The *dharma* associated with both the *varnas* and the *asramas* is called *varna-asramadharmas*. The seeker is to realize that the structure of *asramas* and *varnas* is in the context of harmony of social life coupled with the pursuit of self-realization. None of these is ever predicated of the Self. When the seeker is in the knowledge of the Self, he is beyond the body and the mind, and the society around. He is neither affected by the senses nor attached to the forms and names of the world. As the very Self, the seeker is only a witness consciousness of the *lila* (sport) of the Supreme Self. Contemplating that he is the pure Self, the seeker is to be happy and blissful.

6. Oh, all-pervading one, virtue and vice, happiness and sorrow are all attributes of the mind, not of you. You are neither the doer nor the enjoyer. You are ever free.

The 'I' consciousness enjoys or suffers the objects of senses, and the pains and pleasures. It also appropriates them as 'mine', 'thine' or neutral. This gives rise to the ego or the ego-sense of the individual. The pains and pleasures cause sorrow or happiness to the 'I' consciousness.

The mind thinks; and the body experiences. The thoughts of the mind get translated into the actions of the body. The inward mental process corresponds at every stage with the external material process. In other words, the order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things, and body actions. Nothing happens to or through the body that is not perceived by the mind, and consciously or unconsciously felt.

When the seeker realizes that he is no other than the all-pervading Supreme Self, he is beyond the consciousness of his body and mind. He is, therefore, neither doer of any activity nor enjoyer of the objects of senses, or happiness or sorrow.

7. You are the One Seer-of-All and are really ever free. Verily, this alone is your bondage that you see yourself not as the Seer, but something different.

The One Seer-of-All is the Supreme Self, the One without the second. It is pure awareness and pure consciousness and, as pure consciousness, is eternal. The Self is self-luminous, without darkness and light, and is the self-manifest reality. It is only being.

If the seeker is able to realize his oneness with the Supreme Self, he is ever free. His real bondage is his inability to realize his oneness with the Self, which is the result of his being in the realm of mind and intellect.

8. You have been bitten by the great black-serpent of egoism 'I am the doer'. You take the nectar of the faith, 'I am not the doer' and be happy.

One is to realize that there is no life without action. No one can live without action; even breathing is action. None can condemn action; even condemning is action. The law of action (*karma*) exists. But it works differently for the devotees of God. The work that is done in the name of God produces only good results. One is to undertake only those works that are of pressing necessity, in a spirit of detachment. This is to do work without craving for the results of the work done in the manner anticipated. The aim of the path of action is to fix one's mind on God while doing the work.

When the seeker gets involved in many activities, he gets attached to lust and greed. His ego-sense seeks to appropriate the actions as his own, craving for the results in the manner anticipated. As such, he is not on the path of realization of the Self, but only self-seeking. When he realizes that whatever he does, he does for God and with no craving for the results, he does no longer consider himself 'the doer' of the works. The merits or demerits of the activity no longer attach to him. He will be ever-blissful.

9. Burn down the forest of ignorance with the fire of conviction that 'I am the One, Pure Consciousness' and discard grief. Be happy.

Ignorance or Unconscious (*ajnana, avidya*) is the potency of past actions. Its existence is known only by its results. It acts from behind and limits one's capabilities of knowing and acting. It is the force that veils the original infinity. One cannot find oneself as a finite person in the world of forms and names unless one's original infinity is veiled. It is *Maya* that veils the original infinity. *Maya* becomes the principle of measure, the forms of measure being the valid means of knowing, and the means of acting and enjoying. This establishes that *ajnana* or *avidya* is only *karma* and can be overcome by Supreme Knowledge (*Jnana*).

To realize that the seeker is the One, Pure Consciousness is to remove the veil of ignorance or unconscious. The ignorance or unconscious is to be burnt to dissolve into Supreme Knowledge which is the Supreme Self Itself. When the finitude of the seeker dissolves into the infinitude of the Self, he is no longer in the realm of the mind and is no longer affected by grief or any other emotion emanating from the mind. He will be ever blissful.

10. You are that Consciousness, Bliss - Supreme Bliss in which this universe appears superimposed, like a snake in a rope. Live happily as that Blissful Consciousness.

The seeker is to realize that he is the Supreme Self, the Supreme Bliss, the Supreme Consciousness himself. The universe is the empirical world of action. Practical activity is only to confirm or disconfirm the truth of empirical cognitions. But valid cognition at the empirical level is not the same as cognition tied to *being* in the ontological sense. Ontologically, the universe is only a mirage, a snake in a rope as it is not permanent and eternal. It is ever transient. The seeker is able to realize the impermanence of the universe and the eternity of the Supreme Self by being one with It. In the blissful consciousness of the Supreme Self, the seeker lives in ecstatic joy.

11. He who considers himself free is free indeed, and he who considers himself bound remains bound. 'As one thinks, so one becomes' is a popular saying in this world. It is indeed true.

It is said that the soul conceives, the mind creates and the body experiences. The *Upanisads* state that mind alone is the cause of bondage or liberation in man. In other words, whatever springs in mind, man expresses it. It is mind that makes man either free or bound.

12. The Self is Witness, All-pervading, Perfect, Non-dual, Free, Consciousness, Action-less, Unattached, Desire-less and Quiet. Through illusion, It appears as if It were absorbed in the world.

The Supreme Self – the Ultimate Truth - is expressed in different attributes such as Witness, All-pervading to enable the seeker to lift his reflective mind and intellect to the realm of the Self for direct experience. This is to enable him to have an idea of the Supreme Self – the *Sat-Chit-Anand-Brahman* – in his mind before it is transcended into the realm of the Self. Initially, the Supreme Self appears absorbed in the world. As the seeker transcends the mind, he realizes that the world is no other than a mirage and the Supreme Self is the Ultimate Truth.

13. Having given up all external and internal wavering thoughts and illusion that ‘I am the reflected self’, meditate on the Self as the Immutable, Consciousness and Non-dual.

Mind is a stream of thoughts passing over consciousness. It causes all thoughts to arise. The thoughts waver as waves on the ocean. When the seeker contemplates at the mental level, he considers that he is only a reflection of the Supreme Self in the form of *jiva* - a finite individual. When he transcends the mind, the thoughts cease to arise and waver. The seeker ceases to consider himself to be a reflection of the Supreme Self. He realizes that he is the Self himself, the Immutable and Non-dual Consciousness. In the transcendental stage, the seeker is to contemplate the Self for direct experience.

The *Sanskrit* word *kootastha* used in the *sloka* (verse) meaning immutable is pregnant with different meanings. The word *koota* means mountain top, mystery or anvil. It conveys all the three different meanings in the *sloka*. The Self is the highest Reality like a mountain top. It is mystery as *Maya* in *Purusa*. It is like an anvil in that It does not change while all that emerges from It is ever in change.

14. My child! You have long been bound to your body- consciousness. Sever it with the sword of the knowledge that ‘I am Consciousness’, and be happy.

Individual consciousness is body-consciousness. It releases creative energy and creates physical events, occurrences, circumstances, etc. But the true consciousness of the seeker is different. As Ramana Maharshi says, ‘Existence and Consciousness’ is the only Reality. Consciousness plus waking, we call waking. Consciousness plus sleep, we call sleep. Consciousness plus dream, we call dream. Consciousness is the screen on which all the pictures come and go.

The screen is real; the pictures are mere shadows on it'. This consciousness is the supreme consciousness of the seeker. This is the *turiya* (fourth) state of consciousness. When the seeker gains knowledge of his being supreme consciousness, he can be happy. His bondage to body consciousness disappears in his knowledge of his being supreme consciousness.

15. You are unattached, without action, self-effulgent and without any blemish. That you practise meditation is indeed your bondage.

The seeker is always to bear in view that he is no other than the Supreme Self. Whatever attributes are conceived of the Supreme Self, attach to him, too. He is, therefore, unattached, without action, self-effulgent and without any blemish. He is no different from the Self. In such a state, there is no place for meditation. If the seeker considers that he practises meditation, he is in the state of duality, he being different from the Self. This is an indicator of his being in the realm of his mind and intellect. The mind is but a stream of thoughts wavering and causes only bondage. He is to transcend the mind to be one with the Supreme Self.

16. You pervade this universe and this universe is woven in you. You are, really, Pure Consciousness by nature. Do not be petty-minded.

The seeker is to keep in mind that he is no different from the Self. The Self is Pure Consciousness and eternal in nature. The Self pervades the universe and the universe is woven in It. So does the seeker, too, ontologically. The seeker shall not demean himself considering lower and other than the Self and different from It.

17. You are unconditioned, changeless, dense, serene, of profound intelligence and unperturbed; desire consciousness alone.

The seeker possesses the same attributes as the Self, such as being unconditioned, changeless, dense, serene, unperturbed and of profound intelligence. He is unaffected by the emotions and passions of the mind as the mind is transcended. He is of profound knowledge as he is beyond the limitations of the relative or physical knowledge. He is unperturbed as he is beyond any external or internal agitations that emanate from the mind. In this state, he is to seek the highest plane of consciousness - the Great Cause - the *Mahakarana*. Entering the *Mahakarana* (Great Cause), the seeker becomes silent. He cannot utter one word. He is one with the Supreme Self.

18. Know that which has form is unreal and which is without form is real (changeless). Through this spiritual instruction, you will escape the possibility of re-birth.

The Self is Pure Consciousness and Eternal. All that emanates out of the Self has a beginning. It, therefore, has an end. All that emanates out of the Self has names and forms for its constituents. They are unreal in that they are not permanent. The Self alone is real being eternal and without form. The seeker is to seek ontologically to be one with the Self, to be eternal. This avoids the possibility of future emanation from and dissolution into the Self, the cycle of birth and death repeated without end.

19. Just as a mirror exists inside and outside the image reflected in it, so the Supreme Self exists inside and outside this body.

The mirror exists. The reflection in the mirror is only an appearance. The reflection arises only if an object is brought before the mirror. If the object is withdrawn, the reflection no longer appears. Still the mirror remains. Similarly, the Self alone exists. The body, the mind, the senses, etc of the seeker and all objects of the relative world are only reflections of the Self and are sourced in IT. When the Self seeks to withdraw the objects of the relative world, they do no longer exist. They disappear into the Self.

20. Just as the same all-pervading space is inside and outside a jar, the Immutable and All-pervading Brahman exists in all beings and objects.

The Self - the Pure Consciousness - pervades and permeates everything in the universe.

2. Joy of Self-Realization.

Janaka said:

1. Oh! I am without taint, tranquil, pure consciousness and beyond nature. All along, I have spent my life bewildered by delusion.

The seeker regrets the life so far spent in mere delusion that he is the body and the mind, without realizing that he is the Self himself. He now realizes that he is 'Pure Consciousness', serene and without taint, as he has transcended the states of human consciousness, mind and the senses. He is beyond nature, too, for the reason that he experiences that he is beyond matter and the world of names and forms.

2. As I reveal this body, so do I reveal this universe! Therefore, mine is all this universe; or verily nothing is mine.

Both the body and the universe are made of matter. They are creation of the Nature (*Prakrti*). The seeker realizes that he reveals his body. What reveals the body is the consciousness within him that illumines it. When he is no other than the Supreme Self, the consciousness within him illumining his body is the Pure Consciousness of the Supreme Self. It illumines the universe itself. He is no different from the Supreme Self. As such, the whole universe of which the Self is the very substratum (*sat*) is wholly his own, as it is that of the Self.

3. Oh! Having renounced the universe together with the body, I now perceive the Supreme Self with dexterity.

The seeker realizes that the body and the universe are unreal as they appear as matter. Yet they emanate from and are no other than the Self. He transcends the consciousness of the body and the universe for realization of the Self. This realization enables him to experience the Supreme Self with dexterity. This realization dawns on him by the grace of the Divine.

4. As waves, foam and bubbles are not different from water, so the universe emanating from the Self is no different from It.

Waves, foam and bubbles arise on water in the sea and disappear into the same water. They are no different from the water in the sea. The cycle repeats without end, wherever the water is spread. The universe emanating from the Self is no different. The universe is to the Self as the waves, foam and bubbles are to the sea water.

5. As cloth, when analyzed, is nothing but thread, so this universe, when examined carefully, is certainly nothing but the Self.

6. Just as sugar generated in sugarcane juice is entirely pervaded by that juice, so the universe produced in Me is permeated by Me within and without.

Sugar is inherent and spread everywhere in the sugarcane juice. It is the attribute of the juice. It permeates the juice. Similarly, the universe generated in the Self is permeated by the Self within and without. As heat is to fire or sweetness is to sugar, so is the universe to the Self.

7. The universe appears as a result of ignorance of the Self and disappears with the knowledge of the Self, just as the snake appears from the non-cognition (non-apprehension) of the rope and disappears with its re-cognition.

In the case of seeing a rope as a snake, there is a conflict between a perception and its subsequent rejection as false. This arises in the reflective consciousness, that is, the witness consciousness. The seeker corrects his initial non-cognition by re-cognition. The snake disappears in his re-cognition and the rope remains. Similarly, in the case of the universe, it may appear real to the seeker from the ignorance and non-apprehension of the Self. When the seeker gains true knowledge of the Self, the non-apprehension of the true nature of the universe dissolves into the true knowledge of the Self. For him, the universe disappears as there is no more of its cognition by the seeker, on attainment of the Self.

8. Light is my very nature; I am no other than light. When the universe manifests itself, verily it is I that shine.

The Self is self-effulgent. It is Effulgence Itself. Effulgence is what illumines and, therefore, manifests what exists. As the seeker is no other than the Self, he is effulgence himself. When the universe manifests itself, it is because of the effulgence of the Self and, therefore, of the seeker himself.

9. Oh! The universe appears in me, conceived through ignorance, just as silver appears in the mother-of-pearl, snake in the rope and water in the sun-beam.

The seeker is to realize that he conceives of the universe only through ignorance as he conceives of silver in a mother-of-pearl, snake in a rope and water in a mirage, through non-cognition (non-apprehension). He is to correct his non-cognition through proper re-cognition based on knowledge.

10. Just as a pot (jar) dissolves into clay, a wave into water or a bracelet into gold, so the universe that has emanated from Me dissolves into Me.

A pot is made of clay. When it ceases to exist, it dissolves into clay. A wave arises on water. When it ceases to exist, it dissolves into water. A bracelet is made of gold. When it ceases to exist, it dissolves into gold. The universe emanates out of the Self. It dissolves into the Self when it is to cease to exist.

11. Wonderful (marvelous) am I! Adoration to Me that knows no decay and survives even the destruction of the world from the creator down to a blade of grass!

The seeker is no other than the Self. The Self knows no decay. It is the substratum of the created world that includes the creator, the created and the destroyer. The Self is Immutable and Eternal, while the created world is ever transient like waves on water. The created world perishes, while the Self stays as ever. The realization of the Self is not only fantastic, but is wholly divine that commands reverence and adoration.

12. Wonderful am I! Adoration to Me who, though with a body, am One and who neither go anywhere nor come from anywhere, but abide, pervading the universe.

The seeker is to realize that he is the same as the Self, One without a second. Though he has a body made of matter, he is beyond its consciousness. Though in the consciousness of the body and the mind he acts, in the Supreme Consciousness of the Self he is beyond action. In this state he abides, pervading the universe, being one with the Self himself. This Supreme Consciousness is a matter of great reverence and adoration.

13. Wonderful am I! Adoration to Me! There is no one so competent (capable) as I am, as I am bearing the universe eternally without ever touching it with my body.

The seeker continues to contemplate his total identity with the Self. The Self (the Brahman) is only the supporting Being (ground) of the universe. It is the non self-transforming cause (*vivartakarana*) of the universe. The Self, therefore, remains aloof from the created universe, while being immanent everywhere as Being, though transcendent, too. This realization is amazing to the seeker.

14. Wonderful am I! Adoration to Me who have nothing or all that is ever thought and spoken of!

The contemplation of the identity of the seeker with the Self continues. The Self is One and without a second. 'All That Is' is the Self. When the seeker is one with the Self, there is nothing beyond him. Nothing is, therefore, his. On the other hand, at the level of human consciousness or the mental plane, if the seeker conceives of all that exists, it is all his as all that exists is no other than the Self.

15. The 'knowledge', the 'knowable' and the 'knower' – these three categories do not in fact exist. I am that taintless Self in which this triad appears through ignorance.

In the relative world, knowledge depends on subject-object consciousness. There is a knower, knowable and known or knowledge. This knowledge is centered around the ego-sense and in the plane of the mind and the intellect. On the other hand, Supreme Knowledge transcends both the consciousness and the ego-sense of the seeker. The Self is beyond the realm of the body and the mind. Knowledge of the relative world has no place in the Self. The triad does not, therefore, exist in the Self. If the seeker has any misconception as to the triad being in the Self, it is only due to his ignorance of the nature of the Self.

16. Oh! All misery is rooted in the sense of duality. There is no remedy for this misery except the realization that all objects of experience are unreal and that I am One, Pure, Consciousness and Bliss.

All human misery is rooted in the ego-sense of individuals. The ego-sense separates one from everyone else. The ego-sense leads to duality and multiplicity causing conflict of interests. The remedy lies in the realization that all objects are unreal and that attachment to the objects of senses is the source of all misery. The remedy also lies in the realization that every individual is the Self, being One, Pure, Consciousness and Bliss. The individuals are to transcend their individual ego-sense and human consciousness, dissolving it into the Supreme Consciousness of the Self.

17. I am Pure Consciousness. Through ignorance, I have projected limitations such as the body upon the Self. Constantly reflecting thus, do I abide in the Self, purged of all mental disturbances!

Purged of mental disturbances, beyond the realm of the mind where thoughtlessness (*nirvikalpa*) reigns, the seeker is devoid of ignorance of the Supreme Self. He is no longer aware of the consciousness of his body and mind. He is in the realm of the Supreme Consciousness of the Self.

18. I have neither bondage nor freedom. Having lost its support, the illusion has ceased. Oh! The universe, though abiding in Me, does not in fact so exist.

The Self is ever free and infinite. The ego-sense of an individual is what causes bondage and finitude. When there is bondage, the need for liberation arises. The bondage is thus an illusion rooted in the ignorance of the seeker who is unaware of his true self. When the seeker reflects constantly on his true identity with the Self, the illusion of his bondage ceases. Though he is in this world in relation to his body and mind, he is eternal in being one with the Self, ever free and infinite.

19. I have known for certain that the body and the universe are of no substance. The Self is Pure Consciousness alone. So, now what can be the basis of imagination?

Ontologically, in the world of spirit, all of matter is of no substance. What exists is Pure Consciousness alone – the Supreme Self. There is no place for imagination, as imagination is a state of mind in action. The realm of Pure Consciousness is beyond the realm of matter and mind.

20. Body, the ideas of heaven and hell, bondage and freedom, and also anxiety (fear) are all mere imagination. What have I to do with all these when I am Pure Consciousness?

It is the mind that feeds the ideas of heaven and hell, bondage and freedom, anxiety and fear, and several pairs of opposites that constitute the world of action. As they emanate from mind, they are no more than imagination. In the realm of Pure Consciousness, there is no room for mind, or its activity as imagination. The Self is beyond the realm of the world of action.

21. Oh! I do not find any duality. Even the multitude of human beings is like a forest (wilderness) to me. What should I feel attached to?

When the seeker identifies himself with the Self, he is One and Alone. Into the consciousness of Aloneness dissolves the multitude of human beings, the world of names and forms. He no longer finds any duality. As there is nothing besides the Self, what should he feel attached to?

22. I am not the body, nor have I a body. I am not a finite self (the *jiva*). I am Pure Consciousness. That I had urged for life was indeed my bondage.

When the seeker identifies himself with the Self, he is Pure Consciousness. He is not the body as the body is made of matter. Nor does he have a body as the Self is without form. He is neither the finite self as it identifies with ego. The desire to live physically is to deny the true nature of the Self as it involves the belief that there is death and cessation of being. The urge to continue to live is to seek to identify the Self with the body. This urge is the real bondage of the self of the seeker to the world of matter.

23. Oh! In the limitless ocean of Me, when mental storms rise, diverse waves of worlds are instantly produced.

The Self is eternal, and without limit and form. It is the Mind of the Divine (*Prakrti - Maya*) that creates the world of names and forms. *Prakrti* has three attributes - *sattva, rajas and tamas*. Everything in the world is the product of these three attributes. But the world is like waves and bubbles on the surface of water that arise and dissolve in a cycle without end.

24. With the calming of the storms of the Mind in the infinite ocean of Me, unfortunately for the *jiva*, the trader, the ship of the universe gets wrecked and sunk.

When the activity of the Divine Mind (*Maya*) subdues, there is no world of forms and names, that is, objects. *Prakrti* is then said to be in a state of dormancy when its three attributes are in perfect equilibrium. None of its attributes becomes dominant over the others, all being equally active, and the activities of each force being harmonious with the activities of the others. The dormancy is then stability with harmony in activity. What is essentially and by nature force cannot but be active. What we call its inactivity or dormancy may really be its pulsations of activity under the same conditions and in the same circumstances and pattern. In such an event, the change is not observable, though it always exists. At this level the world of forms dissolves into the Self. There is no separate identity to the *jiva*, the finite individual.

25. Wonderful! In Me, the limitless ocean, the waves of individual selves, according to their nature, rise, jostle about, play for a while and disappear.

The Self is the limitless ocean. The relative worlds rise, are active according to their nature and dissolve into the Self like bubbles on water, in a cycle without end. For the witness consciousness in the seeker, the Self is a sport, a *lila*, causing amazement and wonder.

3. Test of Self-Realization.

Astavakra said:

1. Having known yourself as really Indestructible and One, how is it that you, knower of the Self, and serene, feel attached to the acquisition of wealth?

The seeker that is realized is aware all the time and in all conditions that whatever exists in the universe is nothing but the Self. For the seeker, the awareness of the universe around including his own body and mind is only as a superimposition on the Self. The man of Self-Knowledge has his being in Supreme Consciousness beyond the states of human consciousness related to the body, mind and senses. He is beyond the ego-sense. He lives in the world, but not of the world.

The difference between a man of the world and a man of Self-Knowledge lies not in the actions they perform, but in the consciousness in which they act. If the seeker is wholly realized, will he ever feel attached to the acquisition of wealth?

2. Alas! Owing to ignorance, a mother of pearl (sea-shell) is sought mistaking it for silver. Similarly, attachment arises to the objects of illusory sense perception, owing to ignorance of the Self.

Out of greed for silver, one may seek a mother of pearl (sea-shell) in the illusion that it contains silver. If one gets attached to the world of sense-objects, it is surely owing to the ignorance of the Self. How can one be considered Self-realized, in view of such attachment?

3. Having realized 'I am That' from which the universe emanates like waves in the sea, why do you run about like a miserable being?

To run after the world of sense-objects is an index of the desires of the mind and the ego-sense. The seeker is only in the realm of duality and multiplicity. If the seeker has realized that he is no other than the Self which is the Being of the universe itself, does it make sense for him to run after the objects of the senses in the world?

4. After hearing that the Self is Pure Consciousness, supremely beautiful, how can one yet be deeply attached to the objects of senses and thus become impure?

Impurity is an unclean condition of the mind. It veils consciousness of the spirit. It creates and increases body consciousness. Knowledge of the Self and the body consciousness do not go together. One who has realized the Self cannot find

anything else beautiful and get attached to it. If one is attached to the objects of the senses, can one be considered to have realized the Self?

5. It is strange that the sense of ownership should still continue in the wise man who has realized the Self in all, and all in the Self.

The sense of ownership is the ego-sense. The function of the ego-sense is to appropriate all experiences to itself. All objective experiences fall within personal experiences and cognitions. The mind and the senses work only in unison with the ego. If the ego vanishes, the mind does not think, nor do the senses perceive.

The seeker will realize the Self in all and all in the Self only if he transcends the realm of the body and the mind and, therefore, the ego-sense. It is strange that one still possesses the sense of ownership of wealth, in other words ego-sense, and yet claims that one has realized the Self in all and all in the Self.

6. It is strange that one abiding in the transcendent non-duality and intent on liberation should yet be subject to lust and distraught by amorous pastimes.

The seeker, as house-holder, in that station of life (*asrama*), is entitled to conjugal life with his spouse. But if he has realized the Self and is in the state of Supreme Consciousness beyond the states of human consciousness, how can he still be in and of the life of a house-holder?

7. It is very strange that, knowing lust to be an enemy of knowledge, a man who has grown extremely weak and reached the last spell of his life, should yet be eager for sensual enjoyment.

In the ocean of the world, there are six alligators - lust, anger, avarice, delusion, pride and envy. They are all enemies of knowledge. They are sought after by the mind and the ego. The age of the individual seeking them is of no consequence. It looks strange that one, very old and soon to die, should yet be eager for sensual enjoyment, overcome by lust.

8. It is strange that one who is unattached to the objects of this world and of the next, who discriminates the eternal from the ephemeral and who aspires for emancipation should yet fear dissolution of the body.

The seeker may have attained true knowledge of the Self. Yet he may not have transcended his body consciousness and attachment to it. He may have known all that need be known of the Self and yet is not able to overcome his attachment to and awareness of body consciousness. Such a person will be afraid of death that results in the dissolution of his body. It is strange that such a person of true knowledge so behaves.

9. Feted or tormented, the serene person ever sees the Absolute Self and is thus neither gratified nor angry.

A serene seeker is one who is not agitated in mind, in spite of provocations. He is neither gratified nor angry, neither feted nor tormented. He is beyond the realm of mind as he ever sees the Absolute Self. He is ever in the state of supreme consciousness.

10. A high-souled person witnesses his own body acting as if it were another's. As such, how can he be affected by praise or blame?

The *Upanisads* mention the inward structure of the self – senses, life, mind, individual reason, Cosmic Reason and the *atman* in that ascending order. It is the Cosmic Reason which has to be the same, numerically identical, in all of us. It is what finally confers existence on all the phenomenal objects in so far as they are real. The Cosmic Reason in all of us must be the same and also must be above the impurities of individual reasons. It has to be the higher aspect or dimension of the individual reason and has also to be its deeper aspect or dimension. The numerical sameness of the object we contend for can be made possible only by something numerically the same for all in our inner beings. Hence, in spite of overlapping of experiences, it cannot be contended that we can be different persons all the way up to the individual *atmans*. It ends at the stage of the Cosmic Reason before the *atman* in each individual. Existence is only one. Ontologically, all existences, all beings of both God and the finite individuals are one. Only empirically in the world of action, are they different. The seeker realized of the Self is in the consciousness that all finite individuals ontologically are no other than him.

Praise and blame always refer to behavior related to actions of body and mind. As the true self of the seeker is beyond the realm of the body and the mind, he is affected neither by praise nor by blame. When the seeker realizes the Self, he realizes that every other individual in the world is one with the Self like him, as the Self is the One without the second. The seeker then witnesses his own body acting as if it were another's as he does not see any difference between his body and any other's in the world.

11. Realizing this universe as mere illusion and losing all curiosity for life, how can a man of steady mind fear even the approach of death?

Sankara says, 'If you do not have a consciousness, then everything is dark and nothing in the universe exists'. This corresponds to the view of the modern quantum mechanics that unless you can observe a thing, it just does not exist. This is for the reason that there must be an interaction between the observer and the observed to complete a measurement. It is consciousness that fills the bill in the material world in the sense that it determines its existence. When the seeker is beyond the consciousness of the physical universe, it does not exist for him. It

remains an illusion for him. When he has no consciousness of this universe (world), he has no zest or curiosity for life. Such a seeker has no concern for death either.

12. With whom can we compare that great-souled one who is content with Self-Knowledge and does not hanker even after liberation?

The sage who is content with Self-Knowledge is fulfilled. He does not even have the desire for liberation. Even this desire pre-supposes ignorance and the state of bondage. He is in a state of thoughtlessness as he is beyond the realm of mind, and in the Self.

13. Why should that steady-minded man who knows that the perceived world, in its own nature, has no substance, consider one thing acceptable and another unacceptable?

A steady-minded man realizes that the Self alone is existent. The perceived world is an illusory super-imposition on the Self. The seeker after the Self is unattached to the objects of the world. Neither he hankers after those that give him pleasure, nor does he shun those that cause pain.

14. He who has given up worldly attachment in his mind, who is beyond the pairs of opposites and who is free from desires, to him no experience arising, as a matter of course, brings either pleasure or pain.

One experiences pains and pleasures only some specific times, not always. These pains and pleasures are due to the experience of different objects. This is possible only when there is something directing or pulling the 'I' consciousness towards such experiences at those times. The 'I' consciousness experiences enjoyment or suffering and also appropriates such experiences as its own, thus generating the ego or the ego-sense within. But when the seeker is beyond the states of human consciousness and the realm of his mind, he is also beyond the realm of his ego-sense and the finite 'I' consciousness. In this state there is no pleasure or pain to him arising from any experience of objects.

4. Glory of Self-Realization.

1. Oh! Marvel! The man of understanding, the knower of the Self who plays the sport of life has no comparison to the deluded beasts of burden of the world.

Ordinary men of the world are attached to the world and are immersed in worldly joys and sorrows. But for a seeker of realization, the joys and sorrows of the world are like sport. He is unattached to the world and is not affected by it. For him, this sport is free and spontaneous. It is like release of inherent energy. It is its own fulfillment. A realized seeker is completely free from attachments; his thoughts are ever pure and sweet. Whatever action he entertains, at any time and in any circumstances, there does never arise the sense of doer-ship or enjoyer-ship.

2. Oh! The *yogi* does not feel elated abiding in that state which Indra and other gods hanker after, but do not achieve.

The *yogi*, on realization, abides in the state of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, natural to him. It is this state of Perfect Happiness which Indra and other gods hanker after, but do not attain, because of their inability to be in the state of supreme consciousness devoid of sensuous experiences.

3. Surely, the heart of one who has comprehended the Self is not touched by virtue and vice, just as the sky is not touched by smoke, though it appears to be.

Smoke at a place is to infinite space as ‘vice and virtue’ is to a realized soul.

4. The great-souled one who has known the entire universe to be the Self alone acts spontaneously. Who can forbid him?

The *yogi*, on realization, is beyond all scriptural and social injunctions of conduct. He has already transcended his ego. In whatever way he acts, he acts for God. His actions are always perfect, as a perfect dancer never makes a wrong step or a perfect musician never strikes a wrong note.

5. Of the four kinds of the created beings from Brahma down to a blade of grass, it is the wise one alone that is capable of renouncing desire and aversion.

The *Upanisads* proclaim that the living beings on earth are born in four ways – born from the womb (*garbhaja*), born from an egg (*andaja*), generated from sweat or warm vapor (*svedaja*) and sprouted out of seeds (*udbhijja*). These four ways of creation cover all living beings on earth from the creator to a blade of grass.

Of all the living beings on earth, it is the *yogi*, on realization, that is alone capable of renouncing desire and aversion which are the states of mind. It is the man of realization alone that transcends the mind, and all other living beings on earth are in the realm of the mind.

6. Rare is the man who knows the Self as One without a second, and as the Lord of the universe. He does what comes to his mind with no fear from any quarter.

It is very rare that a seeker realizes the Supreme Self. On realization, whatever he does, he does for God and he has no sense of doer-ship or enjoyer-ship. He is free from desire for action. He, therefore, does not know what he does. What he does is spontaneous. He has no concern as to how others view his actions. As he is one with the Self, there is no consciousness for him of any other entity beyond his self.

5. Four Ways to Dissolution of Ego.

Astavakra said:

1. You are free from contact with anything whatsoever. Pure as you are, what do you want to renounce? Destroy the body-complex and enter into *laya* - the state of dissolution.

Mandukya Upanisad considers the *atman* the worldly person – *Vaisvanara*, meaning the gross aspect of the Cosmic Person. The body-complex is considered to have seven parts and nineteen gateways. The seven parts are the fore head, eye, the life principle, bodily centre, abdomen, feet and face. The nineteen gateways are the five senses – eye, ear, taste, touch and smell, the five organs of action – hands, feet, the generative organ, excretory organ and the organ of speech, the five vital principles – *prana*, *apana*, *udana*, *vyana* and *samana* and the four inner instruments – mind, ego, reason and apperception. The five vital principles are said to control the involuntary functions of the body making life possible. However, it may be difficult to identify them.

On realization of the Self, the seeker is one with the Self and has nothing to renounce. He is already beyond the realm of the body-complex. He is to enter, in spirit, *laya* - the state of dissolution and remain ever undisturbed. Such a seeker shall never have to return to misery and sorrow.

2. The universe rises like a bubble from the sea. Thus know the Self to be One, and in this way enter into *laya* – the state of dissolution.

Water is the only substance of the sea. Bubbles, waves, and foam arise out of and dissolve into the water of the sea, without end. A bubble is to sea water as the universe is to the Self. Thus comprehending the Self to be One, the seeker is to enter into *laya* (total union) with the Self, as the bubble dissolves into the sea water.

3. Though the universe is unreal, it is apparent like the snake in the rope. Though it is present to the senses, it does not exist in you as you are Pure. In this way, enter into the state of dissolution.

The universe is an ordered whole in which the laws of space, time and causation hold true. But it is not a self-contained and self-consistent whole. The self-contradictory nature of the universe in relation to space, time and causation establishes it. What lies beyond the universe is no chaos, but Being itself. The Being of the universe we experience is that of the Being beyond the universe, the Self - the Brahman. It is the nature of the Being to support the universe in spite of its self-contradictions. In spite of its self-contradictory nature, causality holds true in the universe.

In spite of the self-contradictions that make the universe unreal ontologically, it is apparent like a snake in the rope. As long as it is perceived by mind as such, it so exists. It is real to the senses, too, as it is existent physically. But the Self is Pure, Immaculate, One, Supreme Consciousness and beyond the five elements that constitute the universe. The universe is in the nature of a superimposition on the Self, like a bubble on water. As a bubble arises on water and dissolves into it, so does the universe arise out of the Self and dissolve into It. Contemplating the reality of the Self and the unreality of the universe, the seeker is to enter into the state of dissolution.

4. You are perfect, and the same in misery and happiness, in hope and despair, and in life and death. Thus, in this way enter into the state of dissolution.

The seeker, on realization, is stoic and unaffected either in misery or in happiness, either in hope or in despair and either in life or in death. These pairs of opposites are the qualities that attach to the mind and the body. Realization of the Self arises only beyond the realm of the body and the mind. Thus transcending the human states of consciousness, the seeker is to enter into the state of dissolution.

6. True Knowledge of the Self.

Janaka said:

1. True Knowledge is this, 'I am infinite as space. The phenomenal world is like a jar'. So it has neither to be renounced, nor accepted, nor destroyed.

As the space inside a jar is the same as the infinite space outside it, the universe exists in and through the Self. The universe has no separate or independent existence of its own. Its existence is only apparent, in name and form and only in physical perception.

When the Supreme-Knowledge is attained, the Self is realized as One and Infinite. In such an event, what remains either for renunciation, acceptance or destruction? What remains even for *laya* - dissolution into the Self?

2. True Knowledge is this, 'I am like the ocean and the universe is like the wave'. So it has neither to be renounced, nor accepted, nor destroyed.

The analogy of 'the ocean and the wave' to 'the Self and the universe' makes clear the infinitude and the eternity of the Self and the finitude of the universe in space and time. When the Self is One and All-pervading, what remains either for renunciation, acceptance or destruction? What remains even for *laya* - dissolution into the Self?

3. True Knowledge is this, 'I am like the mother of pearl (sea-shell) and the illusion of the universe is like silver. So it has neither to be renounced, nor accepted, nor destroyed.

The reality is the mother of pearl. The illusion is silver. Silver is to the mother of pearl as the universe is to the Self. When the Self is One and All-pervading, what remains either for renunciation, acceptance or destruction? What remains even for *laya* - dissolution into the Self?

4. True Knowledge is this, 'I am indeed in all beings and all beings are in me'. So it has neither to be renounced, nor accepted, nor destroyed.

When the Self is One and All-pervading, It is All That Exists. Everything, animate or inanimate, is within the Self. What does else remain either for renunciation, acceptance or destruction? What does remain even for *laya* - dissolution into the Self?

7. Nature of Self-Realization.

Janaka said:

1. In me, the boundless ocean, the ark of the universe moves hither and thither impelled by the wind of its own inherent nature. I am not impatient.

It is the nature of the ocean that a wind arising thereon tosses a ship hither and thither, and even sinks it. But the ocean is unaffected either by the wind or by the ship. Similarly, *Prakrti* causes the universe to arise which is ever in motion, in view of its inherent nature. The Supreme Self, the Being of the universe, is in no way affected.

2. In me, the limitless ocean, let the wave of the world rise or vanish itself. I experience neither increase, nor decrease thereby.

A wave in the ocean is no other than the water of the ocean. It rises or vanishes on its own. It neither adds nor decreases any quantum of water. Similarly, the universe is like a ripple on the Infinite Self. It neither adds to nor subtracts from the Self. The Reality - the Self - is ever the same.

3. In me, the boundless ocean, is the imagination of the universe. I am quite tranquil and formless. In this Knowledge alone do I abide!

The world of names and forms is in the nature of imagination, an illusion. It is apparent as long as it is so perceived. When its reality is realized, it disappears in the sense that it dissolves into the Reality. In the supreme knowledge that the world is an appearance and the Self - the Being of the world - is tranquil and without form, does the seeker ever abide.

4. The Self is not in the object, nor is the object in the Self which is infinite and without taint. Thus It is free from attachment and desire; It is tranquil. In this Knowledge alone do I abide!

The Self is all-pervasive and infinite. It cannot, therefore, be contained in or by finite objects such as body and mind. The world of objects is only a superimposition on the Self like a wave on water, without adding to or subtracting from It. The attachments and desires are related to the mind and the senses. The Self is beyond the realm of mind and, as such, is beyond attachments and desires. It is, therefore, ever tranquil. In this firm Knowledge of the Self, does the seeker ever abide!

5. Oh! I am really Pure Consciousness. The world is like a magic show. So, how and where can there be any thought of rejection or acceptance in Me?

The Self is Pure Consciousness alone. What appears as the world is only apparent in perception of the mind like a magic show. It is apparent and visible as long as the perception is focused. It disappears the moment the perception is withdrawn. No object, whatsoever, in the world can either attract or repel the seeker after the Self; as his perception is not focused on the world of objects. In the supreme knowledge that all objects of the world are only apparent and, therefore, unreal, does the seeker ever abide.

8. Bondage and Liberation.

Astavakra said:

1. It is bondage when the mind desires or grieves at anything, rejects or accepts anything or feels happy or angry at anything.
2. Liberation is attained when the mind does not desire or grieve, reject or accept, or feel happy or angry.

Psycho-analysts say that mind makes decisions and choices from one of at least three interior levels – logic, intuition and emotion, and sometimes from all the three levels. Within the level of emotion, there are five more levels. These five are the natural emotions, namely, grief, anger, envy, fear and love. The basic emotions are love and fear and the other three are the outgrowths of these two.

Grief is a natural emotion to express the sadness within, at the experience of any kind of loss. When expressed naturally, one gets rid of it. If it is suppressed without being expressed, it results in chronic depression, an unnatural emotion.

Anger is another natural emotion. When expressed naturally, one gets over it and returns to one's usual self very quickly. It will result in one's dealings appropriately with others, whenever one overcomes it. If suppressed, it results in rage, an unnatural emotion.

It is bondage if mind is bound by desires and emotions. It is liberation if mind is devoid of desires and emotions.

Bondage and liberation are of the mind alone. The mind will take the color one dyes it with. One is free if one constantly thinks that way. The one who constantly says, 'I am a sinner, I am bound' really becomes so.

3. It is bondage when the mind is attached to any sense experience. It is liberation when the mind is detached from all sense experiences.

The mind performs the function of receiving the impressions of the different senses and uniting them into phenomenal objects. It presents them as the senses for which pleasures and pains are objects, to the 'I' consciousness for experience as enjoyment or suffering. If the 'I' consciousness (mind) of the seeker is affected by the experience of the senses, it is bondage for him. It is true liberation for him if his 'I' consciousness (mind) is not affected by the experience of the said senses.

4. When there is no 'I' (ego), there is liberation; when there is 'I' (ego), there is bondage. Knowing thus, stop from accepting or rejecting anything playfully.

All the non-physical categories of a human being such as the mind, the five senses, the five organs of action, the five subtle elements and the five gross elements all of which constitute his experience issue out of the ego. The ego comprehends and covers the entire activity of the finite individual. It is not merely related to any one point of reference. There is no experience that is not the experience of the ego.

What covers the embodied *self* is egotism. This egotism covers everything like a veil. The embodied *self* is in bondage as long as it is veiled by egotism. When egotism dies, in other words, when the veil is withdrawn, the embodied *self* is liberated to be in union with the Supreme Self. Abiding in this knowledge, the seeker is to become perfectly tranquil and free from desire or aversion.

9. Detachment.

Astavakra said:

1. When do the performance or non-performance of duties and the pairs of opposites cease and for whom? Knowing it fully be without desires and devoted to renunciation through complete indifference to the world.

The performance or non-performance of duties is the experience of the ego, with the sense of doer-ship and also enjoyer-ship attached to it. The pairs of opposites such as good and evil, success and failure, joy and sorrow are what constitute human life and activity.

Desires are what cause action by a finite individual. According to scriptures, desires relate to performance of religious rites or observance of vows. These rites and vows pre-suppose desires for worldly and other-worldly beneficence. One, on realization of the Self, realizes the unreality of this world or any other world, and renounces one's identification with it, and gets totally indifferent to any activity.

It is not possible for a finite individual to give up work or activity altogether physically. One's very nature will lead one to action whether one likes it or not. But one's worldly activity becomes less and less as one develops love for God. One loses all interest in activity or work. Therefore, one is to work in a detached spirit, that is to say, not to crave for the results of the work done in the manner anticipated. Complete detachment from the results of action is possible only for one who has realized the Self.

2. Rare, indeed, my child is that blessed person whose desire for life, enjoyment and learning has been extinguished by observing the ways of men.

Everyone sees misery, disease, decay and death arising around. It is a wonder that the person seeing it around does not contemplate its arising for him any moment. A blessed person that extinguishes his desire for life, enjoyment and learning seeing the hollowness of life and the misery of others is very rare.

3. The wise man becomes serene by realizing that all is verily vitiated by the three-fold misery, and is transient, worthless and contemptible. It should, therefore, be rejected.

The three-fold misery results from the organism - the body, mind and intellect (*aadhyaathmik*), from the sentient beings and the insentient objects of the world (*aadhi-bhauthik*) and from the cosmic events which we generally call the will of God (*aadhi-daivik*). A seeker realizes that the world of action is vitiated by

the three-fold misery one way or the other, and is transient, worthless and contemptible. It is, therefore, to be discarded.

4. What is that time or that age when the pairs of opposites do not exist for man? He who, abjuring those, is content with what accrues to him unsolicited, reaches Perfection.

The pairs of opposites are what constitute human life and activity in the world of action. It is said: 'End of joy is sorrow; end of sorrow is joy; these two are for the living creatures as inescapable as day and night'. The seeker transcends the pairs of opposites only when he transcends the realm of the body and the mind. When he transcends the realm of the body and the mind and is in the state of supreme consciousness, the pairs (poles) of opposites do not exist for him. What accrues to him in that state is of no concern to him. He is in the Self and ever perfect.

5. Having observed the diversity of opinions among the great seers, sages and *yogis* and become completely indifferent to learning, which person does not attain tranquility?

The great seers, sages and *yogis* have each visualized the Self - the Supreme Truth - in his own way. The visualization is in the realm of the mind and intellect. Based on their vision, not actual realization, they have propounded several schools of philosophy, with considerable diversity in approach. But for the seeker, the wordy arguments of the schools of philosophy are like a dense forest, with no easy way to exit. A true seeker, therefore, is completely indifferent to learning, moves beyond the realm of the intellect and only sets about to realize the Essential Self. Such a seeker attains tranquility.

6. Is not he who apprehends the true nature of Pure Consciousness by complete indifference to the world, by equanimity and by logical reason, and thus saves himself from the cycle of birth and death, the true spiritual guide?

A true *guru* - a spiritual guide - is the one who apprehends the true nature of the Self - the Pure Consciousness - by complete indifference to the world, by equanimity and logical reason. *Brahma-nishthwam*, the direct experience of the Self, is the only qualification of a true *guru*. Even though one is of great knowledge of the scriptures but is not realized oneself is not qualified to be *guru*. It is said: 'How can he who knows no peace in himself bring peace into the bosom of others'?

7. When you recognize that the modification of the elements is nothing in reality but the primary elements in themselves, you will at once be free from bondage and abide in your true Self.

According to the *Vedantic* tradition, every object of the world is considered to contain all the five gross elements (*mahabhutas*) - earth, water, fire, air and space, but in different proportions. This doctrine of every object containing all the five elements is called Quintuplication. When there is any modification in any object, it means that there is only a change in the proportion of the five gross elements. All the gross elements remain in the modified object, too. This understanding enables the seeker to realize that the world of objects and activity is ever transient and only apparent and, therefore, unreal. He thereby frees himself from bondage to the world of forms and names and abides in his true Self.

8. Impressions (*vasanas, samskaras*) alone constitute the world. Therefore, renounce them all. The renunciation of *vasanas* is the renunciation of the world. Now you may live anywhere.

All action is patterned and the patterns of action produce patterns of impressions (*samskaras, vasanas*). They become potential worldly drives in the depths of a person.

Every action produces an impression - *samskara*, a kind of an imprint similar to a trauma, in the causal body and sticks in it like an inherent quality. It bursts into activity when the occasion arises. The causal body is a storehouse of *samskaras*, both cosmic and individual. They are dynamic forces. They influence our life, knowledge and action. They become forces constituting the dynamism of our personality. Thus they constitute the world of action.

The seeker is to renounce action related to the world of forms and names so that there are no new *samskaras* related to the world, added on to his causal body. He shall do only God-related action so that it will produce *samskaras* of merit in his individual self for future action in this life or the following ones, paving the way for realization. When once he is free from the *vasanas* (*samskaras*) related to the world, he may live anywhere, unaffected by the world.

10. Dispassion.

Astavakra said:

1. Having given up enjoyment which is the enemy, wealth which is attended with mischief and *dharma* (ethical merit) which is the cause of these two, cultivate indifference to everything.

Sanatana-dharma conceives of four values of life. They are wealth, enjoyment, ethical merit and salvation. Wealth is considered needed in this world for enjoyment of life and also for ethical activity such as charities and performance of sacrifices. As it is for the sake of enjoyment, it has an instrumental value. But enjoyment should not be chaotic or unprincipled. The principles of enjoyment are given by the ethical laws of society and religion. Enjoyment has to be canalized according to them, and such canalization brings and accumulates merit (*dharma*). The principles are the laws of duty. More merit brings more enjoyment in this life and the lives to follow. Merit is obtained through enjoyment and merit itself brings the opportunities for further enjoyment.

Ethical action is meant not merely for more and more enjoyment, but also for obtaining the highest form of happiness, that is, the spiritual bliss. It is the pathway to liberation or salvation which is emancipation from bondage to the laws of the world. It results in purifying our inward being and enables it to receive and recognize the reflection and grace of the Supreme Being.

Thus, every one of the lower values is made instrumental and subservient to the higher. It is considered that self-realization is possible through realization of the four values in the world of action. As a general rule, it is necessary for man to realize the first three values and the fourth, although the highest, is recommended.

What *Sanatana-dharma* articulates as the four values of life are for a social being for harmonious living. The seeker after realization of the self is to consider the first three values as hindering his *sadhana* as they are related to social living. Unless he gives them up, he cannot enter the state of supreme consciousness. When once he gives up the first three values, he is not of the world, though he is in the world, and is indifferent to everything.

2. Look upon friends, lands, wealth, houses, wives, presents and other such marks of good fortune as a dream or a magician's show, lasting only a few days.

The world of plurality is ephemeral in nature. All physical possessions are like dream objects, or the show of a magician that lasts a few days and no more.

3. Know that to be the world wherever there is desire. Cultivating strong dispassion, go beyond desire and be happy.

The world of names and forms is the culmination of desires. The world exists when it is perceived through the prism of desires. Desire is the supreme source of sorrow, as it is never satiated. 'The individual ego, riding in the chariot of the mind, pulled by the horses of sense-organs, wanders all over the world, driven by its charioteer, desire'. Desire-lessness is the source of extreme happiness.

4. Bondage consists only in desire; the destruction of desire is liberation. By non-attachment to the world alone does one attain the constant joy of realization of the Self.

Desire is the state of the ego which appropriates all experiences to itself. Bondage is the experience of the ego. When the ego is destroyed, desire ceases. There is no more bondage to the objects of the world. Sensuous desires alone are bondage; their renunciation is liberation. Desire-lessness leads to non-attachment to the world of objects. This is true dispassion (*vairagya*) that gives constant joy of realization of the Self.

5. You are One, Pure Intelligence. The universe is inert and unreal. Ignorance also is no real entity. What can you yet desire to know?

The essential Being is the Self. The Self is One, Pure Consciousness. The universe that is superimposed on the Self is inert and only perceived in the reflected consciousness of the Self. Even ignorance is no real entity. How can ignorance exist when the Self is Pure Consciousness and One?

Even the desire to know the universe that is unreal has to be renounced. The seeker need not desire to know what is not real. When the Self alone is real and everything else is only apparent and, therefore, unreal, there is nothing else to know but the Self.

6. Kingdoms, sons, wives, bodies and pleasures have been lost to you life after life, even though you were attached to them.

The worldly objects are ever transitory. Even when we love them dearly, we do not retain them for long. Surely we lose them, causing us suffering in the process. We repeat the same way, life after life. Attachment to the objects of the world is but hallucination.

7. Enough of wealth, enjoyment and ethical merit in the wilderness of the world; the mind did not find repose in them.

The seeker is to move beyond the first three values of life as the mind is never satisfied with their possession. He is to transcend the mind for constant joy, cultivating dispassion.

8. For how many births have you not done hard and painful work with body, mind and speech? Therefore, cease to do work at least today.

As long as we live and work in the realm of the body and the mind, we live life after life without end, the life of a beast. If we move beyond the realm of the body and the mind and enter the state of supreme consciousness, do we realize the Self and be with It. There is no more birth for the soul so realized.

11. Wisdom.

Astavakra said:

1. He who has known for certain that change in the form of existence and destruction is in the nature of things, easily finds peace being unperturbed and free from pain.

In the world of objects, everything that exists changes and is destroyed. Nothing is permanent. If the seeker realizes the ever-changing nature of things, he is no longer attached to them and, therefore, finds peace. Mental disturbance and misery are caused to one by one's attachment to transitory objects taking them to be permanent.

2. He, who has known for certain that God is the creator of all and there is none else here, becomes peaceful with all his inner desires set at rest. He is no longer attached to anything what so ever.

The universe arises, exists and dissolves in the Self in a cycle without end. Whatever exists in the universe is pervaded by the Self. There is no existence other than the Self. The Self is the Creator and the created, too. As heat is to fire, sweetness is to sugar, the created universe is to the Creator. There is none else in the universe than the Self (Creator). If the seeker abides in this knowledge, he becomes peaceful, with all his desires set at rest. He gets no longer attached to anything what so ever.

3. He who has known for certain that adversity and prosperity come in their own time through the effects of past actions, becomes ever contented and has all his senses well under control. He neither desires, nor grieves.

Every action produces an impression - *samskara* in the causal body, which sticks in it like an inherent quality. The causal body is the store-house of *samskaras*, both cosmic and individual. They are dynamic forces. They influence our life, knowledge and action herein-after and / or in the lives to follow. If the seeker is aware of this knowledge, he becomes ever contented, with his senses under control. He neither desires, nor grieves.

4. He who has known for certain that happiness and misery, birth and death are all due to the effects of past actions does no more seek anything to accomplish. He becomes free from care. He is detached, though engaged in action.

Buddhism stridently believes that the *samskaras* become constituents of one's personality by being passed on from moment to moment of its duration. The action-*samskaras* are transmitted from moment to moment of one's existence,

stay in one after one's death and become active in producing one's next birth, and so on. Every action produces *samskaras* in the individual self that cause happiness or misery in this life itself or the later ones. *Sanatana-dharma* (Hinduism), too, carries similar belief, though less stridently. If the seeker abides in this knowledge, he does not seek to accomplish anything related to the world. He becomes free from care and detached from the results of his action in the manner anticipated. He gets involved only in God-related ethical action.

5. He who has known for certain that it is anxiety and nothing else that breeds misery in this world, becomes free from it and is happy and peaceful, rid of all desires.

Anxiety is a condition of agitation of the mind. Agitation of the mind arises from desires and attachment to physical objects of the world. The more the agitation, the more is the anxiety. Anxiety breeds misery. When the mind is rid of the desires, it is quietened. It becomes calm and peaceful. Misery gives way to happiness and bliss.

6. He who has known for certain that 'I am not the body, nor is the body mine, I am Pure Intelligence' does not remember what he has done or what he has not done, as if he attained the state of the Absolute (*Kaivalya*).

Action relates to the body and the mind alone and not to the Self. He who has attained Supreme Knowledge of the Self does not identify himself with his body and mind. As such he has no consciousness of the work either done or not done by him. He is ever in the state of the Self – the Absolute.

7. He who has known for certain that 'I am indeed in everything from Brahma (creator) to a clump of grass' becomes free from conflicts of thought, pure and peaceful, and free from care for what is attained and not attained.

When the seeker realizes that he is one with the Self he has transcended his mind. As such the conflicts of thought no more affect him. He is pure and peaceful. He is in a state of *samadhi* which is 'an exclusive concentration upon the one entity, without distinct and separate consciousness of the knower, the known and knowledge, and even without Self-Consciousness'. In this state, the seeker is not even aware of what is attained or what is not attained, as this state is beyond all knowledge.

8. He who has known for certain that this manifold and wonderful universe is nothing (unreal) becomes desire-less and Pure Consciousness. He finds peace as if nothing existed.

The seeker, on realization of the Self, knows for certain that the Self is the only Reality and that the universe is unreal. He becomes one with the Self and, as such, he is Pure Consciousness. Though, while living in the body, he may

perceive the apparent existence of the universe, yet his inner peace is that of the absolute state in which as if nothing but the Self existed.

12. Abiding in the Self.

Janaka said:

1. I became intolerant first of physical action, then of extensive speech, and then of thought. Thus do I, therefore, firmly abide!

The seeker, on the path of realization, is to go beyond the realms of body, word and mind in that order. Starting with gross matter, the seeker is to discipline the subtler aspects of human consciousness. Devoid of any action related to the body and the mind, the seeker is to enter the state of supreme consciousness.

2. Having no attachment for sound and other sense objects, and the self not being an object of perception, my mind is freed from distraction and is one-pointed. Thus do I, therefore, firmly abide!

Perception is a cognition related to the world of names and forms. The Self is One, Imperceptible and Eternal. There is no knower of the Self. The Self is thus no object of perception.

Perception of senses such as hearing, seeing is related to sense organs such as ear, eye, etc. Perception of senses is related to the world of names and forms, in the realm of duality and multiplicity. One hears some particular sound. One sees some particular object, etc. When the seeker is beyond the perception of the senses, his mind is freed from distraction and is fixed on the Self.

3. An effort has to be made for *samadhi* (concentration) when there is distraction of mind owing to superimpositions, etc. Seeing this to be the rule, thus do I, therefore, firmly abide!

For a man of ignorance, thoughts of body and ego, perception of senses, etc are superimposed on his mind. Such a man needs to make an effort to concentrate his mind on the Self. The seeker who is already established in the Self needs no such effort. In this firm knowledge, does the seeker abide in the Self.

4. Finding nothing to accept or to reject, and having neither joy nor sorrow, oh! Brahman, thus do I, therefore, firmly abide.

To the seeker, the *guru* - the preceptor is the Brahman.

Acceptance or rejection and joy or sorrow arise when we identify ourselves with sense-objects and create distinctions. But the Self is One, Perfect and All-pervasive. If the seeker is established in the Self, he has nothing to accept or reject, nor does he have joy or sorrow, as he is no longer in the realm of the mind and the ego.

5. Finding that a particular stage of life or its negation, meditation or control of the mind causes distractions in me, thus verily do I firmly abide!

In *Sanatana-dharma*, man's life is divided into four stages, called *asramas*.

The first stage is that of the student. When the boy is about eight years old, he goes to his teacher's house and lives there until he finishes his studies.

The second stage is that of the householder. When the boy finishes his studies and is grown up, he is asked by his teacher to go home and pay back the three debts. The first debt is to the forefathers and is paid back by marrying and keeping the family line with male children. The second debt is to the teachers and is paid back by educating the next generation. The third debt is to the gods that maintain and govern the universe and is paid back by performing sacrifices. A sacrifice may be of butter, cooked or uncooked food and the like. These three duties are called debts, as while meeting these obligations produces no rewards, but violating them produces punishment or unhappiness.

The third stage is called the stage of the forest-dweller. After the life of the householder, one retires to the forest along with one's wife and begins to reflect on the values of life one has been able to realize. This stage is, in fact, the stage of self-reflection and self-examination.

The fourth stage is that of the renouncer of the world, or that of the ascetic. At this stage, man gives up all connections with family and all rights and duties. He renounces the world. He spends the rest of his life as a man of God. He owns no property, lives by begging and changes his name so that others do not know his family connections. He may teach spiritual truths to whosoever seek them.

Finding that any stage of life or meditation only causes distraction and does not help to realize the Self, does the seeker give up the rites and the vows related to the *asramas* and also meditation, and is firmly established in his supreme consciousness.

6. Abstention from action is as much the outcome of ignorance as the performance of action. Knowing this truth fully well, thus do I, therefore, firmly abide!

Both performance of and abstention from work, for personal gain or benefit, presupposes consciousness of the ego, and the external and the internal worlds of action and thought. The consciousness of the ego operates in the realm of duality. This is considered ignorance.

The law of action exists. Good work produces good results. Bad work produces bad results. It is not possible to give up work altogether. Even the inhaling and exhaling of air to keep oneself alive is itself work. But this law of action works differently for spiritual seekers. The work that is done in the name of God produces only good results. The seeker is to undertake only those works that present themselves to him and are of pressing necessity. He is even to undertake those works in a spirit of detachment, without craving for the results of the works done in the manner anticipated.

7. Thinking on the Unthinkable One, one only has recourse to a form of thought. Giving up that thought, thus do I, therefore, firmly abide!

The Self is beyond mind and thought. It cannot, therefore, be an object of thought. Meditating on the Self is only being in the realm of duality and, therefore, of the mind. In the early stages of *sadhana*, it may be helpful to quieten the mind for meditation on the Self. When once the mind is stilled and transcended, there can be no more meditation on the Self. Giving up all thought related to the Self, does the seeker get established in the Self.

8. Blessed is the man who has accomplished this. Blessed is he who is thus by nature.

The seeker is blessed if he is able to realize the Self by *sadhana*. He is blessed if he attains the state of the Self by Divine Will.

13. True Happiness.

Janaka said:

1. The tranquility which is born of the awareness that there is nothing else but the Self is rare even for one who wears just a lion-cloth. Therefore, giving up the ideas of renunciation and acceptance, I live in true happiness.

The awareness that there is nothing else but the Self arises to the seeker only when he is established in the Self. This is the state of tranquility - *svasthya* literally meaning the state of being established in the Self. Such awareness is extremely rare to arise, even to one who has given up everything of the world.

A renunciate knowingly gives up the world. Renunciation is no less than acceptance for the reason that both are born in the ego-sense. Both are of ignorance. If a renunciate gives up the world without knowing it to be renunciation, it is true renunciation transcending itself. The seeker established in the Self lives in true happiness as he transcends both renunciation and acceptance.

2. There is weariness of the body here, fatigue of the tongue there and distress of the mind elsewhere. Having renounced these in life's supreme goal, I live in true happiness.

The weariness of the body is due to the practice of penances. The fatigue of the tongue is due to the study of scriptures. The distress of the mind is due to meditation. The sources of weariness and restlessness for the seeker are thus physical, oral and mental. None of these struggles brings him realization of the Self. Knowing this, the seeker renounces the application of the body, speech and mind in his *sadhana* for realization. Emerging beyond the realm of the body, speech and mind, the seeker is established in the Self and lives in true happiness.

3. Realizing fully that nothing whatsoever is really done by the Self, I do whatever presents itself to be done, and so I live in true happiness.

The Self is Immutable and Undifferentiated. The Self does nothing. It is in the nature of Witness Consciousness. Whatever is done is done by the body, mind and senses accompanied by ego. The Self is beyond all of them.

The finite individual acts based on the *samskaras* (impressions) accumulated in his causal body related to his actions in his previous lives or in the past of his present life. He acts, as the *samskaras* present themselves. He is only a witness to the actions rendered by his finite self. In this realization, does the seeker live in true happiness.

4. The *yogis* who are attached to the body insist upon action or inaction. Divorced from both association and dissociation, I live in true happiness.

Action and inaction are true only for those who have consciousness of the body and the mind. Unless the seeker transcends the consciousness of the body and the mind, he cannot be established in the Self. Divorced from both association and dissociation with the body, mind, ego, senses, etc, the seeker gets established in the Self and thus lives in true happiness.

5. No good or evil accrues to me by staying, going or sleeping. So whether I stay, go or sleep, I live in true happiness.

Good and evil are the results of actions by the body and the mind in conjunction with the senses and the ego. When the ego is destroyed, renunciation results. While in renunciation, all actions are related to God as there is no ego sense for the doer. For actions so done, neither merit nor demerit attaches to the doer. No good or evil, therefore, accrues to him whatever he does. Established in that knowledge, does the seeker live in true happiness!

6. I do not lose by sleeping nor gain by striving. So giving up the thoughts of loss and elation (gain), I live in true happiness.

Being active or inactive is a state of mind. Action is only a thought expressed. Unless the seeker transcends the mind and thought, he cannot be established in the Self. Established in that knowledge, the seeker gives up all thoughts of gain or loss by action or inaction as the case maybe. He only seeks to be established in the Self to live in true happiness.

7. Observing again and again the inconstancy of happiness in different circumstances, I have renounced good and evil; I live in true happiness.

Good and evil are associated in our minds with happiness and sorrow. We seek good and avoid evil, to be happy. But it is common experience that physical happiness or pleasure is not continuous or constant in all circumstances. It is a product of circumstances. As circumstances change, so does happiness. It may arise or cease. There is no consistency or permanence about it. Established in this knowledge, the seeker renounces good and evil and is unconcerned of them. Transcending the mind, and transcending good and evil, the seeker lives in true happiness.

14. Tranquility.

Janaka said:

1. He who is empty-minded by nature, who thinks of sense objects involuntarily and who is, as it were, awake though asleep, has verily his recollections of worldly life extinguished.

The past actions of the present life and of the past lives leave the imprint of the *samskaras* on the causal body. They are in the nature of dynamic forces that will arise in the shape of events or actions at an appropriate time. For the seeker that is established in the Self, the effects of past actions have been destroyed forever. They no longer have any hold on him. All his present actions are only God-related as he is already established in the Self. There is thus no *praarabdha karma* for him, as it is exhausted. His mind is stilled and, therefore, empty as he is already beyond the realm of his mind. He has neither desires nor the impact of sense objects. While he is still in body, he is not of the world of objects and senses. As he is in body, he is casually and involuntarily conscious of the world and, therefore, of the sense objects. They have no effect or impact on him. He is like a kernel in a dried coconut shell, unattached to it.

Deep sleep is the bottom line of human consciousness. Human consciousness is in three states – waking, dream and deep sleep. A seeker established in the Self is beyond the human consciousness. He is in supreme consciousness, transcending the three states of human consciousness. He is beyond being awake or asleep.

2. When once the desires have melted away, where are my riches, where are my friends, where are the thieves in the form of sense objects, nay, where are the scriptures, and the knowledge itself?

Riches, friends, scriptures and knowledge are all of great value for one's security, comfort and satisfaction, while living as an ego in the midst of sense objects. The desires are objects of sense-enjoyment in the world. The sense-objects are like thieves as they rob one of the awareness of the Self. Scriptures and knowledge give one spiritual and secular knowledge. When the desires disappear, the riches and friends have no relevance to one, as one is beyond the ego-sense. The knowledge of scriptures is only theoretical and is of no relevance to one as one has direct experience of the Self. The secular knowledge is totally irrelevant as one is not of the world, though lives in the world.

3. As I have realized the Supreme Self who is the Witness and the Lord, I have become indifferent both to bondage and liberation and I feel no anxiety for my emancipation.

The Self is Undifferentiated. It is the Witness Consciousness of the universe, the Becoming of the Self. The Witness Consciousness witnesses that It is knowing, cognizing and experiencing the world of names and forms. The Becoming of the Self - the relative world - cannot be becoming without the Witness Consciousness of the Self running through the different instants and moments of Becoming. The self-conscious beings are aware of the process of becoming so far as they are concerned.

The Self is the One Enlivening Presence which orders, governs and regulates all activities of the Becoming of the Self – the universe. As such, the Self is the Lord of the universe.

When the seeker realizes that he is no other than the Self, he has transcended the consciousness of his body and mind and is in the supreme consciousness of the Self. He is no longer affected by bondage or liberation that fetters the mind and the body. There is no need of emancipation for him as he is beyond bondage or liberation.

4. The different conditions of one, who is devoid of thoughts within but moves about out-worldly at one's own pleasure like a deluded person, can only be understood by those like one.

The seeker established in the knowledge of the Self possesses the whole and complete truth. He is beyond the realm of his mind and intellect. He is, therefore, free of doubts and thoughts. His mind transcended has dissolved into the Knowledge of the Self.

Such seeker is not bound by man-made laws for regulation of social and physical conduct of ordinary social beings. He moves about in ecstatic bliss, at his own pleasure, though it may appear to ordinary people that he behaves like a mad man. The ways of a realized seeker can be understood only by another equally realized. Ordinary people of the society have no clue to understanding the realization of such seekers.

15. Knowledge of the Self.

Astavakra said:

1. A man of pure intellect realizes the Self by instruction in whatever manner imparted. A man of impure intellect is confused in trying to realize the Self, even after enquiring throughout his life.

A seeker is of pure intelligence when his intellect is freed of darkness (*tamas*) and passion (*rajas*) and is full of light (*sattva*), and is endowed with the four qualifications of an aspirant namely discrimination between the eternal and the non-eternal, detachment from all selfish pursuits - worldly and other-worldly, cultivation of the virtues such as tranquility, restraint, renunciation, endurance, meditation, faith, and the desire for liberation. Such a seeker is already prepared by the Divine for realization of the Self. He realizes the Self in whatever manner he is imparted instruction by his *guru*. The *guru* is only an instrument to him for realization.

On the other hand, one who does not have pure intelligence will never be able to realize the Self in spite of his having been learned in the scriptures, and having enquired all his life.

2. Distaste for sense objects is liberation. Passion for sense objects is bondage. Such indeed is Knowledge. Now you do as you please.

The *guru* explains the essential nature of liberation and of bondage, the secret of all wisdom, and leaves to the seeker to reflect it over and choose the course he intends to adopt.

3. This knowledge of the Truth makes an eloquent, wise and active person mute, inert and inactive. Therefore, it is shunned by those who want to enjoy the world.

A person may be eloquent, wise and active in the world of names and forms, and of action. The accomplishments are physical and related to the body and mind. When the seeker is able to realize the Self in supreme consciousness, he has already transcended human consciousness and has been beyond the realm of the world of action. Necessarily he becomes mute, inert and inactive. In this state of supreme consciousness, there is no place for worldly or sensual enjoyment. One who looks for worldly enjoyment naturally shuns entering the state of supreme consciousness.

4. You are not the body, nor is the body yours. You are not the doer or the enjoyer. You are Consciousness Itself, the Eternal Witness and free. You go about happily.

The seeker is one with the Self, established in the knowledge of the Self. The Self is One, Immutable, Eternal, Formless, Pure and Witness Consciousness. So is the seeker in his supreme consciousness, wholly identified with the Self.

5. Attachments and aversions are qualities of the mind. The mind is never yours. You are Intelligence Itself, free from conflict and without change. You go about happily.

The mind is a stream of thoughts passing over consciousness. The mind causes all thoughts to arise. Apart from thoughts, there is no such thing as mind. One, ordinarily, has no control over one's thoughts. Attachment or aversion, selfish love or hate, etc arise in the mind by way of thoughts. As long as such thoughts arise, one loses awareness of one's true nature which is no other than identity with the Self. As opposed to selfish love, universal love arises out of true awareness. This is free from conflict and without change, and leads to realization of the Self - True Intelligence.

6. Realizing the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self, being free from 'I-ness' and 'mine-ness', may you be happy!

Our consciousness of our limitations and of our separateness from all other beings and things is due to our identification with the mind which has created various forms, in conjunction with time, space and causation. Besides, the mind and the senses work in unison with the ego. If the ego is not present, the mind does not think, nor do the senses perceive. Ego is the sense of the 'I' in experiences such as 'This is mine'. The 'I-ness' and the 'mine-ness' are thus the twin expressions of the ego.

If the seeker goes beyond the realm of the mind and the ego, the world of names and forms, and the 'I-ness' and the 'mine-ness' dissolve into the Self. The Self alone remains, which includes the seeker as well as the universe.

7. Oh! You, Pure Intelligence! You are indeed That in which the universe manifests itself like waves on the ocean. Be you free from the fever of the mind.

The objects of the world, on their own, do not bring any agitation to the mind. It is the desire within the mind to possess and enjoy the objects of the senses that causes agitation and fever of the mind. The world of objects is like waves on the ocean of the Self. The seeker is no other than the Self pervading the world of objects which are but transitory. To seek to possess and enjoy the objects of the world for gratification of the senses is not befitting the seeker. The *guru* advises the seeker to be free from the agitation and fever of the mind for possession and enjoyment of transitory objects of the world which are like waves on the ocean.

8. Have faith, my son, have faith. Have no delusion about this. You are Knowledge Itself. You are the Lord. You are the Self. You are beyond Nature.

The core and spiritual heart of all the higher religions is *Faith* as trust. This is in the nature of confidence as the beginning of love-knowledge in relation to the Self. There must be faith in the authority of those whose selflessness and divinity has qualified them to know the Self - the spiritual ground of all being by direct perception as well as by report. There must also be faith in such propositions about Reality as are enunciated by seers and sages in the light of genuine revelation. The propositions are such that the believer knows that he can verify them for himself, if only he fulfills the necessary conditions.

The *guru* impresses on the seeker to have firm faith in his being the Knowledge Itself, the Lord, the Self and his being beyond the nature.

9. The body composed of the constituents of the Nature comes, stays and goes. The Self neither comes nor goes. Why, then, do you mourn it?

Prakrti (Nature) is the world of change in its un-manifest state. It is the source, the origin of everything therein.

Prakrti has three attributes - *sattva* (serenity), *rajas* (activity) and *tamas* (inertia). Everything in the world is the product of these three attributes. *Prakrti* cannot be an object of perception. It is too subtle to be so. It can only be inferred from its effects. The inner-sense, the outer-senses and all the objects are its effects.

The physical body of the seeker composed of the constituents of *Prakrti* is like any other object of the relative world. It comes, stays and goes. The Self is totally distinct from the body in that it does not partake of *Prakrti*. *Prakrti* itself is an evolute of the Self. While the body is transient and mutable, the Self is Eternal and Immutable.

10. Let the body last till the end of the *Kalpa* (cycle of creation) or let it go even today. Where is any increase or decrease in you who are Pure Intelligence?

The body is to the Self as a wave is to the ocean. The existence in or exit of the body from the world does neither add to nor subtract from the Self which is eternal.

11. In you who are the infinite ocean let the waves of the universe rise or fall according to their own nature. That is no gain or loss to you.

The Self is Infinite and Eternal. The universe arises, exists and dissolves in the Self according to its own nature in a cycle without end. It is like waves in the ocean that rise and fall according to their own nature. The rise and dissolution of

the universe in the Self neither adds to nor subtracts from the infinitude of the Self.

12. My child! You are the Pure Intelligence Itself. This universe is nothing different from you. Therefore, how and where can anyone have the idea of acceptance or rejection?

When the seeker tries to grasp the reality of the universe, he finds it to be his own self - the Self. The Self is One and the universe is no different from the Self. It is the Pure Intelligence, the Cosmic Mind or the Consciousness.

The ideas of acceptance of something as real and rejection of some other thing as unreal or false are functions of the mind. When the seeker is beyond his mind, in the state of Pure Intelligence, there is no acceptance or rejection of anything as real or unreal. He alone is the Reality. There is nothing beyond him.

13. From where will there be birth, activity and even the ego-sense in You who are the One, Immutable, Serene, Stainless and Pure Consciousness?

The Self is without birth, activity and ego-sense. The One which is self-existent and immutable cannot be born. Activity implies change and the desire for possession or enjoyment. But the Self which is One, Calm, Perfect and Self-contained has nothing outside It to strive for. The ego-sense seeks to appropriate all experiences to it as different from others or neutral. It pre-supposes duality or multiplicity which manifests the manifold world. It is all in the realm of the body-mind consciousness and, therefore, an illusion. From egoism to the universe, the relative world is only a superimposition or evolute of the Self as waves in the ocean, and is unreal.

The Sanskrit word used in the verse (*sloka*) referring to the 'space which is Consciousness' (Self) is *chidakasa*. *Cit* (consciousness) is conceived as *akasa* (space) as it is all-pervasive and unaffected. Further, perception requires the existence of *akasa* as an essential factor. *Akasa* is conceived in different ways. One is *mahakasa*, the great space which is the physical space in which we perceive external objects. Apperception is the source of time and space and is, therefore, both time and space. Physical space is a concretization of the apperceptive space. The process of concretization works through directedness into the space of sense objects. Second is *chittakasa*, the mental or the psychological space in which the objects of imagination or dreams exist. Third is logical and mathematical space in which logical and mathematical realities exist. Fourth is *chidakasa*, the space of Pure Intelligence or Supreme Consciousness, the space in which the Self exists, perceives Itself. Here space is not different from the perceiver and the perceived, as in the other levels of space. For, the Self is One; there is neither subject, nor object. The space here is identical with the Self. If the

Self is regarded as space (*akasa*) for the reason that all things are located in it, then the space has to be infinite and above time.

14. You alone appear as whatever you perceive. Do bracelets, armlets and anklets exist different from gold?

Shankara says, 'If you do not have a consciousness, then everything is dark and nothing in the universe exists.' This corresponds to the view of the modern quantum mechanics that unless you can observe a thing, it just does not exist. This is for the reason that there must be an interaction between the observer and the observed to complete a measurement. It is consciousness that determines the existence of the material world through cognition. The material world is sourced in and a superimposition on the Self. It is in the nature of a reflection of the Self, apparent when perceived in directed human consciousness. The material world is to the Self as bracelets, armlets and anklets are to gold.

15. Totally give up all such distinctions as 'I am He' and 'I am not this'. Consider all as the Self, and be desire-less and happy.

The seeker is to give up all distinctions among his finite self, the universe and the Supreme Self. Even the view 'I am He' presupposes the difference in identity between I and He. The view 'I am not this' is conclusive of the difference between I and an object of the universe or the universe itself. If the seeker realizes that the Self is All and One, there is no scope for any views based on intellect, and, therefore, in the realm of duality. The realization that the Self is All and One is the state of supreme consciousness in which the seeker is beyond desire and in ecstatic bliss.

16. It is through your ignorance alone where the universe appears to exist. In reality you are One. There is no individual self or the Supreme Self other than you.

As long as the mind and the ego function, the finite ego perceives the relative world, the universe. The ego conceives of the finite self as distinct from the Supreme Self. The ego like the mind is a category of the world of names and forms. It is, therefore, as unreal as the relative world. As the ego-sense is the offshoot of ignorance, the perception of the universe by the ego-sense and the mind is only through ignorance. It is wisdom to realize that the Self is All and One. In reality, the finite individual is not different from the Self and is the Self alone. There is absolute identity between the Supreme Self and the finite self.

17. One who knows for certain that this universe is but an illusion and is nothing becomes desire-less and Pure Intelligence, and finds peace as if nothing else existed.

When the seeker realizes that the universe is only an illusion and nothing, he does not desire anything of it. Wisdom coupled with detachment to the objects of the world brings him perfect peace and serenity.

18. In the ocean of the world, Only One was, is and will be. You have neither bondage nor liberation. Live contented and happily!

The Self is Only One, and without the second. It is, therefore, beyond bondage and liberation. The seeker is one with the Self. He is, therefore, to live in ecstatic bliss, ever contented as he has nothing to desire.

19. Oh! Pure Intelligence! Do not disturb your mind with affirmations and negations. Be calm and abide happily in your own Self which is Bliss Absolute.

Realization of the Self is the experience of the Self and not its knowledge. Attaining knowledge involves discrimination, reason and logic. This is within the realm of the mind and the intellect. Realization is the experience of supreme consciousness, beyond the states of human consciousness. This needs no reasoning or logic. It is beyond affirmations and negations. The seeker, established in the Self, enjoys ecstatic bliss.

20. Completely give up even contemplation and hold nothing in your mind. You are verily the Self, ever free. What will you do by meditation?

Contemplation presupposes duality of consciousness, born of ignorance. Duality is the antithesis of the Self as the Self is One and Immutable. The realized seeker is ever in the Supreme Consciousness of the Self, with his mind transcended. When he is in this state of consciousness, what does he meditate upon? As he is no different from the Self, there is neither subject nor object for meditation.

16. Special Instructions.

Astavakra said:

1. My child! You may often speak on various scriptures or hear them. But you cannot be established in the Self unless you forget all.

The scriptures say that the 'Self is not to be realized by the power of the speech, by a vast intellect or by the study of the *Vedas*'. It is a matter of actual experience, not of intellectual knowledge. The Self is attained by the seeker who chooses It alone; to him the Self reveals Its true nature. It is said in *Panchadasi*: 'An intelligent student, after studying the text and after reflecting upon its ideas, again and again, must throw away all texts as the seeker of the grains throws away the husk'. It means that the seeker accepts and lives the spirit of the text and forgets the letter of the text. Only then can the seeker be established in the Self, beyond the consciousness of his body and mind.

2. Oh wise-one! You may enjoy the world, undertake work and practise *samadhi* (concentration). But your mind will still yearn for your own true nature which is beyond all objects and in which all desires are extinguished.

The body works, the mind and the senses enjoy, and the intellect contemplates and seeks to concentrate. In spite of all these, the mind is still not satisfied. There is an urge within the inner mind (soul - self) to know the true nature of the self which alone gives ever-lasting bliss, beyond all sense-objects and all desires.

3. All are unhappy because they exert themselves. But no one knows this. The blessed one attains emancipation through this instruction alone.

Any exertion presupposes the desire to attain things not possessed at present. Desire either satisfied or unsatisfied is the cause of misery. The desire satisfied at first produces satiety and later more desires. The cycle repeats. The desire unsatisfied leaves either bitterness or creates urge for fulfillment. Either way, the resulting unhappiness is evident. But no one is aware that the efforts made to fulfill desires are the cause of misery. With no such awareness, ordinary mortals continue to make efforts for fulfillment of desires, with misery ever on increase.

If the seeker carries out this instruction, it is enough for him to attain emancipation in life. If he eradicates all desires inwardly, he does not engage himself in work seeking personal gain. He attains Knowledge of the Self and is liberated.

4. Happiness belongs to that master-idler who feels affliction even for closing or opening of his eye-lids, and to none else.

Thought expressed is action. Thought is the function of mind. The seeker who is engaged in no action is free in mind, with no thought. He is in a state of consciousness beyond the realm of his mind. As his mind is transcended, there is no scope for anxiety or misery. He is ever in ecstatic bliss.

5. When the mind is free from such pairs of opposites as ‘this is to be done’ and ‘this is not to be done’, it becomes indifferent to the four values of life - ethical merit, wealth, enjoyment and salvation.

The pairs of opposites are the source of activity in the relative world. They are such as pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, good and evil, etc. They are the two opposite poles for an act that causes experience.

When the mind itself is transcended, the impulse for action is transcended, and so the pairs of opposites. In this state, the mind is indifferent to the values of life which are for harmonious social living in the temporal plane.

6. He who abhors sense-objects becomes non-attached and who covets them becomes attached to them. But he who does not accept or reject is neither unattached nor attached.

If the seeker is non-attached to sense-objects because he abhors them, or is attached to sense-objects as he covets them, he is very much in the temporal plane, subject to sense-impulses. He is not established in the Self. If he is established in the Self, he will not have any thought of either accepting or rejecting sense-objects as he is beyond the realm of mind and senses, and is unaffected by attachment or non-attachment.

7. As long as desire, the seat of non-discrimination, exists there will indeed be the sense of acceptance and aversion – the branch and the sprout of the tree of *samsara*.

Desires are the spring-board of non-discrimination, as they cloud discrimination in their urge for fulfillment. They give scope for acceptance or aversion, as they seek fulfillment. Desires are like the sprout and the trunk of the tree of *samsara* - the phenomenal life in the temporal world. The sprout and the trunk of the tree make the tree grow more and more. Desires, fulfilled or unfulfilled, lead to more and more desires. The actions arising from the desires add more and more complex *samskaras* to the causal body, that cause life after life without end bringing misery in its train.

8. Activity begets attachment. Abstention from it generates aversion. The wise man is free from the pairs of opposites like a child, and is well-established in the Self.

Activity springing from desire begets attachment to worldly objects. Attachment, in its turn, leads to more and more activity, and creates more and

more bondage. Similarly, aversion for sense-objects begets abstention from activity. It may, in turn, develop dislike for them. Thus, both these attitudes frustrate the purpose of either activity or abstention from activity, which they are intended to serve. The wise man is, therefore, indifferent to both activity and inactivity and their concomitant attitudes - attachment and aversion.

When the man of wisdom is indifferent both to activity and inactivity, he is free from the pairs of opposites as they are the source of activity or inactivity. He is child-like. A child is playful every moment, without attachment or aversion. He is not affected by memory of the past or anticipation of the future and is ever-blissful. This is the highest spiritual state.

9. One who is attached to the world wants to renounce it in order to avoid sorrow. But one without attachment is free from sorrow and does not feel miserable even being in the world.

An ordinary person thinks that the cause of his sorrow is in the world. The world is inert, and it appears to the finite person as it is viewed. One is to realize that it is not the world, but attachment to it is the root of all misery. Free from attachment, one can live as happily in the midst of the world as anywhere else.

10. He who has an ego-sense even towards liberation and who considers even his body as his own is neither a *jnani* nor a *yogi*. He suffers misery.

‘One who claims to know everything knows nothing; one who claims to know nothing knows everything’ is a famous adage. If one claims to have been liberated, one’s ego-sense is evident and one is very much in the realm of duality with an awareness of one’s finite self. Similarly, if one claims one’s body as one’s own, one is within the realm of one’s body-consciousness and, therefore, duality. One cannot be a *jnani* or *yogi* unless one transcends duality and enters the supreme consciousness beyond the three states of human consciousness.

11. Let even Hara, Hari or even the lotus-born Brahma be your instructor. But, unless you forget all, you cannot be established in the Self.

Even if the *guru* - the preceptor is the most learned and efficacious, still he is of no help to get the Knowledge of the Self to the seeker that enables him to get established in the Self, unless the seeker transcends the realm of the mind and the intellect. When he transcends the mind and the intellect, his mind is stilled and he forgets all. Only then is he in a state of supreme consciousness and gets established in the Self.

17. The True Knower.

Astavakra said:

1. He who is contented and purified in his senses, and ever revels in his 'Aloneness', has gained the fruit of knowledge as well as the fruit of practice of *yoga*.

A seeker is contented when he knows that he is the Self and, therefore, wants nothing. He is purified in the senses as he is not attached to any object. Such a seeker sees himself as the Self and nothing else exists for him. He, therefore, revels in his 'Aloneness'. This is the state of supreme consciousness of the seeker. It is the fruit of his knowledge as well as the practice of *yoga*.

2. Oh! The knower of Truth knows no misery in this world, for the whole universe is filled by him alone.

The supreme Truth is that the Self is One, Immutable, Undifferentiated, Eternal and All-pervading. The seeker is the Self himself. The sense of misery arises only when duality is perceived. For the seeker that has perceived the Truth, he is the Self which includes the universe. In the absence of duality, there is no perception of misery anywhere.

3. As the leaves of the neem tree do not please an elephant that delights in *sallaki* leaves, no sense objects ever please one who delights in the Self.

The sense-objects cause temporary pleasure in the temporal plane. The seeker who ever experiences ecstatic bliss in the Self never cares to enjoy temporal sensual pleasure.

4. Rare in the world is he on whom impressions are not left of things which he has experienced, or who does not desire things which he has not yet experienced.

Every action produces an impression, a kind of an imprint, in the causal body, which sticks in it like an inherent quality. It bursts into activity when the occasion arises. Thus the causal body of the finite individual is the store-house of impressions which are dynamic forces that burst into activity later in life or in the lives to follow. This is what is termed *praarabdha karma* which manifests in the activity of the present. But if the seeker acts ethically and with detachment, the impressions resulting from his actions will only pave the way for realization of the Self. Rare is such a seeker who does not act for sensual experience.

The urge to desire things not yet experienced is the desire of the senses. This desire stems from the mind and the ego-sense, and relates to the world of

objects. A seeker is to transcend the world of objects, and the plane of mind and senses to realize the Truth.

5. Those who desire worldly enjoyment and those who desire liberation are both found in this world. But rare indeed is the great-souled one who is desirous of neither enjoyment nor liberation.

Even the desire for liberation is desire rooted in the mind. The seeker desiring liberation is still in the plane of duality. This desire implies the consciousness of being in bondage. Absolute Knowledge of the Truth transcends the desire of both enjoyment and liberation.

6. Rare is the broad-minded person who has neither attraction for, nor aversion to ethical merit, wealth, enjoyment and salvation, as well as life and death.

The values of life such as ethical merit, wealth, enjoyment, salvation, or life and death are all related to social living and the states of human consciousness. A seeker established in the Self is ever in the supreme consciousness, beyond the states of human consciousness. He is neither attracted to, nor averred from such values or states of human consciousness.

7. The man of Knowledge does not feel any desire for the dissolution of the universe or aversion to its existence. He, the blessed one, therefore, lives happily on whatever subsistence comes his way unsolicited.

The man of Knowledge perceives the universe as no other than the Self. The Self is One and Immutable. He is one with the Self himself. There is no difference in his consciousness among the Self, the universe and himself. He has, therefore, neither desire for dissolution of the universe or aversion to its existence. He is beyond the consciousness of his body and mind. He accepts whatever subsistence comes his way unsolicited, as his body continues to live. He does not live to eat, nor does he eat to live. He lives and he eats; he eats and he lives.

8. Being fulfilled by the Knowledge of the Self and with his mind contented and absorbed, the wise man lives happily seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and eating.

The seeker, established in the Self, is beyond the consciousness of his mind. His mind is stilled and contented. It is absorbed, that is, immersed in the glory of the Self and the resultant ecstatic bliss. Outwardly, his sense-organs namely eye, ear, nose, taste buds in the tongue and skin continue to function with their corresponding powers of sense perception such as seeing, hearing, smelling, eating (tasting) and feeling by touch. These sense perceptions continue in the seeker as he lives in the world, though he is not of the world. He is unaffected by

them. He is like a dried kernel in a coconut shell. He is ever happy and in ecstatic bliss.

9. There is no attachment or aversion in one for whom the ocean of the world has dried up. His look is vacant, his actions purposeless and his senses inoperative.

The ocean of the world is the cycle of birth-death-rebirth syndrome, without end. He who falls into an ocean is tossed about hither and thither by the waves and the currents of the ocean. He finds it very hard to reach the shore. He suffers in the process. Similarly, in *samsara*, in the cycle of birth and death, desires and sensual actions toss us about hither and thither. We suffer in the process and cannot attain the goal of Self Knowledge. A seeker is able to overcome the *samsara* only if he has no attachment to or aversion from any objects of the world. This arises when he realizes the Self and is free from ignorance and the resultant desires, and *karma*.

Such a seeker looks vacant as he has no motives or desires within. His actions are without purpose as he has no ends in view. His senses are inoperative as he has transcended them.

10. The wise man neither keeps awake nor sleeps. He neither opens nor closes his eyes. Oh! The liberated soul anywhere enjoys the supreme consciousness.

The wise man is not considered awake as he is not alive to the world of perceptions. He is neither awake to the world of sensuality. In other words, he is dead to the relative world. He is not considered asleep either; he is ever-conscious of the Self all-pervading.

Winking the eyelids is the physical expression of the state of mind and intellect of a person. Animals do not wink. Only an intelligent and thinking man winks. A liberated soul is beyond the consciousness of his body and mind. He does not, therefore, wink his eyelids. He is in a state of supreme consciousness.

11. The liberated one is always found abiding in the Self; he is pure in heart. Freed from all *vasanas* (impressions), he revels at all times and in all conditions.

The liberated one is beyond all passion and desire. Nor is he affected by the *vasanas* (*samskaras* – impressions) of the past actions of this life or the past lives as he has outlived the *praarabdha karma* and transcended ignorance (*avidya*). He is totally pure in heart in that the world of objects is no more attached to him. Established in the Self, he revels in all conditions at all times.

12. Seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, accepting, speaking and walking, the great-souled one is emancipated free of all attachments and aversions.

A great-souled one acts, while living, as he is in the world, though not of the world. True knowledge lies not in cessation of work, but in the absence of attachment. The liberated one has neither attachment to nor aversion from any work he does. Whatever he does, he does it for God, with no sense of doer-ship or enjoyer-ship. He is, therefore, ever free and emancipated.

13. The liberated one neither slanders nor praises. He neither rejoices nor is he angry. He neither gives nor takes. He is free from attachment to all objects.

The intellect slanders or praises. The mind rejoices or is angry. The body gives or takes. The liberated one has no attachment to or aversion from any of these activities.

14. The great-souled one is not perturbed, and remains self-poised at the sight of a woman full of passion as well as the approach of death. He is, indeed, liberated.

The liberated one is an epitome of equanimity. He is not disturbed by the prospect of any terrible experience. He remains self-poised and unaffected in the event of very pleasant experience, too.

15. The wise man that sees the same everywhere sees no difference between happiness and misery, man and woman, and prosperity and adversity.

The wise man, ever established in the Self, makes no distinction or sees no difference under all conditions, among all beings and in all circumstances. He always remains one of serene tranquility.

16. In the man whose worldly life is exhausted, there is neither compassion nor violence, neither humility nor pride, and neither wonder nor agitation.

The exhaustion of worldly life is that the seeker is no longer bound by the cycle of birth-death-rebirth syndrome, the *samsara*, because of realization of the Self. This is the state of supreme consciousness transcending the states of human consciousness. As he has already transcended human consciousness, he is beyond the limitations of human nature such as compassion or violence, humility or pride, wonder or agitation, etc.

17. The liberated one neither abhors the objects of the senses, nor craves for them. Ever with a detached mind, he accepts them as they come his way.

Both abhorrence and craving are due to attachment. A liberated person is free from attachment and, therefore, is beyond abhorrence or craving for objects. He accepts them as they come his way with no sense of acceptance or rejection.

18. The wise man of vacant mind does not know the conflict of contemplation and non-contemplation, and of good and evil. He abides, as it were, in the state of Absoluteness.

The mind of the wise man is unattached to the world. No desire arises therein. It is stilled to duality. It is filled with the consciousness of the Self alone. As such there is no scope for any conflict of contemplation and non-contemplation, or good and evil to arise in his mind. Such pairs of opposites relate to the consciousness of relative life. He is beyond such consciousness.

19. Devoid of the feelings of 'I' and 'mine', knowing for certain that nothing is, and with all his inner desires set at rest, the wise man does not act, though he may appear to be acting.

The ego functions in two ways. First is the ego-sense, experienced in the 'I'-ness. Second is the ego-feeling experienced or appropriated as 'mine'. The ego is sourced in the desires of the senses. When the liberated man has transcended his egoism, he is beyond the realm of the desires related to the senses, the ego-sense and the ego-feeling. As he does not desire anything, there is no motive for action. He does not, therefore, act. But as long as he lives in the world, by nature he may indulge in some acts, though with no ego-sense. He may, therefore, appear to be acting, though, in effect, it is no action.

20. The sage whose mind is stilled, having ceased to be functional, and who is free from delusion, dreaming and dullness, attains an incredible state.

The sage – the man of Self-Knowledge – has his mind purged of delusion, dreaming, inertia, etc. His mind is stilled and non-operational. It dissolves into his self. When his self realizes the Supreme Self, he attains a state, beyond description in words.

18. Peace.

Astavakra said:

1. Salutation to That which is the embodiment of Bliss, Serenity and Effulgence, with the dawning of the knowledge of which all delusions disappear like a dream.

That - the Self - is Bliss, Serenity and Effulgence. It is serene in that It never changes. It is self-effulgent. Nothing else can perceive It. It is Unknowable, and yet It is known to Itself by Itself.

With the knowledge of the Self, the world, which otherwise is cognized real in ignorance, changes its nature and appears unreal as a dream. When once it is cognized unreal, it loses all charm and allurements. The delusions arising from it disappear on such cognition, as dreams disappear when a person wakes up from sleep.

2. One gets plenty of enjoyment by acquiring objects of the senses abundantly. Surely, one cannot be happy without renouncing them all.

Most men seem to identify the good or happiness with pleasure or enjoyment. That is the reason why they love the life of enjoyment. The type of life they live is pleasurable. The mass of mankind is quite slavish in its tastes, preferring a life of physical pleasure.

The mind, a certain definite mind, distinguished by certain definite marks from all others, has at a given moment a certain definite feeling called pleasure. 'Pleased' means nothing but having pleasure. It does mean having the sensation of pleasure. It may be that we may be more pleased or less pleased; we may have one or another kind of pleasure. But what we have is one definite thing, absolutely indefinable, some one thing that is the same in all the various degrees and in all the various kinds of it that there may be.

Some men have an ideal of life - a notion of perfect happiness, which is never attained in real life. This ideal of perfect happiness is not something fragmented or discontinuous, but is brought before the mind as a unity. Happiness, thus, is something final, self-sufficient and the end of action.

Happiness is an activity of the self (soul) in accordance with perfect virtue. If we consider the nature of human virtue, it enables us to see the nature of happiness. By human virtue is meant not that of the body, but of the self. Happiness then is an activity of the self.

Therefore, happiness or felicity consists substantially and principally in an act of the intellect, a feeling of the self (soul) rather than in an act of the will. It is

evident that it is impossible for human felicity to consist in bodily pleasures, the chief of which are those of food and sex. Thus happiness or felicity is beyond bodily pleasures. It may indeed be rooted in their renunciation.

3. How can one, whose heart has been scorched by the heat of the sun of sorrow arising from duty, enjoy happiness without the continuous shower of the ambrosia of tranquility?

Relations universally measure duties. One is to maintain one's own position towards others. One need not examine what the other is doing. What one must do is that one does '*will*' conformable to nature. Another will not damage one unless one chooses. One will be damaged when one thinks that one is damaged. In this way one will discover one's duty from the relation of a neighbor, a member of the family, a member of the society, etc.

Duty is the morbid attachment of body to body and the things of the relative world. Only those who live in the world and of the world consider that they have things to do and duties to fulfill. It binds us to the relative life, subjecting us to the miseries of the world. Duty, thus, arises from ignorance. This scorches our innermost self.

When the mind of the seeker is withdrawn from its attachment to other finite individuals and the objects of the relative world, the sense of duty is also withdrawn. The feeling arises that the world is ephemeral and there is nothing to do in or with it. Then arises in the mind tranquility, which is true happiness.

4. This universe is but a mode of thinking. In reality it is nothing. The Existent (Self) and the non-existent (universe) do not lose their inherent nature.

The universe is only the projection of the mind. As is cognized, so does it exist. The moment the cognition changes, the content of the universe changes, too. The universe has no existence independent of the Self.

The nature of the Self and that of the universe is distinct and separate. The Self is Eternal, Permanent, Changeless and Infinite. The universe is non-eternal, impermanent, ever-changing and finite. The Self alone is real. The world of plurality is ever unreal. The Self is Existent and the universe is non-existent.

5. The Self which is Absolute, Effortless, Immutable and Stainless is neither far away nor limited. It is ever attained.

The Self is One without a second. It has nothing to exert for. It is ever calm and Serene. It is Stainless as It is beyond all attributes. As It is All-pervasive and One, It is neither far nor near. It is without limit. It is ever attained as It is no different from us. It is our very nature. It cannot be attained from elsewhere, ever

attained within. It is said in *Mundaka-Upanishad*: 'Farther than the farthest, It is here within the body. The sages realize It verily in this life as fixed in the heart'.

6. As soon as their vision is unveiled, their illusion ceases and the Self is realized. Such persons live with their sorrows dispelled.

What exists is the Self. What veils the Self is *Maya* - ignorance, *avidya*. When once the veil is withdrawn, the illusion or the ignorance vanishes. The Self reveals Itself. The sages realizing the Self ever live with their sorrows totally dispelled.

7. Knowing all as mere imagination and the Self as free and eternal, the wise man acts like a child.

What exists in the plane of mind is imagination. What exists beyond mind is the Self. The realized seeker, established in the Self, is no more than a child unattached to the relative world, and ever in ecstatic bliss.

8. Knowing for certain that one's self is the Brahman (Self) and that existence and non-existence are figments of imagination, what does one, free from desire, know, say or do?

There are said to be four levels of being covering the world of action. They are the insignificant being, the apparent being, the pragmatic being and the Supreme or the Ultimate Being. Self-contradictory objects like the son of a barren woman are considered insignificant beings as they do not exist at all. The objects of dreams and illusions unrelated to the world of action through causal laws are considered apparent beings. The objects of the real world have observability and perceivability. They are meant for action and meet the conditions of action. They are, therefore, called pragmatic beings. The being of the whole world as such is the Supreme or the Ultimate Being. The difference among the four levels of being is not merely epistemological, but ontological.

The significance of this classification into four levels of being is that each higher level transcends the lower. This transcending is not by abstraction, but by assimilation and absorption. The Brahman or the Supreme Being is described as swallower, devourer (*atta*) of the world. As the Brahman creates and maintains it, He destroys it, too. Where does it go when it is destroyed? It is absorbed and assimilated into the Brahman. Similarly, the being of the objects of my imagination is the being of my mind into which the objects disappear. The being of the objects of my dream is the being of my empirical, waking self into which the dreams disappear.

Relative existence and absolute non-existence are only projections of mind. They are cognized as such, or figments of imagination. Relative existence is pragmatic. Relatively existent objects disappear from cognition with the knowledge of the Absolute Reality. On the other hand, absolute non-existence is

only imaginary. Absolutely non-existent objects such as a child of a barren woman do not have even apparent existence. However, both relative existence and absolute non-existence have their basis in the Absolute Existence – the Brahman.

When the seeker realizes that he is no other than the Brahman – the Supreme Being, he is fulfilled and beyond desire. He is in the state of supreme consciousness. He does not know, say or do anything related to the relative world.

9. Such thoughts as ‘I am That’ and ‘I am not this’ are extinguished for the *yogi* who has become silent by knowing for certain that everything is the Self only.

With the dawn of the knowledge of the Self, the Self is revealed as all, and nothing but the Self. There is no duality. The *yogi* realizes that he is no other than the Self and nothing else.

10. The *yogi* who has attained tranquility has no more distractions, no concentration, no increase in knowledge and no ignorance. He has neither pleasure nor pain.

The liberated *yogi* has transcended the realm of his mind and intellect. As the mind is stilled, it has no more activity, along with his senses. He is in tranquility, in perfect poise.

11. Whether in heaven or in beggary, in gain or in loss, in society or in solitude, there is no difference to the *yogi* who is unconditioned.

To feel differently in different conditions such as prosperity or destitution, gain or loss, living in a society or in solitude is possible only for one whose mind is conditioned, bound and limited by relative consciousness. When one has transcended that state, difference in conditions of living makes no difference to one. One is not affected by the physical conditions of subsistence.

12. Where is *dharma* (ethical merit), *artha* (prosperity) and *kama* (enjoyment)? And where is discrimination for the *yogi* who has transcended such dual notions as ‘this is to be done’ and ‘this is not to be done’?

The dual notions such as ‘this is to be done’ and ‘this is not to be done’ are typical of the pairs of opposites springing from relative consciousness, ignorance and desire. Finite individuals are under the active impulse of desires, securing some and still seeking others. Desire is at the root of the three primary values of life – prosperity, enjoyment and ethical merit. The need for discrimination also arises as we are bound by ignorance and desire. If we transcend ignorance and desire, the need to discriminate the real from the unreal no longer exists, as the

unreal does not exist for us. When the seeker is free from the pairs of opposites, he has no use for the values of life including discrimination.

13. The *yogi* who is liberated in his present life has neither any duty nor any attachment at heart. His actions pertain to his present life only being merely the effects of his past *karma*.

The liberated *yogi* is one whose ignorance has completely been eradicated and who, rid of all bondage, abides in the Absolute Self. Shankara explains the state of the liberated *yogi* thus: 'The knower of the Self is indeed he, and no other, who does not see in the waking state, being as if he were asleep; who, being One without a second, does not perceive duality, even though he may see objects; and who is inactive even though he may perform actions'. As the *yogi* has attained liberation, he is beyond the dual notions of 'I' and 'mine' and along with them attachment and sense of duty.

So long as the liberated *yogi* lives in the world, he is found to act as it is human nature to act. Yet he is said to be inactive. The contradiction here is only apparent, and not real. The *yogi* is internally free and does not desire anything. Nor does he have any need to do anything. But the very fact that his body still exists in the world shows that the *samskaras* of the past in this life or the past lives still hold their sway over him. This *karma* continues to operate until it is exhausted. Only when it is exhausted, he exits the body, with his self merging into the Supreme Self. One important aspect is that whatever actions he does in the present life carry no *samskaras* (impressions) for the future as his actions are God related and are free from merit or demerit.

14. Where is delusion? Where is the universe and where is its renunciation? Or, where is liberation for the great-souled one who rests beyond the world of desires?

The Self is One, Existent. It is only the desire that creates the illusion of the relative world in cognition. When the relative world is cognized, there arises an urge for the seeker to go beyond it. He is able to get over it when he overcomes the desire and is freed from it. With the freedom from desire, the illusion of the relative world and its sensual effects dissolve into the Existent Self. There is no longer the illusion of the universe, the resultant delusion and the need for liberation.

15. He who sees the universe may try to obliterate it. What has the desire-less to do? He does not behold, though he sees it.

When a seeker sees the universe as the distinct world of names and forms, it is his individualized-ego that perceives the universe. There is the subject to experience and the world of objects to be experienced with its joys and sorrows. As the universe is distinct and separate to the seeker, he tries to negate it in his

effort for realization of the Self. But the seeker who has already realized is beyond ignorance and desire. He does not cognize the universe distinct or separate from the Self. Though physically he appears to look at the objects of the world, his mind does not cognize them as it is stilled, and the world is no different from the Self for him.

16. He who sees the Supreme Brahman meditates 'I am the Brahman'. What does he that has transcended all thought meditate upon when he sees no second?

He who sees the Brahman has not evidently reached the highest state of *laya* or mergence with the Brahman. He is aware of his self being different and distinct from the Brahman. He meditates 'I am the Brahman' with a view to being one with the Brahman. The mind is not transcended yet for him. The dual consciousness of 'I' and the Brahman is still there. But when the identity between the self and the Brahman is reached, the dual consciousness is transcended. The mind of the seeker is stilled with no possibility of thought. He is one with the Brahman and sees no second.

17. He who experiences distractions in himself must control himself. But the great-souled one is not distracted at all. Having nothing to accomplish, what shall he do?

Distraction, outward or inward, is the activity of the sense-perception in the realm of the body and the mind. One who is distracted is to control oneself by way of transcending beyond the realm of the body and the mind. The great-souled one is not distracted at all as he has transcended the realm of the body and the mind. He is the one that has realized the Self as One without a second and has already transcended the duality. He has nothing more to accomplish.

18. The wise man, though living like an ordinary man, is unlike him. He sees neither absorption, nor distraction, nor his involvement.

The wise man behaves externally like other people. The fundamental difference between him and others is that while he considers the world of objects and events illusory and unreal, others consider it real and, therefore, binding. The actions of the wise man are only those that carry on his life and he is in no way responsible for them. Nor do they have any impact on him. He sees nothing but the Self which is Pure Intelligence.

19. He who transcends existence and non-existence and who is wise, satisfied and free from desire does nothing even if he may be acting vigorously in the view of the world.

The relative world is a mixture of existence and non-existence. It is existent in the sense that it is perceived in ordinary human consciousness. It is non-existent as it disappears in supreme consciousness beyond the three states of

human consciousness. Knowing the true nature of the world, the man of knowledge is not concerned with it.

Actions in the relative world arise out of egoism. When the man of knowledge transcends egoism, whatever he does is free from egoism. He does not identify himself with his actions. He is, therefore, considered inactive even though he appears active in the view of the world.

20. The wise man who lives on happily doing whatever comes his way does not feel eagerness in activity or inactivity.

The wise man does whatever comes his way to be done. He considers it to be fulfillment of his *praarabdha karma*. He does no action out of any sense of egoism. As such, there is no further addition of *samskaras* to his causal body by the actions he does. There is no eagerness or anxiety for him either in activity or inactivity.

21. Blown by the wind of the *samskaras*, the desire-less, independent, free and liberated person moves about like a dry leaf.

A dry leaf is blown about hither and thither by the wind and not of its own choosing. Similarly, the liberated seeker only discharges the vestiges of his *praarabdha karma*, with no sense of egoism what so ever.

22. There is neither joy nor sorrow for one who has transcended worldly experience. Ever with a tranquil mind, one lives as if one had no body.

Joy and sorrow are emotions that arise in I-consciousness and are sourced in desire for objects and events of the relative world, the root of worldly experience. The seeker who has transcended worldly experience is beyond joy and sorrow. In such a state, he has a tranquil mind that is stilled and, as such, is beyond the consciousness of his body. When there is no body consciousness, he lives as if he had no body.

23. The wise man who delights in the Self and whose mind is serene and pure, has no desire to renounce anything what so ever, nor does he feel any loss anywhere.

The seeker established in the Self is beyond the consciousness of his body and mind, and egoism. The desire to renounce or to feel a sense of loss arises only in a state of duality and of relative consciousness. When the seeker is beyond this state, there is neither the desire to renounce nor the sense of loss.

24. Naturally of a vacant mind, and doing whatever comes his way, the wise man, unlike an ordinary one, is not affected by honour or dishonor.

For the seeker established in the Self, his mind is vacant as it is transcended. He does whatever comes his way to discharge his *praarabdha karma*. He does not identify himself with the relative aspects of his being in the society he lives. He has, therefore, no concern for honour or dishonor, or for what others think of him.

25. One who acts in conformity with such thoughts as ‘this is done by the body and not by me, the pure Self’ does not, even though active, act.

26. The liberated seeker acts like one who does not say why one is so active. But he is not, thereby, a fool. Though he is in the world, he is ever happy and blessed.

An ordinary finite individual has consciousness of his motives and aims of his actions. He can specify them when required. But a fool is neither conscious of what he does, nor can explain the rationale of his actions. Though the liberated seeker is neither conscious of what he does, nor able to explain his actions, he is not a fool. He is only beyond the consciousness of the physical activity. Even though he lives in the world, he is not of the world. He lives as his body has life. But he has no attachment to anything of the relative world. It is the attachment that causes bondage to one and makes one unhappy. As the liberated seeker is beyond bondage and liberation, he is in ecstatic bliss.

27. The wise man that has withdrawn from diverse reasoning and has attained complete repose, neither thinks, nor knows, nor hears, nor sees.

The divine experience of the Supreme Self is beyond all reason and intellectual appreciation. It is a spiritual experience.

28. As the wise man has no distraction and does not practise meditation, he is neither an aspirant for liberation, nor is he in bondage. Having known the universe to be a figment of imagination even though he perceives it, he exists as the Brahman.

Unaffected by reason, intellect, sensual perception and egoism, the realized seeker is in the absolute state of the Brahman.

29. He who has egoism in him acts even though he does not act. Surely, the wise man who is free from egoism does not act even though he acts.

Egoism is the source of all our actions, internal and external. One may refrain from physical action. But, endowed with egoism, one may be active in mind. When egoism is withdrawn, does true inactivity arise. Whatever the liberated seeker does, it is inaction in that it is not rooted in ego-sense. Though he acts, it is no action.

30. The mind of the liberated one is neither troubled nor pleased; it is action-less, motionless, desire-less and free from doubts.

The mind of the liberated one is not troubled as it is free from hatred. It is not pleased as it is free from attachment. It is action-less as it is free from egoism. It is motionless as it is free from volition. It is desire-less as it does not see duality. Consequently, it is free from doubts.

31. The mind of the liberated one does not engage itself either in meditation or in activity. It becomes meditative and active without any motive (spontaneously).

The mind of the liberated one is absolutely free from egoism and attachment to the objects and events of the relative world. Even after attainment of liberation, the *yogi* still lives in the world as he is to exhaust the *samskaras* of the past in the current life and the earlier ones. While he lives in the world, he is to act, though free from egoism, as it is human nature to act. He also contemplates. Whatever he does, either physical acts or contemplation, he does spontaneously. He is ever in the state of serenity and tranquility.

32. A dull-witted person becomes bewildered on hearing the real truth. But some wise man withdraws within himself, like a dull person.

A seeker after truth is required to qualify in four ways for spiritual practice, namely *viveka*, *vairagya*, *satsampatti* and *mumuksha*, as stated in the first verse. If he is not so qualified, he is sure to be bewildered when his *guru* tells him the real truth. On possessing the qualifications that purge the impurities of the mind and enlighten the spirit, is the seeker fit to hear the *guru* and proceed towards the attainment of his ideal.

Attaining knowledge of the Self is very rare in the world. It is said in the Gita that 'one, perchance, in thousands of men, strives for perfection; and one, perchance, among the blessed ones striving thus, knows Me in reality'. It is said in the *Katha-Upanisad* that the 'Self-existent God has so created the senses that they go outward, and hence man sees the external and not the internal Self. Only, perchance, some wise man desirous of immortality turns his eyes inwards and beholds the inner *Atman*'.

When an intelligent and discriminating seeker hears the real truth, he withdraws himself within in the sense that he becomes free from desires and the cravings of the senses. He turns inward, toward the *Atman* or the Self.

33. The fools constantly practise concentration and control of the mind. The wise, abiding in the Self, like persons in deep sleep do not find anything to be attained.

The ignorant constantly practise concentration and control of the mind as they are distracted in themselves, being in the realm of body and mind. But the wise seeker, established in the Self, is like a man in deep sleep. The man in deep sleep has no consciousness of his body and mind and does not find anything to do. So is the seeker, though awake, with no consciousness of his body and mind. He does not have anything to attain, except to remain in the state of supreme consciousness.

34. The fool does not attain tranquility either by action or inaction. The wise one becomes happy merely by knowing the truth.

An ignorant person can never attain tranquility or peace by way of suppression of all mental activity, or by activity propelled by desire. If the mind is sought to be controlled by way of suppression of thoughts, the seeker never succeeds. The mind resists and the thoughts sought to be avoided persist. Similarly, the performance of rituals or other actions propelled by desire does no good. This activity of the body or suppression of the activity of the mind is born of ignorance and is the cause of all misery. Such physical or mental activity is the very negation of the consciousness of the true nature of the Self, the realization of which alone results in peace, tranquility and ecstatic bliss.

35. In this world those who devote themselves to diverse practices do not know the Self which is Pure, Enlightened, Beloved, Perfect, Transcendental and Stainless.

Those who resort to different spiritual practices for realization never know the Self, as their practices are rooted in the consciousness of duality, the result of ignorance. Unless they transcend the state of duality, they never know the Self.

The Self is the source of all love. The Self is Love. 'Love is infallible. It has no errors, for all errors are the want of love'. Love is a mode of knowledge. When it is disinterested and very intense, the knowledge becomes that of the Divine and so takes the quality of infallibility.

It is only on account of the self that our love is directed to the objects of the world. *Bṛhadaranyaka-Upanisad* states thus: 'None, my dear, ever loved the husband for the husband's sake; it is the self (Self) for the sake of which the husband is loved'. This applies to all objects of human love.'

36. An ignorant person never attains liberation through the repeated practice of the control of his mind. The blessed one, through mere intuitive enlightenment, gets liberated and immutable.

Spiritual practices lead the seeker to the path of enlightenment. They do not help attain the ideal, on their own. The seeker is to be blessed by the Divine, to attain liberation and become immutable.

37. The fool does not attain the Brahman for he desires to become It. The wise one certainly realizes the nature of the Supreme Brahman without desiring to do so.

The desire to become the Brahman arises out of a sense of duality, a sense of separateness from It. It is a denial of our true nature of ever being the Brahman. As long as the desire remains, consummation or merger with the Brahman remains wanting. The cessation of desire results in consummation with the Brahman.

38. Without any support and eager for attainment of freedom, the fools only keep up the world. The wise cut at the very root of the world which is the source of all misery.

The knowledge of the Self is the basis of our true being. Those who do not have that knowledge are truly ignorant. Such people, by way of suppression of mind and performance of just rituals, are ever eager to attain the Self, by trying to get rid of the world as if it were real. They never succeed. Both their premise and process are rooted in ignorance. The wise one knows intuitively that the world is illusory and unreal, and the source of all misery. He transcends the consciousness of the world to enter the Supreme Consciousness of the Self.

39. The fool desires peace through control of the mind and so does not attain it. The wise one knows the truth and is ever of tranquil mind.

If one wants something, one remains wanting that something. If the seeker seeks to control the mind, he never succeeds as it resists such control. He is only to transcend the mind, to be beyond the realm of the mind. The wise one knows the way of transcending the mind to be ever in tranquility.

40. Where is the knowledge of the Self to one whose knowledge depends on the objects of the world? The wise do not see this and that, but see the Immutable Self.

If the knowledge of a person depends on the objects of the world, it means that his knowledge is relative and in the realm of duality and multiplicity. Relative knowledge is dependent on three factors – the knower, the known and the knowing. These three factors are absent in the Self - the Absolute Knowledge. The wise do not relate to the objects of the world, and only see the Immutable Self alone.

41. Where is the control of the mind for the deluded one who strives for it? To the wise man that delights in the Self, it is always spontaneous.

Perfect control of mind springs from complete detachment from body and mind. It, therefore, negates all forms of activity which presuppose identification of one's self with body and mind. One who is deluded seeks to control the mind while being of the world. It continues to resist as the attempt to control the mind strengthens its identification with the body and the world. The wise man does not seek to control it. On the other hand, he transcends it and it is spontaneous for him.

42. Some think that 'existence' is and others think that 'nothing' is. Rare is the one who thinks neither. He is serene and free from all distractions.

For the pure materialists in the Indian Philosophy – the *Charvarkas*, the world is 'existence'. The manifested world alone is the only 'Reality'. For the *Madhyamikas* in Buddhism, 'nothing is'. In spiritual practice, some recommend meditation on 'Existence-Knowledge-Bliss-Absolute'. Some others consider that the Infinite Self is realized only when the mind (self) has no existent-consciousness. All these are different methods for withdrawal of the mind from sense objects and egoism, to enter the state of supreme consciousness.

On the other hand, the one who realizes and experiences the Self attains unity. There is no thought in one as to the reality or unreality of the world as the mind is already transcended. One is, therefore, perfectly serene and free from all distractions.

43. Those of dull intellect think that the *Atman* is Pure and One without a second, but they, through delusion, do not realize It. They remain unhappy as long as they live.

Delusion bars self-realization. Those in the realm of the mind and the intellect only conceive of the *Atman* as Pure and One without a second. It is an exercise of the intellect. It is dull in that it cannot transcend itself to realize the truth. Unless it is transcended, realization is not possible. The delusion persists. Such seekers will not be able to realize the *Atman*. They remain unhappy and frustrated as long as they live.

44. The intellect of the one who aspires for liberation cannot function without a supporting object. But the intellect of the liberated one is ever independent and free from desire.

The one who aspires for liberation is still a seeker, without realization. For him, the Self is still an object, distinct from him and he is in a state of duality. He does not realize, as the liberated person does, that the Self is undifferentiated Knowledge, free from the subject-object relationship. The liberated person, established in the Knowledge of the Self, does not see duality. He is ever independent and free from desire.

45. Encountering the sense-objects as tigers, the frightened ones seek refuge in the cave of the mind for attainment of control and concentration.

The ignorant feel frightened because they look upon the sense-objects as different from the Self. The sense of duality is what causes fright and fear. With a view to avoiding the overbearing power of the senses, they try to control the mind for concentration. Both the premise and the process of the practice are sourced in ignorance. They do not succeed.

46. Seeing the man - the lion without desires, the sense-objects - the elephants quietly take to their heels. If they are unable to run away, they serve him like flatterers.

The seeker is to realize that it is not the sense-objects themselves that cause misery. Indeed, it is one's identification with and attachment to them that cause misery. Once free from such identification and attachment, one need not give up the world. Even while living in the world, such a person can live freely and happily without in any way being affected.

47. He who is free from doubts and has his mind identified with the Self, does not resort to practices of control as a means to liberation. Seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and eating, he lives happily.

Practices of control arise from the sense of duality. Duality arises from egoism. Egoism is the source of ignorance. The seeker, established in the Knowledge of the Self, is beyond the realm of egoism and duality. Though such a person is in the world, he is not of the world. As he is alive, his sense-organs continue to function. But he has no attachment to anything in the world. He, therefore, lives happily.

48. Established in Pure Knowledge and calm by the mere hearing of the Real, the wise one does not see what is proper action or improper action or even inaction.

No sooner does a seeker who has been established in Pure Knowledge hear about the nature of the Self than the Truth dawns upon him. As such a seeker is absolutely free from egoism with the dawn of Self-Knowledge; the rules of conduct have no meaning for him.

49. The wise man does freely whatever comes his way, whether good or evil; for his actions are like those of a child.

The seeker established in Pure Knowledge is free from the sense of egoism. He has no sense of doer-ship or enjoyer-ship. He has no purpose and motives for actions, like a child, which determine the ethical nature of conduct. His actions, therefore, transcend all ethical implications.

50. Through freedom one attains happiness; through freedom one attains the highest; through freedom one attains tranquility; and through freedom one attains the supreme state.

Freedom from desire is the key to attainment of the supreme state.

51. All modifications of the mind are destroyed when a man realizes that he himself is neither the doer nor the enjoyer.

When the mind is transcended, ego disappears. With ego disappears the sense of doer-ship and enjoyer-ship.

52. The conduct of the wise one, unrestricted and spontaneous, shines; but the affected calmness of the deluded person, whose mind is attached, does not.

When a person restrains his conduct and appears calm, he does so with a motive. He wants to give the impression that his thought and feeling correspond to his conduct. When his thought and feeling are different from his conduct, such appearance of 'correspondence to conduct' is pretence. Such pretence is assumed by an ignorant and deluded person. It is the pretended calmness of an attached mind. This attitude is the antithesis of spiritual enlightenment and creates more bondage. On the other hand, the wise one is completely free from attachment. His actions are free from egoism and are without motive. They transcend all limitations, and are spontaneous. Such conduct shines.

53. The wise men that are free from mental projections, unbound and of unfettered intellect, sometimes sport in the midst of great enjoyments and sometimes retire into mountain caves.

The wise men are unfettered by egoism. They remain the same and unaffected under all conditions. They live, move about and have their being only in the Self. They live in the world unconcerned of anything.

54. No desire what so ever springs in the heart of the wise one on honoring a scholar of Vedic learning, gods, holy places, or on seeing a woman, a king or a beloved one.

The wise man sees the divine essence in everything and everywhere. As he is beyond egoism, he has no likes and dislikes. He has perfect equanimity in every situation.

55. The liberated *yogi* is not at all perturbed even when ridiculed and abused by his servants, sons, wives, daughters' sons and other relations.

The liberated *yogi* is completely free from delusion, that is, from attachment and aversion, which alone perturb the mind on his relationship with his close relatives that live with him. As he has neither attachment to, nor aversion from those that live with him, he is unaffected by whatever way they treat him.

56. Though pleased, he is not pleased. Though afflicted, he does not suffer affliction. Only those who are like him understand his wonderful state.

Pleasure and affliction are modifications of the mind and pertain to it. But the Self is beyond the realm of the mind. The seeker established in the Knowledge of the Self is beyond the modifications of the mind such as pleasure and affliction. Though outwardly he looks either pleased or afflicted, truly he is not affected by either. *Yogis* similarly blessed like him alone understand such state of supreme consciousness.

57. The sense of duty is, indeed, the world of relativity. It is transcended by the wise one who realizes himself as the All- pervasive, Formless, Immutable and Untainted Self.

Duty is the morbid attachment of body to body and the things of the relative world. Only those who live in the world and of the world consider that they have things to do and duties to fulfill. It binds to the relative life, subjecting them to the miseries of the world.

The sense of duty is, thus, sourced in attachment to worldly objects which, in turn, arises from the sense of reality of the world. The sense of duty binds us more and more to the world and thus subjects us to the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. The liberated person transcends the sense of duty and identifies himself with the All-pervasive, Formless, Immutable and Untainted Self.

58. One of dull intellect, even without doing anything, is ever agitated by distraction. But the skillful one, even doing his duties, is unperturbed.

Egoism is the source of distraction. As the wise person is free from egoism, he is ever calm and tranquil even in the midst of activities. He is, therefore, never distracted. On the other hand, an ignorant man is ever in anticipation of what happens he does not know. This causes agitation in his mind either at work or in no work. As a result, he is ever agitated and distracted.

59. With perfect equanimity, the wise man, even in practical life, sits happily, sleeps happily, moves happily, speaks happily and eats happily.

The wise (liberated) one is ever in equanimity established in the Self. He ever lives in the Self alone. He is unattached to sense objects and unaffected by the senses. Though he is in the world, he is not of the world. As he has life, he appears to be performing all the functions of the senses.

60. He, who by virtue of realization of the Self does not feel distressed even in practical life like ordinary people and remains un-agitated, with all his sorrows extinguished, shines.

A vast lake may have waves and bubbles on the surface that rise and dissolve continuously, but is not disturbed in its body. Similarly, a liberated seeker is undisturbed and un-agitated in practical life owing to absence of all sorrow.

61. For the deluded, even inaction becomes action. For the wise, even action results in the fruit of inaction.

The deluded one may be inactive outwardly. But his mind is always at work. It is ever active. On the other hand, the wise one may be engaged in outward activity. As he is not identified with his body and senses, and he has no sense of doer-ship, he is unaffected by the actions. All such activity is, in essence, inaction for him.

62. The deluded one often shows aversion to his possessions. Where is attachment and where is aversion for one whose love for the body has vanished?

The deluded one identifies himself with his body and is, therefore, attached to it. Such a person shows aversion sometimes to some possessions because of satiety. If a person is fed in full, he shows aversion to more food at that moment. It is only for the moment. The moment he feels hunger later, he seeks food. He does not give up possessions which are concomitant to attachment to the body and the mind. On the other hand, the seeker who is beyond the realm of the body-consciousness has neither attachment nor aversion, as they are born of body-consciousness alone.

63. The consciousness of the deluded one is always attached to ideation and non-ideation. But the consciousness of the one established in the Self, though engaged in ideation, is of the nature of unconsciousness.

The deluded one is ever in the realm of his mind and thinks of the objects of thought as real. He forms and re-forms ideas of things and events in a stream. He is ever bound to his mind. But the seeker established in the Self is beyond the consciousness of the mind. His consciousness is beyond duality of things known or acts of knowing. Though any ideation arises, it is without attachment and egoity, and, therefore, does not affect his state of supreme consciousness.

64. The wise one who has no motive in all his actions and who moves like a child and is pure has no attachment to all the work being done by him.

The liberated seeker has no sense of doer-ship or enjoyer-ship of any work he does, as he has no motive for or attachment to it. He is child-like and ever pure.

65. Blessed, indeed, is that knower of the Self that has transcended the mind and that, even though seeing, hearing, touching, smelling or eating is the same under all conditions.

The knower of the Self has removed from his mind all craving for sense-gratification. Even though outwardly he attends to sense-perceptions, he is unaffected by or unattached to them.

66. For the wise one, who is ever changeless like the eternal space, where is the world, where is its appearance, where is the end and where is the means?

The man of Knowledge sees nothing but the Self everywhere, within him and outside. To him only the Self exists. The world is neither real nor apparent. He has no end to attain and no means to employ. He has no need for spiritual practices as means to self-realization. He is Immutable and All-pervading as the Self.

67. Glory to him who is free from all desires, who is the perfect embodiment of bliss which is his own nature, and who is spontaneously absorbed in the unconditioned Self!

‘The embodiment of bliss which is his own nature’ is indicative of the total union of the seeker - the finite self with the Supreme Self.

68. In short, the great-souled one that has realized the Truth is free from both the desire for sense-enjoyment and the desire for self-liberation. He is devoid of all attachment at all times and in all places.

69. What is it that remains to be done by one who is Pure Consciousness? He has renounced phenomenal existence which begins with *Mahat* and is manifested merely by name.

According to *Sankhya* Philosophy, *Mahat* or Reason is the first evolute of *Prakrti*. Its function is to make decisions both cognitively and ethically, both in cognition and in action. It is cosmic and covers the whole world (universe). The world comes into being out of a cosmic assertion or decision ‘That is’. This cosmic decision is related to the Cosmic Person - the Self. While it is cosmic for the world, it is separate for each finite individual. In relation to the individual, it may be either the transparent or the static. In relation to the transparent character, it exhibits the qualities of knowledge, ethical detachment, etc. In relation to the static character, it exhibits the opposite qualities. Reason - *Mahat* may thus be considered to be related to the Cosmic Person in Its highest character, while it

may be related to the individual beings in varying degrees between the highest and the lowest qualities.

Mahat is the first of several other evolutes of *Prakrti* such as ego, mind, five sense-organs, five organs of action, five subtle elements and five gross elements all of which constitute the phenomenal world. The phenomenal world is only apparent in that it is unreal and illusory, and is the basis of all apparent manifoldness.

The liberated seeker who is no other than Pure Consciousness ever remains unidentified with the phenomenal world. He is ever free from the false consciousness of duties. Nothing remains for him to be done.

70. The pure one knows for certain that this universe is the product of illusion and that nothing exists. The imperceptible Self is revealed to him and he naturally enjoys peace.

The seeker being pure is free from ignorance. He knows for certain that the Self alone is the reality and the universe is an illusion and apparent. The Self is imperceptible as It is beyond the mind and the senses. It cannot be objectified. Nor is It perceivable. Yet It is self-luminous. Though unknowable, It is known to Itself by Itself. The seeker being aware of the nature of the Self naturally enjoys peace, as bliss and peace are the very essence of his true nature as he is established in the Knowledge of the Self.

71. What are all the rules of conduct, dispassion, renunciation and restraint of the senses to one who is of the nature of Pure Effulgence and who does not perceive any objective reality?

When the seeker is of the nature of Pure Effulgence, he is one with the Self, beyond the realm of the body, mind and senses. The world of objects and action has no relevance to him.

72. Where is bondage or liberation, and joy or sorrow for one who shines as the Infinite and does not perceive relative existence?

The seeker who perceives the relative existence and who identifies the Self with the not-self is in bondage, and this bondage is the source of sorrow. When he transcends this stage, he is liberated and ever in joy. He is one with the Infinite Self.

73. The illusion of the world prevails until knowledge of the Self is attained. The wise one lives devoid of I-ness, mine-ness and attachment.

74. To the wise one who perceives the Self as imperishable and free from grief, where is knowledge and where is the universe? Where is the feeling ‘I am the body’ or ‘the body is mine’?

Mundaka-Upanisad states that the Knowledge of the Self is the knowledge by knowing which all other components of knowledge become known. To the seeker established in the Self, there is no more knowledge to be known to him.

75. No sooner does the man of dull intellect give up practices such as mind-control than he becomes a prey to desires and fancies.

An ignorant person persists in the vision of duality. Whatever efforts he makes such as mind-control, as part of his spiritual practices, they are of no avail. On the one hand, mind-control does not take him anywhere as the attempt at control makes the mind resist. On the other hand, when he ceases the effort to control the mind, desires and fancies enter it. Either way he is agitated and disturbed.

The seeker is to be aware that Knowledge of the Self is not attained by practices of control. It already is and to be realized as such, transcending the mind itself.

76. Even hearing the truth, the man of dull intellect does not give up his delusion. Though, through suppression, he appears devoid of mental activity, a craving for sense-objects lurks within him.

Hearing the truth does not help delusion in the seeker to disappear. It is only the Knowledge of the Self attained by him that enables him to be devoid of delusion. Suppression of desires in the mind does not help to get rid of desires. Such suppression may enable him to abstain from sensual pleasure. But the craving for sense-objects still lurks within him. The seeker can get rid of his desires only by attaining Knowledge of the Self. The Bhagavad-Gita says: ‘The objects of the senses turn away from the abstinent man, leaving the longing (behind); but his longing also turns away on seeing the Supreme’.

77. He whose work has ceased with the dawn of knowledge does not find an opportunity to do or say anything, even though in the eyes of ordinary people, he is doing work.

The indicator of true inaction is not the cessation of physical activity, but the freedom of the doer from the conceited feeling of ‘I am the doer’.

78. To the wise one who is ever unperturbed and immutable, where is darkness; where is light; where is loss? There is nothing what so ever.

Darkness, light, loss, gain and other sensuous objects and experiences are possible only in the domain of duality, but not in the domain of the Self which is One and Immutable.

79. Where is patience, where is discrimination and where is even fearlessness for the *yogi* who is impersonal and of indescribable nature?

Patience, discrimination and fearlessness are the qualities which a seeker after realization is to possess to commence his spiritual practice. When once he has realized the Self, he has no more use of these qualities as he has achieved his ideal.

80. There is no heaven, nor is there any hell. There is not even the state of liberation. In short, nothing exists in the consciousness of a *yogi*.

‘Nothing exists’ does not mean non-existence, based on the philosophy of *Sunya-vada* of a sect of Buddhism. It means that the Self Alone is. Everything is the Self. It is the state of Supreme Consciousness. The *yogi*, beyond the state of the body and the mind, is one with the Self, in the state of Supreme Consciousness.

81. The wise one neither longs for gain, nor grieves at loss. His serene mind is verily filled with the nectar of Supreme Bliss.

82. The desire-less one neither praises the calm nor blames the wicked. Contented and equi-poised in happiness and misery, he finds nothing to be done.

The state of desire-lessness is neither sublimation nor suppression of desires. It is the state wherein the seeker, in his inner experience of immeasurable happiness, is rendered incapable of entertaining any more desires. This is not a state of absence of desires, but the state of the desires transcended into the Pure Self. In this state, the *yogi* is totally contented and equi-poised both in apparent happiness and in apparent misery.

83. The wise one neither abhors the world of change nor wishes to perceive the Self. Free from joy and sorrow, he is neither dead nor alive.

The desire for liberation arises from the idea of being in bondage. The idea of being in bondage is ignorance and arises from egoism. Similarly, the desire to experience the Eternal Self is the consciousness of the seeker being different from the Self, but seeking realization of the Self. But the liberated seeker, already being the Self, neither seeks liberation from bondage nor seeks perception of the Self.

Life and death, joy and sorrow, etc are the pairs of opposites that constitute the world of change. The Self is changeless and eternal. The seeker that

has attained knowledge of the Self is the Self himself. He is neither dead nor alive, being beyond the realm of life and death, the cycle of *samsara*.

84. Glory to the wise one that is free from expectation, attachment to children, wife and others, desire for the objects of the senses, and the care of even his body.

85. Contentment ever dwells in the heart of the wise one who lives on whatever comes one's way and who wanders about at pleasure, resting wherever one is when the sun sets.

86. Reposing on the foundation of his own being and completely transcending birth and re-birth, the great-souled one does not care whether his body drops dead or rises to live.

The world of objects consisting of the gross elements and the cosmic principles is super-imposition on the Supreme Being – the Self. The seeker himself is the Self and is, therefore, unaffected by the super-imposition. Changes in the world such as birth, death, re-birth etc do not affect the liberated seeker.

87. The wise one stands alone, unattached to anything. He is without any possession and moves about at his free will and pleasure. He is free from the pairs of opposites and his doubts have been cut asunder. He, indeed, is the blessed one.

The liberated seeker stands 'alone' in the sense that he is the Self himself, and the Self is One and Alone. Further the Self is the Witness-consciousness; so is he. He is without any possession, too. When the Self is One without a second, what else does he, the Self, possess? He is the blessed one in the sense that he enjoys ecstatic bliss.

88. Glory to the wise one who is devoid of the ego-sense, to whom a clod of soil, a precious stone and a lump of gold are all the same, the knots of whose heart have been cut asunder and who has been purged of *rajas* and *tamas*.

Prakrti has three attributes - *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. *Sattva* is serenity, the tendency to manifestation. *Rajas* is activity. *Tamas* is inertia, the obstruction to manifestation. Everything in the world is the product of these three attributes.

Ontologically, the attributes constituting *Prakrti* are ever active. *Prakrti* is said to be stable when the forces inherent in it are in a state of equilibrium, none becoming dominant over the others, all being equally active and the activities of each force being harmonious with the activities of others. Stability is thus harmony in activity.

The same attributes constitute the human mind, too. For the finite ordinary individual, the three attributes work in unison, in harmony, in the domain of the relative world. Unless the mind of the seeker is purged of the two attributes of

rajas and *tamas*, the mind is not transcended to enter the state of supreme consciousness for realization of the Self. The liberated seeker has been purged of the two attributes of *rajas* and *tamas* and has then entered the state of Supreme Consciousness - the Self.

89. Who can be compared with a liberated one that has no desire what so ever at heart and that is contented and indifferent to everything?

The inner nature of a liberated seeker is indescribable. It stands no comparison. It is the Absolute Self that admits of no description.

90. Who but the one free from all desires knows not, though knowing, sees not, though seeing and speaks not, though speaking?

A liberated seeker is totally free from desires and ego. He has no sense of doer-ship and enjoyer-ship of whatever he does. Whatever he does, he does unknowingly as he has transcended his mind.

91. He who is unattached and whose view of existent things has been freed from the sense of good and evil indeed excels, even though he is a mendicant or a king.

A liberated seeker is free from the sense of good and evil as he finds nothing but the Self existing in all. His station in life is of no relevance for his realization.

92. For the *yogi* whose ideal of life has been fulfilled and who is the embodiment of guileless sincerity, where is wantonness, where is restraint and where is determination of the Truth?

The purpose and motive of action and the sense of doer-ship determine the ethical nature of action. Established in the Self, the One without a second, the *yogi* is devoid of the purpose and motive and also the sense of doer-ship for his action. His action, therefore, transcends ethical consideration. There is neither wantonness nor restraint as to his activity. There is no more determination of the Truth, too, for him, as Truth has already been self-revealed to him.

93. How and to who can be described what is experienced within by one who is desire-less, whose sorrow is destroyed and who is contented with repose in the Self?

The Self is beyond thought and speech. Its experience is beyond description.

94. The wise one who is contented in all conditions is not asleep even while in deep sleep, not lying down even while dreaming and not awake even in the waking state.

Waking, dream and deep sleep are the three states of alternating human consciousness. They are not real as they come and go. The 'I' or existence that alone persists in all the three states is real. The liberated seeker transcends the three states of alternating human consciousness and gets established in the supreme consciousness of the Self. He is, therefore, not affected by the three states of the alternating human consciousness.

95. The man of Knowledge is devoid of thought even though he is engaged in it. He is devoid of the sense-organs even though he uses them. He is devoid of intelligence even though he is endowed with it. He is devoid of the sense of ego even though he is possessed of it.

Established in the Self – the Pure Consciousness, the seeker is beyond the realm of mind, intellect, senses and ego though he may appear to behave like an ordinary man.

96. The man of Knowledge is neither happy nor miserable, neither attached nor unattached, neither liberated nor an aspirant for liberation; he is neither this nor that.

The Self is beyond happiness, misery, attachment, non-attachment, liberation and bondage which are in the domain of human consciousness. The seeker established in the Self has transcended such states of human consciousness.

97. The blessed one is not distracted even in distraction; he is not meditative even in meditation; he is not dull even in a state of dullness; and he is not learned, even though possessed of learning.

The man of Knowledge is, in essence, other than what he outwardly appears to be. He realizes the Self as distinct from his body and mind. He has the awareness of being Witness Consciousness as the Self. As the Witness Consciousness, there is awareness of distraction while not being distracted, meditation while not being meditative, dullness while not being dull, and not being learned though possessed of all learning.

98. The liberated one that abides in the Self under all conditions is free from the idea of action and of duty. Owing to the absence of desire in him, he is the same everywhere and does not reflect upon what he has or has not done.

Ego breeds desire. Together, they give rise to the sense of action and duty. The liberated seeker has transcended ego and, therefore, desire, and the sense of

duty and of action. He ever remains unconcerned with all his actions – the past, the present and the future.

99. The wise one does not feel pleased when praised; he does not feel annoyed when blamed. He neither rejoices in life, nor fears death.

Established in the Self, the seeker identifies himself with the Self – the One without a second. In such a state, who is to praise and who is to blame? And where is life and where is death?

100. The man of tranquil mind seeks neither a crowded place nor the solitude of a forest. He remains ever the same in all conditions and at any place.

The seeker established in the Self is ever the same, enjoying ecstatic bliss, wherever he is, totally unconcerned with his surroundings.

19. Repose in the Self.

Janaka said:

1. I have extracted from the innermost recesses of my heart the thorn of different opinions, using the pincers of the knowledge of Truth.

Different opinions and doubts veil Truth, keeping the seeker in ignorance. As a thorn is extracted with a pair of pincers, different opinions and doubts in the seeker are integrated into the knowledge of Truth by *guru* - the preceptor.

2. Where is ethical merit (*dharma*), enjoyment (*kama*) and prosperity (*artha*)? Where, too, is discrimination, where is duality, and where, even, is non-duality for me who ever abide in my own glory?

When the seeker identifies himself with the Self - One without a second - there is nothing else but the Self. Every superimposition on the Self ultimately dissolves itself into the Self.

3. Where is the past, where is the future, where even is the present, where is space and where is even eternity for me who ever abide in my own glory?

Time and space belong to action and to the world of action. Action belongs to man, a self-conscious being, but not to mere material objects. Even eternity is an extension of space in terms of human consciousness. Thus time and space relate to a human being in his states of temporal consciousness. The seeker established in the Self is in the state of supreme consciousness, beyond the domain of human consciousness. In this state, time, space and eternity are transcended.

4. Where is the self, where is the non-self, where are, likewise, good and evil, and where is anxiety or non-anxiety for me who ever abide in my own glory?

All thoughts, emotions, etc are of the mind. When the mind is transcended with the seeker established in the Self, there is no more activity in the mind.

5. Where is the state of dream, where is the state of deep sleep, where is the state of wakefulness and where is the fourth state of consciousness? Where is even fear for me who ever abide in my own glory?

The alternating levels of relative human consciousness are waking, dream and deep sleep states. They come and go. As such they are not real. The 'I' or existence that persists in each of the three states is alone real. The state transcending the three alternating states of human consciousness is called the fourth or the *turiya* state. This is the state of supreme consciousness into which the three preceding states merge and disappear. When this happens, the *turiya* state transcends itself and becomes the *turiyatita*. The Self is the *Turiyatita*,

beyond the fourth state of consciousness. The seeker established in the Self is ever in the *turiyatita* state of Supreme Consciousness.

6. Where is distance, where is proximity, where is exterior, where is interior, where is grossness and where is subtlety for me who ever abide in my own glory?

All these distinctions arise in the mind as it discerns the world of plurality which is but an illusion. The distinctions disappear when the mind and the ego are transcended, when the Self is realized.

7. Where is life or death, where are the worlds or worldly relations, where is lapse (*laya*) and where is concentration (*samadhi*) for me who ever abide in my own glory?

The Sanskrit word *laya* is used in the *sloka* (verse) in the sense of lapse of the mind into sleep without resting on the Absolute. It is one of the four obstacles to *nirvikalpa-samadhi* (concentration), the other three being *vikshepa* (distraction), *kasaya* (torpidity) and *rasasvada* (enjoyment of *savikalpa-samadhi*). Life or death is a state of the body, perception of worlds and worldly relations is a function of the senses and *savikalpa-samadhi* or its negation is a function of the mind and the intellect. One does not get established in the Self, unless one transcends the domain of the body, the senses, and the mind and the intellect. Once established in the Self, one is beyond these states.

8. To talk about the three goals of life is needless, to talk about *yoga* is purposeless and even to talk about wisdom is irrelevant to me who ever abide in my own glory?

The three goals of life are the three values of life, namely prosperity (*artha*), enjoyment (*kama*) and ethical merit (*dharma*). *Yoga* and wisdom are the means for realization of the Self. All these are irrelevant to the seeker already established in the Self.

20. Liberation in Life.

Janaka said:

1. Where are the gross elements, where is the body, where are the organs of action and where is the mind; where is the void; where, too, is despair for me who am untainted by nature?

For the seeker, established in the Self, transcending the relative planes, there are neither the five gross elements, nor the physical body formed out of them. There are neither the organs of perception, nor the instruments of action, nor the mind. If the elements are the cause, the body is their effect. If the sense-organs are the cause, the mind is the effect. By denying all of them, the cause-effect-relationship is denied in the state of the Self.

In the absence of the cause-effect-relationship, in the domain of the intellect, there may arise a concept of 'void', a state of complete absence of things as in the state of deep sleep. The state of void may lead to a feeling of despair. All this is in the domain of the intellect where the Self is not realized. If the domain of intellect is transcended, there is no state of void and no state of despair, too. The liberated seeker is beyond all these states.

2. Where are the scriptures, where is the knowledge of the Self, where is the mind unattached to sense-objects, where is contentment and where is desirelessness for me who am ever devoid of the sense of duality?

Realization of the Self is not learning; it is direct experience.

3. Where is knowledge, where is ignorance, where is 'I', where is 'this', where is 'mine', where is bondage and where is liberation? Where is an attribute to the nature of my 'self'?

All these are of the relative world which is illusory and unreal. The Self is beyond them all, the One without a second.

4. Where is *praarabdha-karma*, where is liberation in life and where is even liberation at death for me, the Ever Undifferentiated?

To a seeker of Self-Knowledge, liberation in life is a contradiction and is a creation of ignorance as bondage. He denies life itself. As such there is no scope or need for liberation. Attaining liberation presupposes bondage. But the Self is ever-existent, ever unborn and ever free. He is one with the Self. He, therefore, has never been born and ever free. He has never been in bondage, too. The very idea of attaining liberation is a serious limitation to the seeker for it is an indicator of his being in the domain of duality and not being one with the Self.

The same truth applies to the idea of liberation at death which presupposes that the body is different from the self and that the self is dissociated from the body permanently, at the time of death. The idea of such emancipation at death by way of liberation presupposes the differentiation of the body from the self, and of bondage. It goes directly against the true nature of the self which is One, Immutable, Undifferentiated and All-pervasive. The realized aspirant, therefore, neither seeks liberation in life, nor liberation at death.

The *praarabdha-karma* of the seeker has been fulfilled by the time of attainment of realization of the self. In the absence of such fulfillment, realization is impossible of achievement. Whatever actions the realized seeker undertakes thereafter do not add to his *praarabdha-karma* as they are devoid of egoism and are God-related.

5. Where is the doer or the enjoyer? Where is the cessation of thought or the rising of thought? Where is direct knowledge or reflected knowledge for me who am ever impersonal?

The mind performs the function of receiving the impressions of the different senses and uniting them into phenomenal objects. It presents the objects as the sense for which pleasures and pains are objects, to the 'I' consciousness. This knowledge that accrues to the 'I' consciousness is what is reflected into it by the mind. Whatever the 'I' consciousness experiences directly such as pains and pleasures, colors and smells is the direct knowledge. The process of acquisition of direct or reflected knowledge by the 'I' consciousness is only in relation to the relative world. This does not apply to the seeker established in the Self, as he has transcended the body, the mind and the senses.

6. Where is the world, where is the seeker for liberation, where is the man of contemplation and where is the man of knowledge, where is the bound man and where is the liberated man for me who is non-dual by nature?

When the seeker is established in the Self, he becomes non-dual by nature. Non-duality admits of no concept of 'seeker, seeking and sought' as the Self is One without a second and Indivisible.

7. Where is creation and where is destruction; where is the end and where is the means; where is the seeker and where is the success for me abiding in my non-dual nature?

Creation and destruction, end and means, bondage and liberation, seeking and success, etc are concepts of the mind in the relative world. They do not apply to the seeker established in the Self as he has transcended the relative world.

8. Where is the knower, the means to knowledge, the object of knowledge, or knowledge itself; where is anything and where is nothing for me who am ever pure?

The Self is Ever Pure in the sense that it is beyond the three attributes of *Prakrti* – *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. The three attributes are what constitute everything of the universe. In so creating the objects of the universe, impurity is built in as they are all unreal. The Self is neither anything, nor nothing and It is Ever Pure.

9. Where is distraction and where is concentration; where is knowledge and where is delusion; where is joy and where is sorrow for me who am ever without action?

Distraction and concentration, knowledge and delusion, and joy and sorrow are all functions of the mind and the senses transcended by the seeker established in the Self. He is ever without action.

10. Where is relativity and where is transcendence; where is happiness and where is misery for me who am ever beyond any discursive thought?

The Self is beyond the domain of mind and intellect. The seeker established in the Self is beyond happiness and misery, and beyond any discursive thought.

11. Where is the illusion and where is the relative world; where is attachment and where is detachment; and where is the *jiva* and where is the Brahman for me who is ever pure?

The Brahman is the Supreme Consciousness. The seeker that has realized the Brahman is in the state of supreme consciousness. Though the seeker is one with the Brahman, there is no consciousness of such identity for him. If there is any such consciousness of identity, he is still in the state of duality only. When he is established in the Self he is unaware of the Brahman, too. He is the Brahman himself. No other thing, anyway, exists for him.

12. Where is activity or where is inactivity; where is liberation or where is bondage for me who am ever immutable and indivisible, and established in the Self?

13. Where is instruction, where are scriptural injunctions, where is the disciple, where is the *guru* (preceptor) and where is, indeed, the ideal of life for me who is the Absolute Good (*Siva*) and free from all limitation?

The seeker in supreme consciousness is the Supreme Consciousness Itself.

14. Where is existence, where is non-existence, where is the One, where is duality and what need is there to say anything more? Indeed nothing emanates from me.

The Self is One, Indivisible, Immutable and All-pervasive. The Self is the only Reality. Nothing exists besides the Self. The world does not exist. Ontologically, there is no appearance of the world even, for appearance is brought about by and perceived in ignorance, and the negation of appearance can only take place in ignorance. Even ignorance does not exist. If ignorance is considered existent, it amounts to admission of something existent other than the Self.

Similarly, there is neither bondage nor liberation. Either is the creation of mind. True knowledge of the Self is not within the domain of the mind and it is necessarily transcendence of mind and its consciousness.

The only Reality is Absolute Knowledge, Absolute Bliss – the state of Supreme Consciousness – the Supreme Self, the ideal of the spiritual seeker for attainment in this life itself.

Avadhuta-Gita

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Introduction

An *Avadhuta* is an ascetic who has renounced all worldly attachments and connections. He is the one who has gone beyond the social customs of the day. He often moves about naked, and lives on alms. He lives in bliss, alone and in solitude. He renounces ego. As he renounces his ego, he realizes the Brahman within.

The *Avadhuta-Gita* has been assigned to Dattatreya claiming to be an *avadhuta* himself. In the last verse of the Gita is stated thus: 'This is the joyous Gita (song of joy) by Dattatreya *Avadhuta*, the embodiment of Supreme Bliss. Whoever reads or listens to this Gita realizes the Brahman and is not reborn'. It is an exposition of the Brahman by the sage to himself in ecstatic bliss, stated thrice in the Gita thus: 'One cannot realize the Brahman through the chanting of the Vedic mantras (hymns), the recitation of the scriptures or the practice of the *Tantra*. The *Avadhuta*, being realized, becomes one with the continuous bliss of the Brahman. Such *Avadhuta* (Dattatreya) sings this Gita out of his ecstatic bliss emanating from the *turiyatita* (beyond the fourth) state of consciousness'. The Gita is in the nature of a saga - precept to any seeker after the Truth - the Supreme Brahman.

The author of the Gita is not known. He must have been an *avadhuta* himself inspired by the spirit of Dattatreya who must have been the deity of his worship and meditation. The *Avadhuta-Gita* has been assigned to about the same period of the *Astavakra-Gita*.

It has simplicity of diction, clarity of expression, forcefulness of language and is pregnant with thought. There is no involved philosophical discussion, and directs the attention of the seeker after Truth all along to the Supreme Reality - the Supreme Brahman. Like the *Astavakra-Gita*, it resembles an epic in its style and structure of composition. It is a jewel in the Gita-literature propounding monistic *Vedanta* in its pristine purity.

1. Divine Grace

1. By divine grace, in the final birth, after a series of births, one attains unitive knowledge of the Divine. Thereby one gets liberated from ignorance and illusion, to unite with the Divine. One stills the mind for one's soul to awaken to the Spirit, in meditation (*dhyana*). The soul (individual spirit) gets united with the Spirit (Divine Spirit), only with divine grace. When once the union takes place, there is no birth beyond the spell of the present life.

2. Supreme Consciousness permeates the cosmos all over. When the Divine Spirit is everywhere, how and what am I, a seeker, to worship to realize the Divine?

The seeker considers being different from the Divine Spirit and seeks to find a way for union with the Divine. The ego of the seeker contemplates the manner of securing the union.

3. The cosmos, made of five elements, is like a mirage. It is of forms and names, and looks innumerable units of entities. Who shall I, part of the Divine Whole, worship in the cosmos?

The seeker is aware of his being part of the Divine Spirit. Yet he sees the physical differences around. He contemplates the manner of realizing the Divine.

4. The Divine Spirit alone exists everywhere. It is beyond name and form. It is beyond differences, and unitary. It is One without a second. It is a great wonder that It, in Its becoming, appears in varied form and nature.

5. The essence of *Vedanta* is *Jnana* - knowledge of the Divine. But I am the formless, omnipresent Divine Spirit. The knowledge of *Vedanta* is of no avail for my oneness with the Divine.

The seeker contemplates the *Advaita-atita-tatta* - the philosophy beyond *Advaita*. He contemplates *laya* or mergence into the Divine. Practices or ways of knowledge, devotion, *yoga* or works may not help to secure oneness with the Divine. He does *dhyana* (meditation) for securing oneness (*laya*) with the Divine.

6. Without any doubt, I am the *Atman* ever present everywhere, infinite, pure, indivisible, luminous Oneness.

The seeker abandons his individual I-consciousness. He realizes that he is no other than the Supreme *Atman*. He seeks to enter the state of the Divine Spirit which is *Akhanda Advaya Ananda* (Supreme Undivided Bliss). This is the state of total Unawareness of Awareness.

7. *Aham* (I-consciousness) is indestructible, infinite, pure and the embodiment of supreme knowledge. *Aham* is beyond the pairs of opposites such as pain and pleasure, happiness and sorrow. How does, then, one go through the gamut of physical experiences?

The seeker is to transcend the mind to keeping it away from senses so that there is no experience of sensuousness to the I-consciousness resulting from the senses.

8. I am the eternal one, pure and effulgent. Any action of thought, word or deed is neither good nor bad for me. I am unaffected by any action.

The seeker is to renounce his ego (I-consciousness) to be unaffected by his actions. Any living human being is to do actions. When any action is rendered without the ego and for the Divine, he is unaffected by the results of his action. Neither merit nor demerit accrues to him on account of the action.

9. The mind is like sky (space-*akasa*). It pervades in all directions. It appears to transcend everything. It appears to be everywhere and infinite. But the ultimate truth is that it does not exist. As such, it is an illusion.

Mind is a stream of thoughts passing over consciousness. It causes all thoughts to arise. Apart from thoughts, there is no such thing as mind. It is one of the evolutes of *Prakrti*, and as such it is unreal. It is only an illusion.

10. I (*Aham*) am omnipresent, omnipotent. I am beyond space and infinite. How is it possible to consider the Infinite Self to be the ever-changing cosmos?

Aham does not mean only individual ego or I-consciousness. In relation to the Supreme Being, *Aham* is *A* plus *Ham*. '*A*' stands for the beginning of the Becoming of the Supreme Being and '*Ham*' stands for the end of the said Becoming. The end means the Becoming merging (dissolving) into the Being. In between the two stages is the continuum of consciousness, time and space in different dimensions. *Aham* is the ever active attribute of the Supreme Being that causes the emergence out of and merging into the Being - the cause of the Becoming. And this is perennial - *nirantaram*. When the seeker is one with the Divine in union, how does he consider the ever-changing appearance of the cosmos or the Becoming as the infinite and immutable Self?

11. Do not hesitate to realize that everything arises out of the Absolute. The mystery of creation is embedded in you, too. In such an event, how do you think that day and night are different?

Mystery shrouds the creation of the Divine. Within creation is everything such as time, space in all their dimensions. The creation consists of entities of names and forms. All the creation is within the Creator and makes no difference

to the Creator. When the seeker seeks to be in union with the Creator, the entities of creation such as time and space, day and night, etc make no difference to him.

12. The *Atman* (the Supreme Brahman) is everywhere. Always contemplate on It. When the *Atman* is everywhere and everything, is it not unwise to make It an object of meditation?

The seeker is to have absolute faith that *Atman* - the Supreme Brahman is One, Indivisible and All-pervading. To meditate on the Indivisible Self is dualism, as it amounts to considering that the seeker is separate from the Divine Self. When there is no awareness of the individual self, there is no duality between the seeker and the Supreme Brahman. The Supreme Brahman can no longer be the object of meditation when the seeker realizes that he is in union with It. No object of meditation does, therefore, exist for him.

13. You are never born; nor do you ever die. You do not possess a body. The *Vedas* proclaim the greatest truth that 'All is the Brahman'.

The seeker is to realize that he is not his body, mind, senses or any other physical or non-physical constituents associated with his physical body. He is the *atman*. As the *atman* is one, indivisible, indestructible and beyond creation, he is neither born, nor does he die. He is the Brahman himself. Birth and death relate to the physical body, but not to the *atman*.

14. You are present everywhere and are the Eternal Self. Then, why do you run hither and thither, haunting illusions, like a ghost?

The mind of the seeker is like a ghost looking for sensory objects, thinking irrelevant thoughts, moving everywhere in the universe, etc. Unless the seeker stills the mind, the soul (spirit, *atman*) within does not activate to seek the Divine Truth.

15. You and I are neither one, nor separate. We are all an inseparable whole. Neither you, nor I, nor the world exists independently. The *Atman* alone is One, Real and Eternal.

The philosophy of Non-dualism (*Advaita*) postulates the existence of the world, the individual self, the personal god Isvara and the Brahman. By the process of elimination, through the knowledge of the Self, the seeker realizes that the Brahman alone is Real and Eternal. This is an exercise of the intellect (*buddhi*). The ego of the seeker is different from the Divine. He is still separate from the Absolute. He only realizes the truth, but does not experience it. What the seeker ultimately needs is its experience. This experience is the union with the Divine.

16. You are not the sense organs. Nor are you the corresponding powers of sense perception such as sound, sight, touch, taste or smell. When you get beyond the awareness of the senses, you merge in the Supreme Divine.

The mind unites all the sensations arising from objects and organs of senses, and presents them to the I-consciousness (*atman*) for physical experience. When the mind is stilled, the activity of the senses and their perception is withdrawn. The mind and the senses through it no longer interact with the I-consciousness. The 'I-consciousness' – *atman* is activated beyond the domain of the mind and the senses, and it seeks union with the Divine.

17. As the eternal soul, you have neither the beginning nor the end, neither memory nor forgetfulness, neither bondage nor freedom and neither good nor bad. O friend! Why are you anxious about destiny? You and I have neither name nor form.

Name and form constitute the basis of awareness of separation from the Divine. They constitute the individual ego. This awareness of separation is the function of the mind. The seeker realizes that he is the eternal Soul, only beyond the function of his mind. At the stage of realization that he is the eternal Soul, he is free of the limitations of the mind such as memory or forgetfulness, bondage or freedom, good or bad, beginning or end and the like.

18. Oh, mind! Why do you wander everywhere, like a ghost, craving for illusory activity? Renounce attachment to the worldly objects, to realize supreme bliss.

The wandering mind is the source of attachment to the worldly objects and, therefore, the cause of unhappiness. Renunciation of attachment (*raga-tyaga*) to the worldly objects is possible when the mind is withdrawn from them. This is possible when the mind is transcended and the *atman* activated for union with the Divine, bringing supreme bliss, in its turn.

19. You are THAT - the Eternal Self. You are Peace and Freedom, and devoid of mutation. You do not experience either passion or dispassion, nor is there any possibility of such experience.

When the seeker realizes that he is the Divine Self himself, his ego totally dissolves into the Divine Self. His mind is totally withdrawn from the world including his own body. His experience in that stage is the experience of the Divine bliss. He is no longer possessed by temporal passions and urges.

- 20 - 21 The *Srutis* pronounce that the Brahman is without qualities, without form and omnipresent. Realize you are that Brahman. Never be in doubt.

Know it for certain that all forms of the world are unreal for they are ever transient. The Ultimate and the Eternal is the Brahman without form. The Brahman alone is real, immutable, all-pervasive and without qualities (*nirguna*). The Brahman is the Supreme I-Am, the highest level beyond which the seeker's consciousness cannot reach. It is the Supreme Being Itself. It is the innermost, further unfathomable depth of man's own being. It is in which the world including man has its roots and by which it is supported. The seeker is to realize that he is no other than the Brahman and shall never be in doubt.

22. The sages pronounce that the Supreme Reality is only One, Immutable and without a second. When attachment to the world is renounced in the mind, there is no awareness of either unity or diversity.

Awareness of unity or diversity relates to the world of forms and names and is related to the function of the mind. Realization of the Supreme Reality is the function of the *atman*, beyond the realm of the mind. The Supreme Reality is the Supreme Being. It is only One without a second, and Immutable.

23. How can there be union with the Divine as long as there is awareness of the individual self being different from the Supreme Reality?

As long as one thinks that one is different from the Divine - the Supreme Reality, there is awareness of one's individual ego. Such awareness of individual ego is the very negation of *samadhi-sthiti*. Only in *samadhi* is the union of the individual self with the Divine possible. The seeker gains *samadhi* only when his mind and senses are transcended.

24. You are the purest Immutable Reality. You are without form and origin. You are imperishable. Then, why do you ponder over such terms that you know the *atman* or you do not know the *atman*?

In the seeker, the intellect discriminates. Discrimination leads to awareness. Awareness contemplates. Knowing or not knowing the *atman* is part of contemplation. All this is the function of the mind in varied forms, in the realm of duality.

But for the seeker, the 'I-consciousness' is the *atman*. The *atman* is self-conscious. The self-consciousness of the *atman* is without dimensions and fathomless. The self-conscious *atman* is the spirit within, ontologically. It seeks realization of itself - self-realization.

The 'I-consciousness' is the pure being, eternal existence, free from ignorance and thought illusion. If the seeker stays as the 'I', his being alone, without thought, the 'I' thought for him will disappear. The illusion will vanish for him forever.

25. The *Srutis* propound the true nature of the Supreme Being in such *Mahavakyas* as *Tattvamasi*. The world composed of the five elements is itself known to be unreal. Yet the *Srutis* (*Vedanta*) follow the method of elimination and negation to arrive at the eternal truth.

The process of elimination and negation is an exercise of the intellect. Intellect extends to the sphere of the known to the mind. What cannot be conceived by the mind, but realized in the self is the ultimate truth. The application of the process of elimination and negation is only to use the intellect to know about the ultimate truth, but not to realize the Eternal Truth.

26. The cosmos is verily filled with the Supreme Self fully and wholly. When that is the ultimate Truth, what do you meditate upon? Who is the meditator and what is meditation?

When the Supreme Self is only One and Indivisible, who is to meditate on what and in what way? The cosmos including the seeker is verily the Supreme Self. The seeker is to realize that he is no different from the Supreme Self and, as such, there is no way he is to meditate upon the Supreme Self. He is to abandon his awareness of being separate from the Supreme Self, for his union with the Divine.

27. How can I worship the Supreme Self which I cannot think of as an object either through knowledge or by any other means? I am myself the Supreme Self - Infinite.

The seeker is to realize that he is infinite, being one with the Supreme Self. As such he cannot seek to worship the Supreme Self as It is no different from him. He is not limited to any awareness of name or form apart from being the Supreme Self.

28. I am not the Cosmic Principle that is the effective cause of the cosmos. I am the ultimate Reality that is bereft of inference and reason, subject and object relationship. How do I know myself when I am beyond all knowledge?

There are stated to be twenty-four cosmic principles created by the Supreme Being that are the cause of the cosmos. They are *Prakrti*, reason, ego, mind, five sense organs and five organs of action, five subtle elements and five gross elements. The cosmos itself is considered unreal in the sense that it is ever transient. The ultimate Reality - the Supreme Being is the source of the cosmic principles.

Reason is the evolute of *Prakrti*. It is to make decisions both cognitively and ethically, both in cognition and in action. It is cosmic and covers the whole world. On the other hand it is separate for each individual and exhibits the qualities of knowledge, ethical detachment and also its opposites depending upon

the transparent and static nature of the individual. Inference is syllogism in Indian epistemology. Subjects and objects are constituents of the world (cosmos). The cosmic principles that are the cause of the world can only explain the subjects and objects of the world, with the aid of reason and inference. They cannot throw any knowledge of the Supreme Being, the source of the said principles.

29. Any object cannot assume the proportion of the infinite, by its becoming or in its being. All matter constituting objects is transitory. The *Atman* is the Supreme Reality. It is neither a concept nor an object. Such *Atman* can neither injure nor be injured.

Every object of the world (cosmos) is finite and, therefore, limited. As such, either in its being or becoming, it can never be infinite. All objects are the products of the five gross elements (*mahabhutas*). They are the becoming of the Supreme Being. They are like bubbles on the ocean, rising, dissolving, re-rising etc in a cycle without end. As such they are transient and unreal.

Only the *Atman* is the Supreme Reality - the Brahman. It is supreme consciousness, integral knowledge, etc. Simply because it is consciousness, it need not be identified with subjectivity as opposed to objectivity. At every transcendental level, the opposition between the subject and the object at the lower level is overcome, and what transcends and covers both cannot be a mere subject or object of the lower level. For this reason the highest I-Am - *Atman* is called the highest truth. The highest Transcendental I-Am cannot be one among many. It is only One, and is neither a concept nor an object.

Causing injury or violence can be by thought, word or deed. Matter is involved in action that might cause injury or violence. Matter and mind interact with each other. Mind experiences the injury or violence caused to matter. The *Atman* is beyond mind and matter. Neither does It injure, nor be injured. It is, therefore, unaffected by injury or violence.

30. You are the formless, pure, eternal, never born, immutable Reality. You are the *Atman*. There is no scope for any doubt. Why do you feel perplexed as to the *Atman*?

For the seeker, mind is the source of doubt. He is to transcend the mind in the firm faith that he is the *Atman*. The perplexion or confusion vanishes when the mind is transcended.

31. As long as the jar is intact with water, it reflects the sky on the surface of water within and gives an illusion that it contains the sky. When the jar is broken, water spills away. The sky is no longer seen in illusion. It remains where it is.

The human body is like a jar. The life principle within is like water. The Brahman is reflected as individual soul (*atman*) within, as *akasa* is reflected in the

water of the jar. When the body perishes on death, the individual *atman* merges into the Brahman.

32. The distinctions, such as pot and the sky seen in the pot, the human body and the soul within, relate to objects created, but not to the Brahman. The Brahman is beyond all knowledge and measure. The Infinite cannot be measured or assessed by finite means.

The Brahman is beyond perception. What is perceived is the creation, the becoming of the Brahman. The created world or the world of cosmology is an ordered whole possible to measure. It is what is measured and, therefore, called *Maya (Prakriti)*, and also the product of *Maya*. It is the world of action or the being for action, and is the pragmatic being. It is determined by the accepted means of knowing - cognition. But the Supreme Being (*paramartha-satta*) - the Brahman is beyond thought, speech and the means of cognition and cannot, therefore, be measured. It is basically that which does the measuring and lies behind the act of measuring. If what cannot be measured is Being, what can be measured is *Maya*, and not Being. It is important to note that what is not Being is not Non-being.

33. The *Atman* is omnipresent, immutable and eternal. Everything exists in the world as the becoming of the *Atman*. Everything is pervaded with the *Atman*. Do not entertain any doubt about it.

The seeker is not to exercise his mind or intellect to realize the *Atman*. When the *Atman* pervades everything in the universe, how does the mind or the intellect, finite and limited to the individual seeker, bring him realization of the *Atman*? The seeker is, therefore, to meditate in his *atman* (soul) to get into union with the Divine.

34. In the Brahman, there is no *Veda*, no world, no gods, no sacrifices and the like. There are no stages of life (*asramas*), no castes (*varnas*), no races and the like. There is no passage of darkness (smoke), no passage of luminance (light) either. The Brahman is the Supreme Reality and exists *Alone*. All that emerges out of the Brahman merges into the Brahman, reemerges out, merges into, etc. The cycle ever goes on.

The distinctions of *asramas*, *varnas* and races are only man-made for the society to function in harmony. The rituals to gods enjoined in the *Veda* are only to help the individual seeker to concentrate to meditate on the Divine for ultimate realization. What happens in the world outside is the *lila* or play of the Divine. The seeker is only to seek union with the Divine for eternal bliss.

35. If you realize the Absolute Truth that is beyond everything known, how do you deem your soul (*atman*) that is the Supreme *Atman* to be either perceptible or imperceptible?

The Divine Self is without name and form and beyond what is known. Being without name or form, or unknown, it is neither perceptible nor imperceptible. It is beyond perceptibility and imperceptibility. The soul (*atman*) of the seeker, being the same as the Self, is, similarly, beyond perceptibility and imperceptibility. It is beyond all cognition.

36. Some *Vedantins* prefer to be non-dualists. Some others prefer to be dualists. But neither category knows the Brahman that is beyond duality and non-duality.

‘Discrimination and knowledge’ (*jnana*) can only explain what the Brahman is. It does not, by itself, get realization of the Brahman to the seeker. What gets realization of and oneness with the Brahman is meditation (*dhyana*) in *samadhi-sthiti*. This state is supreme consciousness and is beyond the concepts of duality and non-duality.

37. The Absolute is beyond any color such as whiteness, beyond any quality such as sound. The Brahman is beyond thought and word. How do then people describe It?

The Brahman is without form, eternal and immutable. It is Divine Consciousness, beyond thought and word. As long as the intellect seeks to realize It, it never succeeds. The seeker is to seek to merge his consciousness into the Divine Consciousness. Stilled mind leads to deep silence which enables the seeker to realize the Brahman. The seeker, even on realization, cannot explain the Absolute or what It is.

38. If you realize that the world in its name and form, within and without, is transient and therefore unreal, you know that what is beyond the world is the Brahman. Then you will no longer be bound by conflicting ideas and contradictory postulations.

When the seeker realizes that the Brahman is the source of the Becoming (the cosmos), he realizes that the Brahman is beyond the cosmos and yet immanent in the cosmos. The cosmos is only an appearance on the substratum of the Brahman like bubbles on the ocean. The idea of the Brahman creating the cosmos which does not exist on its own, through His will, involves something like the idea of illusion.

When the seeker realizes that the Brahman is Pure Consciousness, One, Immutable, Eternal and All-pervading, ever present everywhere, he will no longer entertain any doubts of what the Brahman is or be bound by conflicting ideas or contradictory postulations.

39. When the Supreme Self and the self of the seeker are identical, eternal and all-pervading, where is meditation, and where is the meditator?

When the seeker is in deep silence, his mind transcended, merging his consciousness into the Divine Consciousness, he loses his individual ego. He no longer meditates on the Divine, as there is no individual ego to meditate on something different. When the seeker reaches the stage of merger of his consciousness into the Divine Consciousness, neither the meditator nor meditation exists.

40. Whatever I do, eat, sacrifice, offer, give out, it is not mine. Nothing belongs to me. I am always pure, immutable and unborn.

The seeker is to bear in view that he is not his body and mind. The activity in the physical world relates to one's body and mind. The possessions, the objects of senses, are claimed by mind and body only. The seeker is to realize that he is the *atman* alone, beyond the domain of the physical world, always pure, immutable and unborn.

41. Know that the being of this universe is without form, immutable and pure consciousness. Also know that the being of the universe is Supreme Beatitude.

The creative force is immanent in the Brahman. Creativity is negativity. The creation - the universe is the Brahman's own power of negativity, of creative self-differentiation, of immanence and self-transcendence. This is to say that the Brahman is the ground of everything that exists, the being of the world that is ever transient. The Being of the whole world is the Supreme or the Ultimate Being.

The Brahman is the support of everything that is. It means that the being of everything, that is, its 'to be' lies in its being rooted in the Brahman. This means that the Brahman - the Supreme Being throws out of Itself the shapes and forms of the world.

This makes the Brahman the efficient cause of the world. As ultimately the stuff of the world is the Being of the Brahman, it is the ultimate material cause. This gives rise to the idea that the Supreme Being - I-Am is everywhere, in all sentient and insentient objects. It is no other than Pure Consciousness Itself. The Brahman is thus Being and Consciousness. There is no distinction between Being and Existence.

The Brahman is Bliss, too. Bliss is the collecting together of our dispersed and divided being into an intense unity. It is infinitely more intense than the essence of everything in the world. It is the intensity of Being. As such, the state attained in realization is Bliss Itself. Thus Being, Consciousness and Bliss are attributes of the Brahman. They are the Brahman.

The seeker is to activate his *atman* (soul) for realization of the Supreme Being with absolute faith in the Oneness of the Supreme Being.

42. Without doubt, you are the Supreme Self and Eternal Reality. Do not entertain any doubt within yourself whether you are the *atman* and whether you can comprehend or experience the *atman*.

The seeker is to realize that his self (soul) represents fractional eternity while the Supreme Self represents the Integral Eternity. This understanding leads him to realize the Oneness of the Supreme Self which includes the individual souls. When the individual soul (*atman*) is part of the indivisible Supreme Self, it becomes the Supreme Self. Absolute faith in the seeker being the Supreme Self himself eliminates all doubts in him.

43. The Brahman – the Supreme Knowledge and ignorance do not co-exist as light and darkness do not co-exist. Everything of name and form originates from the formless, all-pervading Brahman, the Eternal One.

Ignorance is of the world of names and forms. The world of names and forms is only a superimposition on the substratum of the Brahman, as waves are on the ocean. Ignorance dissolves into Supreme Knowledge in the state of supreme consciousness, beyond the three states of human consciousness. Supreme Consciousness is the Brahman.

44. I am eternal, without any beginning, middle or end. I am not bound in any way by the grace of the Supreme Beatitude. It is my firm conviction that I am pure and perfect as *Atman*.

When the seeker realizes the Divine, he is filled with Divine Knowledge (*Brahma-jnana*). The darkness of the world of names and forms is dispelled for him and merges into light by the grace of the Divine. His bondage to the world of objects dissolves in freedom as the world no more exists for him in his state of supreme consciousness. He is in union with the Divine, eternal, pure and perfect.

45. All That Exists from the un-manifest to the manifest world is verily the Brahman. When everything is the Brahman, how can there be any concept of *varnas* (castes) and *asramas* (stages of life)?

In the early Indian society, man's life was divided into four stages called *asramas*, to enable man to reflect on the purpose and ideals of life so that he was not carried away by the needs, duties and responsibilities of his daily life in family and society. The *asramas* are *brahmacharya* (student), *grihasta* (house holder), *vanaprasta* (retirement into forest) and *snayasa* (mendicant). The life of *vanaprasta* and *sanyasa* are primarily meant for reflection on the ideals of life and spiritual realization.

The caste system of India was an historical growth, but not a stratification of society according to a preconceived plan. One Sanskrit word for caste is *varna* meaning color. The Aryans who had migrated to India in the pre-Vedic period, with their white skin could easily be distinguished from the local dark skinned races. Since the Aryans were far fewer in numbers than the original local inhabitants, they found it convenient to establish a social structure with religious sanctions that would safeguard their cultural and political superiority and adapted what could have been a kind of caste structure of the pre-Aryans. Accordingly they kept the religion of sacrifices for themselves. The priests in charge of religion were called *brahmanas*. The warriors were called *kshatriyas*. They kept part of the profession of trade to themselves and gave part to the local inhabitants. The traders were called *vaisyas*. Agriculture and other forms of manual labor were entrusted to the local inhabitants. The cultivators and the laborers were called *sudras*. Several sub-castes arose out of the mingling of the four.

While the functions associated with the *asramas* were called *asramadharmas*, the functions associated with the *varnas* were called *varnadharma*. There was an inter-relationship in the functions between the *asramadharmas* and the *varnadharma*.

Although the four *asramas* or stages were recommended to all men, women and the fourth caste in general were dissuaded from taking to the third and the fourth stages. Old wives of old men accompanied their husbands to the forest in the third stage. But it was thought that women always needed protection and they were prohibited from going independently to the forest where no protection was available.

Since the fourth stage was hard and its follower had to live by him or herself, women were not allowed to take to it, even when their husbands took to the fourth stage, though there were exceptions. The fourth caste was prohibited from taking to these stages as it was thought, rightly or wrongly, that members of that caste were not capable of self-reflection, self-examination and self-control, and was immature both in intellect and in character.

But there were instances of men like Vidura and Suta who were saintly, and even taught the higher castes about ethics, immortality, the nature of God and the like. For the sake of social stability and welfare, such saints and sages of the fourth caste did not violate the social injunctions. The *dharma* associated with both the *varnas* and *asramas* is called *varna-asramadharmas*.

The structure of *asramas* and *varnas* is in the context of harmony of social life coupled with the pursuit of self-realization. None of these is ever predicated of the Supreme Being - the Brahman. When the seeker is in the knowledge of the Supreme Being, he is beyond the consciousness of the body and the mind, and the society around. He is neither affected by the senses nor attached by the forms and

names of the world. The seeker is only a witness consciousness of the *lila* (sport) of the Supreme Being. Contemplating that he is no other than the Supreme Being - the Brahman, the seeker is happy and blissful.

46. From every point of view, I realize that I am the Supreme Reality - the Omniscient and the Omnipresent. All the gross elements such as earth, water, fire, air and space appear unreal to me.

Everything in the world of objects is considered to contain all the five gross elements, namely earth, water, fire, air and space in different proportions. When there is transformation of any object of matter, there is only a change in the proportion of the gross elements. The gross elements thus exist in every object in the world. This doctrine is called the doctrine of Quintuplication. It is doubtful whether this doctrine has a scientific basis.

At the stage of realization, ontologically the seeker merges into and is one with the Brahman. This arises only in *samadhi*. He transcends his individual consciousness to merge into the Divine Consciousness. Nothing of the manifest world exists for him. The gross elements that make up the whole of the manifest world do no longer matter for him.

47. The *Atman* is neither male, nor female, nor neuter. Neither by perception nor by inference can It be known. Is it not futile to ponder over the bliss or blisslessness of the *Atman*?

There is no gender for the *Atman*. Nor can It be known by perception or inference or by any other means of cognition. Nor is it known that realization of the *Atman* generates bliss or blisslessness. Any knowledge of the *Atman* can only be in the state of duality for the seeker, for the valid ways of knowing or cognition, or knowledge relate to mind. Unless the seeker transcends the mind and, therefore, the duality, there is no realization of the *Atman*. In the state of realization, there is no knowledge of bliss or blisslessness but only experience of bliss, as this state is that of thought transcended, the state of serene silence resulting from stillness of the mind.

48. Any kind of *yoga* cannot sanctify or purify the nature of the *atman* (soul). Nor does the annihilation of mind purify it. The teaching of *guru* is of no help. This is for the reason that the real or true nature of the *atman* (soul) is purity itself.

The manifestation of the Supreme Being is totally pure. It is pristine purity (*nirmala*) as It is Pure Consciousness. Either *yoga* of any kind such as works, devotion, meditation or knowledge, or the teaching of a *guru* can only prepare the seeker for realization. He is to realize the Divine *Atman* on his own, in his own way, in *samadhi*, purely by the grace of the Divine.

49. The *atman* is neither body of the five elements, nor is it bereft of the body. All that exists is truly *Atman*. How can one ascribe three states or four states to the *atman*?

Ontologically all that exists is the *Atman*. Physical entities of name and form are made of elements. The *Atman* (Brahman), the Supreme Consciousness, is All That Exists. It is not made of the gross elements as the objects of the world, or of anything else. The three states of waking, dream and deep sleep relate to human consciousness. Supreme consciousness is the fourth (*turiya*) state of consciousness, beyond the three states of human consciousness. This state is eternal and the other three states come and go in it. As the *turiya* state alone ultimately exists and as the three preceding states merge into it and disappear, the *turiya* state transcends itself and becomes *turiyatita*. The *Atman* (Self) is the *Turiyatita*, beyond the fourth state of consciousness.

50. I am neither liberated from, nor bound to, nor segregated from the Brahman. I am neither the doer, nor the enjoyer; neither the pervader nor the pervaded.

The seeker is to realize that he is no other than the Brahman that has no attributes. Liberation, bondage or segregation, activity or enjoyment, etc relate to the body and the individual ego. The consciousness of the body and the ego are in the realm of duality. Only when the seeker transcends his consciousness of body and mind, and the individual ego wholly, will he be in union with the Brahman. In the state of realization, there is no consciousness either of liberation or segregation from or bondage to the Brahman, either. Such consciousness reflects duality, with the seeker knowing himself different from the Brahman. The seeker is only in the state of supreme consciousness - the state of bliss.

51. Water in a container merges with water in another container, with no trace whatsoever of identity of either unit. Similarly, the Becoming and the Being of the Brahman are one and the same though they are considered different.

So far as creation is concerned, there is no Becoming without Being, and no Being without Becoming. The Becoming is always patterned in a perfect way. If there is no pattern, the Becoming will be a disconnected plurality. The pattern confers the way for different aspects of Becoming. This is to say that without something the same running through the different instants or moments of Becoming, Becoming cannot be becoming. Change cannot be change. They will be merely unconnected events.

The Brahman is also *Prakrti* - the Primordial-energy. When thought of as 'inactive', the Supreme Being is called the Brahman. When thought of as the creator, the preserver and the destroyer, the Supreme Being is called the Primordial-energy. The Brahman and *Prakrti* are identical, like fire and its power to burn. Water is water whether it is still or moving.

52. There is no liberation when there is no bondage. Liberation and bondage are relative to each other. How do you presume that you are the form or the formless?

Bondage and liberation are relative to thought. The mind conceives of bondage or liberation of the body and / or the mind related to the world of names and forms, and of action. It does not concern the soul or the *atman*. If the seeker realizes that he is not the body or the mind, but the *atman*, he has no concern of liberation or bondage, as he is beyond the consciousness of the world of forms and names, and of action. As *atman*, the seeker has no concern to the form. As all *atmans* integrate with the Supreme *Atman* in Its Oneness, the seeker is beyond the consciousness of form or formlessness.

53. The Brahman is all-pervading, omnipresent, without form and eternal. The Becoming of the Brahman has form, like a mirage.

The world of names and forms admits of classification. It is an ordered whole in which the laws of space, time and causation hold true. But it is not a self-contained and self-consistent whole. The self-contradictory nature of the world in relation to space, time and causation establishes it. What lies beyond the world is no chaos, but Being Itself. The Being of the world we experience is the Brahman. It is the nature of that Being - the Brahman to support the world in spite of its contradictions. The self-contradictory aspect makes the Becoming - the world of forms, a mirage. In spite of its self-contradictory nature, causality holds true in the world. The Brahman is, however, beyond any classification.

54. I possess neither a *guru* nor his instruction; neither any attribute, nor am involved in action. I am infinite, eternal and pure in nature.

The state of realization or union with the Divine is the *turiyatita* state - the state, beyond the fourth, of supreme consciousness, related to a human being. In this state, there is no role for *guru* or his instruction. The seeker has no awareness, nor is he involved in action. As he is in union with the Divine, he is no other than the Brahman, eternal, infinite and ever pure.

55. You are pure; you are beyond mind and body. You are the *atman*. But at the level of ego (*aham*), you must be ashamed to claim that 'I am the *Atman*, the Supreme Reality'.

The seeker secures union with the Divine only when he transcends his mind and ego. As long as the ego is intact, any claim of realization or union with the Brahman is only a boast or a false claim.

56. Oh mind! Weep not. You are truly merged in the thought of the *Atman*. Dear friend, enjoy the supreme nectar of the infinite ocean of the Supreme Oneness.

The seeker is to transcend the state of his mind for union with the Divine. Transcendence of mind is not by its annihilation, but by taming it and gradually stilling it until it is completely withdrawn into the *atman*. The mind is to be turned away from the mundane world until it ceases to be functional. This is possible when the mind is attuned and integrated into the *atman*, to enjoy the bliss of the Supreme Oneness.

57. In the realm of the *Atman*, there is neither wisdom, nor ignorance, nor the combination of both. He, who attains the knowledge, becomes Knowledge itself.

Wisdom or ignorance is related to the intellect of the seeker. The attainment of the *Atman* is beyond the mind and the intellect. What attains the *Atman* is not the knowledge gained by the mind and the intellect. It is the Supreme Knowledge Itself that attains the *Atman*. This Knowledge is attained by the *atman* of the seeker and not his intellect.

58. Knowledge of the *Atman* does not stoop to the level of reasoning or the practice of meditation. It does not depend on the instruction of *guru*. Nor does it depend on space or time. When one becomes the Supreme Knowledge Itself, the Ultimate Reality is realized as Infinite, Eternal and All-pervading.

Knowledge of the *Atman* is not based on logic or reasoning. Nor is it available through any valid means of knowing or cognition. It is not attained by meditation. The *guru* can be of no help either. It is the experience of the *Atman* attained by the grace of the Divine, beyond the state of the mind and the intellect.

Supreme Knowledge is the Divine Self. When the seeker becomes the Supreme Knowledge, he is in union with the Divine - Infinite, Eternal and All-pervading. As the seeker is in union with the Divine, he realizes himself to be infinite, eternal and all-pervading.

59. I am never born. As I am never born, I shall never die. I have no action to perform – either good or bad, as I am the Brahman without attributes. There can be no limitation or bondage to me.

The seeker is no other than the *atman*. As the *atman*, he is eternal and never born. As such, there is no death to him either. There is no action too, as action is related to the senses, mind and the body-organs which are of the world of action. Limitation or bondage is only a constraint to the body and the mind. When, as *atman*, the seeker is beyond the mind and the body, how can there be limitation or bondage to him?

60. The Brahman is everywhere, infinite, unmoved, full and all-pervading. There can be neither centre, nor circumference for the Brahman. There can be neither inside, nor outside, nor any kind of diversity for the Brahman.

In the state of realization of the Divine, there is only the Divine *Atman* everywhere, eternal and all-pervading. The individual ego totally merges into the Divine *Atman*. Only the Brahman Is, One, Immutable and Whole.

61. The whole world appears to me as a continuum of the Infinite Oneness. Oh! But *Maya* creates the illusion of distinctions between duality and non-duality.

Maya is *Prakrti*. It is the instrument that creates, sustains and dissolves the world of forms and names. It is something that makes the objects we experience determinate through spatial, temporal and causal laws. The world of forms and names is but a superimposition on the substratum of the Brahman as the waves are on the ocean. The waves are continuous with the ocean and have their support in it. So is the world of names and forms related to the Brahman.

Maya causes the illusion of distinctions between duality and non-duality in the created world. All philosophies of religion or spirituality are only mere knowledge. Supreme Knowledge of the Oneness - the Brahman alone is true realization of the Divine.

62. In the enquiry as to the Brahman, any object with or without form is negated saying, 'not this, not this'. Only the Supreme Beatitude is free from the discrimination of 'not this'.

One way of self-realization is by way of discrimination and knowledge called *Jnana-yoga*. This is the core of the *Vedantic* philosophy that has engaged the greatest sages and seers in India.

There are three kinds of reality - the Supreme Spirit, the individual spirits and the material principle. There are three kinds of relationship - the relation of the Supreme Spirit to the individual spirits, the relations of the individual spirits to matter and the relation of matter to the Supreme Spirit. Each of the three terms is related to the other two. So each relationship has two directions.

A number of questions arise. For example, are all the relations of the same kind? Are they of the same kind in each of the directions? What is the nature of the differences, if the three relations are of different kinds? If each relation is different in each of its directions, what is the nature of the difference? What is the role of the Brahman as the Supreme Spirit in creation of the matter - the world?

One must practise discrimination to enquire the pros and cons of each issue and to choose the one that leads to the Brahman. For instance, 'lust and greed' is impermanent. God is the only Eternal Substance. What does a man get

with money? Food, clothes and a dwelling place - nothing more! One cannot realize God with its help. Therefore, money can never be the goal of life. Such is the process of discrimination. Discrimination is the path of reasoning - *vichara*.

One is to discriminate about objects. One is to consider what is there in a beautiful body. On discrimination, one finds that the body of a beautiful woman consists of bones, flesh, fat and other disagreeable things. Should one give up God and direct one's attention to such things? Why should one forget God for the sake of money, worldly objects and sensuous pleasures?

'One may enter the world after discrimination and dispassion. In the ocean of the world, there are six alligators - lust, anger, avarice, delusion, pride and envy. One need not fear the alligators if one smears one's body with turmeric before one goes into the water. Discrimination and dispassion are the turmeric. Discrimination is the knowledge of what is real and what is unreal. It is the realization that God alone is the real and eternal substance and all else is unreal, transitory and impermanent. One must cultivate intense zeal and love for God and be attracted to Him as the *gopis* of Brindavan. The magician alone is real; his magic is illusory. This is discrimination'.

By turning the mind within, one acquires discrimination and through discrimination, one thinks of truth. Then the mind feels the desire to go the way of God. Going the way of God, one can, without effort, gather the fruits of *artha* (wealth), *kama* (enjoyment), *dharma* (ethical merit) and *moksha* (salvation). After realizing God, one can also get, if one so desires *artha*, *kama* and *dharma* which are necessary for leading the worldly life.

Discrimination leads to the right views or understanding of the nature of the world, the right resolve to follow the truths, the right speech constituting truthfulness, the right action including non-injury, non-stealing, non-sensuality, non-lying and non-intoxication. These, in turn, lead to the right livelihood that does not involve the performing of prohibited actions as means of livelihood, the right endeavor to overcome the temptations of evil, the right mindfulness constantly placing one's ideal before oneself and the right concentration or meditation. When meditation becomes perfect, one attains realization - *nirvana*, a state of absolute non-disturbance and liberation.

The seeker, sticking to the path of knowledge, always reasons about the Reality. The Brahman is neither 'this' nor 'that'. It is neither the universe nor the living beings. Reasoning this way, the mind becomes steady. Then it disappears, is transcended and the seeker goes into the *samadhi*. This is the knowledge of the Brahman. It is the unwavering conviction of the aspirant that the Brahman alone is real and the world illusory, like a dream. What the Brahman is cannot be described.

The seeker reasons about the Brahman as long as He has not realized It. One cannot have this knowledge so long as there is the slightest trace of worldliness. The seeker is to keep his mind aloof from the objects of sight, hearing, touch and other things of a worldly nature. As long as the seeker is conscious of his body, he is conscious of duality. It is when he tries to describe what he sees, he finds duality. He is to give up his identification with worldly things, discriminating that it is 'not this, not this' he is looking after. Only thus does he realize the Brahman as his own inner consciousness.

The seeker thinks of God - the Brahman without form. He, following this path, does not accept the Divine Incarnation. The seeker seeks to realize the Supreme Soul. His ideal is the union of the embodied soul and the Supreme Being.

The seeker believes that the acts of creation, preservation and dissolution of the universe and all its living beings are the manifestations of *Sakti*, the Divine Power. By reasoning, he will realize that all these are as illusory as a dream in the sense that they are transient. The Brahman alone is the Reality. All else is unreal. Even this very *Sakti* is unsubstantial, like a dream.

Though the seeker reasons continuously, he cannot go beyond the stage of *Sakti* unless he is established in *samadhi*. Even when he says that he is meditating, he is in the realm of *Sakti*, within Its power. The seeker ultimately realizes that the Brahman and *Sakti* are identical. If he accepts the one, he must accept the other. It is like fire and its power to burn. It is like the sun with its radiation. Thus, the seeker cannot think of the Brahman without *Sakti* or of *Sakti* without the Brahman. One cannot think of the Absolute without the Relative, or of the Relative without the Absolute. When he gets into the *samadhi*, thus discriminating, what he realizes is the Brahman, beyond mind and speech.

The seeker, thus, gives up his identification with worldly things, discriminating 'not *this*, not *this*'. Only then can he realize the Brahman. It is like reaching the roof of a house by leaving the steps behind, one by one. But the realized seeker who is more intimately acquainted with the Brahman realizes that which is realized intuitively as the Brahman is then found to have become the universe and all its living things. The realized sees that the Reality which is *nirguna*, without attributes, is also *saguna*, with attributes.

The seeker initially feels that the Brahman alone is real and all else is illusory. Afterwards, he finds that it is the Brahman Itself that has become the universe, *Maya* and all living beings. The process of discrimination involves first negation and then affirmation. The seeker attains *Satchidananda* by negating the universe and its living beings. But after the attainment of *Satchidananda* he finds that *Satchidananda* Itself has become the universe and the living beings. Everything is Its manifestation. It is the Brahman alone that has become everything. The world by no means exists apart from It.

63. As *atman*, you have no relation to mother, father, relatives, wife, children or friends. You are neither partial nor impartial. Then, why is there such suffering for the mind and for what?

The human relationships relate to the body and the mind alone and not the soul (*atman*). Whatever concerns the body and the mind brings misery and unhappiness in its train, as it results in bondage. When the mind is shunned and transcended, the relationships cease to operate. There is, then, no misery or unhappiness to the seeker.

64. Oh mind, day or night, or light or darkness has no relevance to you. The *atman* in your body is infinite and without form. Then, how do you attribute name and form to it?

Time and space belong to action and to the world of action. Action belongs to man, a self-conscious being. Day and night or light and darkness are part of time in space. The 'I-consciousness' of the individual utilizes day and night for his action. For the mind they are not relevant. The mind is aware that the *atman* within the body is infinite and without form. Yet it attributes name and form to the individual based on the action the I-consciousness (*atman*) does in the sphere of time and space. It is strange that the mind attributes name and form to the individual who is but the *atman*.

65. The immutable *Atman* is indivisible. It is neither part nor whole, neither divided nor undivided. It is beyond happiness or misery.

The seeker realizes in his union with the Divine that the *Atman* (Brahman) is immutable, undivided, eternal, omnipresent and all-pervading. This realization is the experience of the *atman* (soul) and not the thought of the mind. The mind can only experience pain or pleasure, happiness or misery, etc. As the seeker has transcended his mind, he is beyond the experience of happiness or misery.

66. I am neither the doer nor the enjoyer. There is no action in me bound by the past or the present. I do not possess consciousness of the body or bodiless-ness. How am I to recognize mind or no-mind in me?

The seeker realizes that he is not the body or the mind, but only the *atman*. He has, therefore, no consciousness of doer-ship or enjoyment of any action, as self-conscious action is associated with body or mind. Whatever action he does, he does it for the Divine. He is not, therefore, bound by the result of the action either of the past or of the present. He has no consciousness of the body or bodiless-ness as he has transcended mind which alone causes such consciousness. As such, he recognizes no role of mind or no-mind in his personality.

67. I am free from passion and anger. I am free from misery related to the body or the mind. I am aware that I am the *Atman*, the eternal and all-pervading.

Passion and anger are emotions emanating from one of the three interior levels of mind, while the other two levels relate to logic and intuition. When the mind is stilled and withdrawn, there is no place for exercise of emotions. Similarly there is no misery to the body or the mind as experience of pain or misery is the function of the mind. When the consciousness of the body and the mind is transcended, the seeker knows that he is no other than the *Atman*.

68. Oh friend, mind! What is the utility of idle talk? The matter of realization of the Divine is no mere conjecture. It is very true and real. You, too, are infinite, eternal and all-pervading.

Mind indulges in reasoning and dialectic. All reasoning and dialectic only lead to knowledge, but not to actual realization. In the state of actual realization, mind ceases to be functional. It does not get annihilated. It only merges or dissolves into the *atman* of the seeker. As the *atman* is infinite, eternal and all-pervading, so is the mind dissolved in that state.

69. In whatever manner and at whatever place the *yogis* shed their mortal body, they merge into the Brahman. This is similar to the space reflected in the water of the jar joining the infinite space when the jar is broken.

Physical death in the world is only to the gross body of name and form. When there is awareness that an individual is not the body and the mind, but the *atman*, there is no death to the individual. The body changes form. But for a *yogi* realized, the life in which he is realized is the last. When the gross body of such realized *yogi* is shed physically, his finite (individual) *atman* joins the Divine *Atman*. He is not reborn. The manner and place of his shedding his physical (mortal) body is of no consequence.

70. A *yogi* may shed his body at a holy place or at the place of an untouchable, or in a state of coma (physical unconsciousness). But, on his shedding his mortal body, he becomes one with the Supreme Self.

The gross physical body is only a vehicle on earth for the *atman* (soul) to be its in-dweller. The body has no spiritual connection to the *atman*, in respect of a realized *yogi*. As such the place or manner of dropping the gross body by a *yogi* has no relevance to his *atman* (soul) joining the Supreme Self.

71. A *yogi* considers all ideals of life such as *dharma* (ethical merit), *artha* (wealth), *kama* (enjoyment), *moksha* (salvation), and all human, animate and inanimate beings and the like, just like water in a mirage.

A *yogi*, in spells of his entering the physical world after realization, is like a dried kernel in a coconut. Though within the coconut, the dried kernel has no contact what so ever with the shell. So is the *yogi* in the physical world, after

realization. Everything around is like water in a mirage, an illusion for him. The only Reality is the Brahman.

72. I did not do any action in the past. I do not perform any action in the present. Nor do I intend performing any action in the future. I need not, therefore, have to reap the fruits of action. This is my firm conviction.

There is no life without action. No one can live without action; even breathing is action. To think or to meditate is a kind of work. But as one develops love for God, one's worldly activities become fewer and fewer of themselves. One loses all interest in them.

One's very nature will lead one to action whether one likes it or not. Therefore, the scriptures suggest that one is to work in a detached spirit, that is to say, not to crave for the results of the work done in the manner anticipated. Any work done for God and in a detached spirit is considered as no work done. The work so done does not carry any merit or de-merit to the doer. The conviction that the doer of such action carries no merit or de-merit is true.

73. The *Avadhuta* lives in bliss, alone, in solitude, totally renouncing the ego and sanctified by the bliss of the Brahman. He moves about and finds everything within his own self as the Brahman.

An *Avadhuta* is an ascetic who has renounced all worldly attachments and connections. He is the one who has gone beyond the social customs of the day. He often moves about naked and lives on alms. He lives in bliss, alone and in solitude. He renounces ego. As he renounces his ego, he realizes the Brahman within.

74. Beyond the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep consciousness, there is said to be the fourth (*turiya*) state of human consciousness. Into the fourth state of consciousness, the preceding three states come and go. Finally they merge into the fourth state, which, at that stage, transcends itself into the state beyond – the *turiyatita*. This is the state where there is neither virtue nor vice. This is the state of the *Avadhuta* which is beyond bondage or liberation.

75. One cannot realize the Brahman by chanting Veda mantras (hymns), recitation of scriptures or practice of *Tantra*. The *Avadhuta*, being realized, becomes one with the continuous bliss of the Brahman. Such *Avadhuta* (Datattreya) sings this Gita out of his ecstatic bliss emanating from the *turiyatita* (beyond the fourth) state of consciousness.

2. Guru

1. A *guru* may be young in age, an enjoyer of worldly pleasures, an illiterate or a household servant. None of these, matters. Does one give up a gem dropped in dirt?

The seeker is to distinguish between a *guru* and a teacher. A *guru* is in the nature of an inner being sent to the seeker (disciple) by the Divine at the appropriate stage of his *sadhana* (spiritual practice) to attain realization. Age, caste, creed, gender, vocation, etc of the *guru* is of no relevance to the seeker. The seeker is to feel the *guru* in his soul and accept him as such.

2. The instruction of a *guru* is not to be judged from the points of view of literary or any other quality of excellence, but the spirit that lies behind. The seeker (disciple) is to imbibe worthy teachings. Even though the boat is not painted and looks ugly, it is capable of carrying passengers across the water.

A true *guru* instructs the seeker by the way of his life. He follows what he says and expects his disciples to emulate him. The instruction of the *guru* is to carry the seeker through his spiritual practices, to realization.

3. The Brahman is unmoved, and yet is the driving force of all that moves, with no effort. The Brahman is, by nature, calm, conscious, infinite and all-pervading.

The seeker, as disciple, realizes from a true *guru* the true nature of the Brahman and the mystery of His creation.

The word Brahman is derived from the Sanskrit verbal root *brh*, meaning to grow, to expand. The Brahman is the ever growing, the ever expanding, the infinite dynamic Being without limits or bounds. This dynamism involves infinite energy, force or power. The Brahman is thus not understood as mere abstract being, but as the root of the world itself. On the other hand, the Brahman is considered the Highest Being, the Absolute, the Transcendental Self. As the Supreme Consciousness, the Brahman is everywhere and all-pervasive. As such while the Brahman is unmoved being all-pervasive, It is the driving force of the cosmos that is ever in motion. The Brahman is Pure Consciousness, Serene, Infinite and All-pervasive.

4. The Supreme Consciousness is beyond cause and effect, mobility and immobility. How can the Supreme Consciousness be different from me?

The Brahman has no initial cause. It is, therefore, Uncreated. It has no precedent state. It is not a product. Nothing changes to be the Brahman, nor does It change to anything else. It does not undergo modification. The Becoming that arises out of It takes place without affecting Its very nature (*vivarta-karana*).

Vivarta means change without being affected by change. The Brahman is changeless.

The *guru* explains the mystery of the cosmos and the states of consciousness leading to the state beyond the fourth (*turiyatita*), which will dawn on the seeker the realization that he is no other than the Brahman.

5. As I am emancipated, I am beyond the essential and the non-essential. Therefore, neither birth nor death, neither doubt nor confusion binds me to mind.

The seeker is to realize that emancipation from worldliness is in the sphere of spirit and not in the realm of matter. As such, the I-consciousness (*aham*), on emancipation, is beyond the essential or the non-essential physicality, beyond birth and death. There is nothing that causes doubt or confusion to the mind as the mind is transcended into the *atman*.

6. I am without limit. I am luminous and effulgent. Even gods worship me. I am the eternal Brahman. I do not recognize any difference among the trinity of gods - Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.

The Supreme Being - the Brahman is without form and attributes, and is to be worshiped without form. The deities at the lower level such as the trinity of gods in Hindu mythology serve the interests of their devotees in a limited physical way. The true seeker after the Supreme Self only seeks realization of the Divine and not of the deities at the lower level who satisfy physical needs, but not grant realization of the Supreme Self.

7. The mind is a stream of thoughts passing over consciousness. It causes all kinds of thoughts to arise and exit. They come and go as bubbles on water. There is no more ignorance or doubt in my mind about my true nature.

When the seeker realizes the true state of the mind, he gives no importance to the stream of thoughts flowing across it. The mind then does not entertain any doubt or ignorance of its true nature. The seeker seeks to transcend his mind and ordinary human consciousness, to be in a state of supreme consciousness for union with the Divine.

8. As qualities such as softness and hardness, sweetness and bitterness are attributed to respective objects, intellect as well as the elements is pervaded by the Brahman.

The qualities such as softness and hardness, sweetness and bitterness are integral to the objects concerned. For instance, sugar is sweet; fire is hot. The sweetness of sugar and the heat of fire are integral to sugar and fire respectively. Similarly intellect, elements and the like are integral to the Brahman. They are not

qualities being different from the Brahman. They are the attributes, being the Brahman Itself.

9. Water is still water whether it is pure, saltish or murky. Similarly there is no dividedness (division) between the Being and the Becoming of the Brahman.

So far as the cosmos is concerned, there is no Becoming without Being, and no Being without Becoming. The Becoming is always patterned in a perfect way. If there is no pattern, the Becoming will be a disconnected plurality. The pattern confers the way for different aspects of Becoming. This is to say that without something the same running through the different instants or moments of Becoming, Becoming cannot be becoming. Change cannot be change. They will be merely unconnected events.

The objects of the real world - the Becoming of the Brahman, have observability and perceivability. They are meant for action and meet the conditions of action. The Being of the whole world as such is the Supreme and the Ultimate Being. As the Brahman creates and maintains the world, It destroys it, too. When it is destroyed, it is absorbed and assimilated into the Brahman – the Supreme Being. Thus the Brahman is the Being as well as the Becoming. The nature of the Brahman does not change in between the Being and the Becoming, as the nature of water does not change because of its varying quality as being pure, saltish or murky.

10. The Brahman is subtler than the subtlest. It is devoid of appellation. It is beyond senses, mind and intellect. It is self- effulgent and all-pervading.

The Brahman, being the Supreme Being, permeating and pervading everything in the world is the Supreme Consciousness. It is, therefore, considered the Supreme Spirit or the *Atman*. By Its very nature of being all-encompassing and all-pervading phenomenon, the Supreme Spirit or *Atman* is considered the innermost attribute or constituent of the individual spirits or *atmans*. The Supreme Being becomes the *Atman* of all the *atmans* - the Universal Spirit residing in all individual spirits. The Supreme Spirit thus inwardizes into the individual spirits. The individual *atmans* - spirits are the subtlest. The Brahman is, therefore, considered subtler than the subtlest, as It is innermost to the individual *atmans* - spirits.

The Brahman is Pure Consciousness and is, therefore, beyond the cosmic principles that constitute the physical world including man. As such, It is beyond mind, intellect and senses. The Brahman is all light - self-effulgent. But It is not the light we perceive, not material light. It is impossible to explain the Brahman by analogy as between light and darkness.

The Brahman is THAT which the *atman* (spirit - soul) of the seeker alone can realize beyond mind and intellect, and the varied states of consciousness.

11. When the Brahman is infinite and eternal, how can there be 'I' or 'you' or the world of animate and inanimate beings?

Sankara says, 'If you do not have a consciousness, then everything is dark and nothing in the universe exists.' This corresponds to the view of the modern quantum mechanics that unless you can observe a thing, it just does not exist. This is for the reason that there must be an interaction between the observer and the observed to complete a measurement. It is human consciousness that determines the existence of the material world. As the Brahman is beyond intellect and human consciousness, there is neither the observer nor the observed. There is no place for cognition of 'I' or 'you' or the world of animate and inanimate beings in the state of realization of the Brahman.

12. The Brahman is described as the infinite space. Truly, like the space, the Brahman is infinite and all-pervading. The Brahman is Supreme Consciousness, Omniscient and All-pervading (whole).

The 'infinite' attribute of the Brahman refers to the integral whole of all That Exists. The integral whole is Supreme Consciousness and, as such, Omniscient and Omnipresent.

13. The Brahman cannot be contained by gross elements (*mahabhutas*). The elements of earth and air cannot contain the Brahman. Water cannot submerge It. Fire cannot consume It. Space cannot limit It.

The five gross elements - earth, water, fire, air and space - constitute the relative world of objects. Each object is said to contain all the five gross elements, in some proportion. Even when there is transformation of any object, still it contains all the five gross elements, but in a different proportion. The relative world constituting the gross elements is itself the *lila* (sport) of the Brahman (Divine). The gross elements like the relative world emerge out, merge into and re-emerge out of the Supreme Being in a cycle without end.

14. The Brahman pervades the space. But the Brahman is not pervaded by anything. The Brahman is the only One, without a second. It is in everything, undivided and without interruption. It is within, without and everywhere.

The seeker attains a glimpse of the Brahman in spirit, in *samadhi*. The manner of attaining the glimpse of the Brahman may be called *siva-drushti* - the manner of seeing the beatitude. This has no analogy to the physical vision. This is realization by the *atman*.

15. The Brahman is subtle, imperceptible and without attributes (qualities). The means prescribed by the *yogis* for realization of the Brahman must be followed one after the other.

The Brahman is beyond the comprehension of the intellect as It is subtle, imperceptible and without attributes (qualities). The intellect cannot determine the manner of seeking realization of the Brahman. But the *guru* is aware of the possibility of realization of the Brahman, with the grace of the Divine. As there is no known way to realize the Brahman, the seeker is to follow the guidance of his *guru* and attempt different ways and means stated by the *yogis* that have earlier realized the Brahman, one after the other, until such time he realizes the Brahman himself.

16. The constant practice of meditation of the Divine keeps the mind away from clinging to any particular object. When the objects do not attract the mind, the mind is transcended, and merges into the infinite *atman*. It has no more concern for good and evil.

The mind is to be weaned away from the physical objects by constant meditation of the Divine, tamed and finally absorbed into the *atman*. The mind is to be handled pleasantly to being weaned away from the physical objects. Any violent approach to annihilate it will produce negative effect. Whatever one resists, persists in some form or other. When the mind merges into the *atman* (soul), it takes no more cognizance of good or evil, pain or pleasure, or the like.

17. The deadly poison of worldliness causes delusion. The only unfailing antidote to it is the innate nectar (ambrosia) of the Brahman.

For the seeker who realizes that he is the *atman* and not the body and the mind, the world of names and forms is only a delusion. He is able to overcome the delusion by meditating on the Brahman, with a view to realizing It. Realization of the Brahman – the Divine nectar - is the only antidote to the delusion of the worldliness.

18. The mind can think of the Brahman both with form and without form. But the Brahman is neither with form nor without form. The Brahman is the innermost one in you.

In the search for the Brahman, the seeker may conceive of a form or formlessness. It is possible for him to realize the Brahman either way as the Brahman takes the form or formlessness the devotee worships, in the state of his realization. But, in fact, the Brahman is neither with form nor without form. As Pure Consciousness, the Brahman is everywhere and omnipresent, and is subtler than the subtlest. The Brahman is, thus, innermost to the finite spirits or *atmans*. The seeker may well realize the Brahman if he looks within his self.

19. The outer manifestation of the Brahman is the universe. The inner manifestation is *Prakrti*. The Brahman is the innermost of the inner self, like water within the kernel of a coconut.

The Brahman is the true ontological Being - Supreme I AM. The universe has its being in the Brahman. It is the outer manifestation of the Brahman. On the other hand, *Prakriti* is the world of change in its un-manifest state. It is also the primary (*pradhana*) state as it is the source, the origin of everything in the universe. It is, therefore, the inner manifestation of the Brahman. The Brahman is the Supreme Being, the Supreme Consciousness. It is also considered the Supreme Spirit or the *Atman*. By its very nature of all-encompassing and all-pervading phenomenon, the Supreme Spirit is considered the innermost attribute or constituent of the individual spirits or *atmans*. Thus the Brahman is the innermost of the inner self of the seeker.

20. The knowledge that relates to the outer world is an illusion. True knowledge is within you (your soul). Realize the Brahman which is in your innermost self, like water within the kernel of the coconut.

The outer world of names and forms is transient, therefore unreal, and an illusion. Unlike the mind which is but a stream of thoughts related to the physical world and the world of imagination and fantasy, the human soul (*atman*) carries true knowledge of the Brahman. It is aware that the Supreme Spirit - the Brahman inwardizes into and resides in all individual spirits. The seeker is, therefore, to realize the Brahman in his innermost self.

21. On a bright full-moon night, one sees only moon and nothing else, emanating light from the sky. Likewise, one is to perceive the Brahman as the sole source of effulgence of the Divine.

On a full-moon night, the light emanating from the moon is effulgent, and absorbs the light of stars and the other heavenly bodies. The light of the moon alone is noticed. Similarly, the seeker is to realize that the Brahman alone is the sole source of effulgence of the Divine and meditate on It for ultimate realization. Any diversion of attention in the mind is detrimental to his pursuit.

22. The seeker of the Brahman has to train his perception and intellect to envision non-dualism (monism). He may give away his ignorance in charity. As a result, pure and unsullied intellect springs out of him (his soul) to enable him to realize the Brahman. Such a seeker may be one in ten million.

23. Whether the seeker is a scholar or an ignoramus, it is his *guru* who, with his grace, makes the seeker realize the Divine Knowledge to cross the ocean of the cycle of births and deaths.

A divinely ordained *guru* is necessary to impart the truth of the Supreme Self to the seeker. This knowledge so imparted by the *guru*, with his grace, enables the seeker to realize the Divine and attain salvation.

24. The seeker who attains the Supreme Reality is liberated from attachment and aversion. He will be devoted to the welfare of every being. He possesses very steady intellect that enables him to be in union with the Divine.

The seeker guided by a *guru* to attain the Supreme Reality has no more attachment to or aversion from any physical entity. He is no longer affected by the mind or the senses, and possessed only by the soul (*atman*). When he enters the physical world from *samadhi-sthiti*, he possesses very steady intellect, totally detached from the world that enables him to be ever in union with the Divine. Whatever work he does is only for God. He, therefore, cares for the welfare of every being.

25. As the space reflected in the water of a jar merges with the infinite space when once the jar is broken, a *yogi*, on realization, loses the consciousness of his body as it merges into the Supreme Consciousness.

26. It is said that in whatever state the human beings are, while living, they attain their next birth based on what they desire at the time of their death.

This teaching of the *Srutis* is based on the principle '*ya matihi sa gatihi*' (as is the mind (at the time of death), so is the birth that follows). This is to say that the soul taking the form of a body on reincarnation is the creation of pure thought - the work of the subtle mind forming part of the soul. As the soul exits the body on death, the subtle mind forming part of it also exits. But it carries the impressions of the individual mind at the time of death. These impressions - the pure thought - impact upon the soul as to the next body to be taken on reincarnation.

The thought of an ordinary individual at the time of his death is no other than what he has been thinking all along his life. If he is engrossed in worldly ways while living, he goes through a cycle of births and deaths, with no enlightenment of the soul. A *yogi*, on the other hand, ever contemplates and meditates on the Divine, beyond the state of mind and human consciousness. When he gives up life, the pure thought his subtle mind carries is no other than the Supreme Spirit. This is the reason for his *atman* merging into the Supreme Self, on his giving up his physical body.

27. The destination of those following the *Karma Yoga* can be described in words. But the destination reached by the *yogi* cannot be expressed.

The seeker is to realize that all action (*karma*) is related to the mind and the body, and in the physical plane. The *karma yoga* helps the seeker to move up the path of realization up to a stage, but not reach the final destination. The *karma yoga* can always be described in words, being physical action of the world. But what the *yogi* seeks is true union with the Divine, with his *atman* merging into the

Supreme *Atman*, beyond the realm of mind. It is, therefore, beyond comprehension and description, beyond thought and word.

28. Aware that the destination to be reached cannot be described, a *yogi* shall not imagine that a particular path will lead him to his destination. He may give up his desire to know of the path and even doubt the very possibility of realization. The realization for him comes ultimately on its own and spontaneously.

One seeking realization of the Divine cannot be certain of any particular path leading one to it. Realization of the Divine is only by the grace of the Divine at the time and in the manner ordained by the Divine. The *guru* will only help to prepare the seeker for realization. The seeker may get disenchanted with his *sadhana* (spiritual practice) bearing no fruit in the way. He is only not to lose heart, and continue to meditate on the Divine, beyond mind and physical consciousness. Realization dawns on him sometime unexpectedly and spontaneously.

29. Whether a *yogi* that has attained oneness with the Divine dies at a holy place or a place of an untouchable, there is no rebirth to him. He merges into the Brahman. The place of birth or death, or the way of his life in the world is of no relevance, as he lives, while alive, in the realm of the *atman*.

30. The seeker who has realized the inmate, eternal, inconceivable, uncontaminated and pure effulgence within his self may act in any manner. He is free of ignorance as it dissolves into the effulgence. The merit or demerit of any action he does, does not attach to him as he does not desire the fruit of his action. He has, therefore, neither loss nor gain.

31. A *yogi* attains through *dhyana* (meditation) oneness with the Brahman that is pure, incomparable, without form, without support, incorporeal, without desire, without attributes, non-dual, devoid of delusion, beyond attachment, ever effulgent, all-pervading and endowed with infinite power.

32. The *yogi* that attains the Brahman is not bound by the *Veda*, the initiation, the tonsure of his head, the *guru* or the disciple, the power generating symbolic diagrams (*yantras*) and postures (*mudras*). All these only manifest the physical worldly entities. The true Brahman is beyond the manifest and the un-manifest.

33. The Supreme *Atman* which a *yogi* attains originates neither in *Siva* (Manifest) nor in *Sakti* (Un-manifest). In the Supreme *Atman* there is neither a posture (*mudra*) nor penance (*diksha*), neither microcosm nor macrocosm, neither form nor formlessness, neither a beginning nor an end, nor an illusion like the space reflected in the water in a jar (pot).

34. The entire animate and inanimate entities of the world emanate from the Brahman, dwell there and dissolve into the Brahman, as foam and bubbles arise from water and dissolve into it.

Foam and bubbles arise on water, dissolve, again arise, and dissolve without end. So is the world of animate and inanimate entities emanating from the Brahman, dissolving into the Brahman, re-emanating and re-dissolving in an endless cycle. The world of animate and inanimate entities is as real or unreal as the foam and bubbles on water.

35. The Supreme *Atman* is beyond wisdom and illusion (ignorance). It cannot be manifested by any *yogic* exercises such as control of breath, fixing the gaze on a specific centre, taking specific *asanas* (physical postures) for stillness in the body or moving the life force such as *Kundalini* up in the body. A *yogi* merges into such Supreme *Atman*.

The exercises of *yoga* such as *Raja-yoga*, *Tantra* may be of avail only to prepare the seeker on the path of realization. But they do not help him reach his final goal.

36. The Supreme Brahman is neither one, nor more than one, nor another. It is beyond measure like emptiness, vastness, largeness or smallness. It is devoid of dimensions; nor does It repeat. The world of names and forms is only a diversity of forms for the purpose of knowledge.

Diversity is created in the mind while unity is realized in the soul (*atman*). As long as there is awareness of diversity, it means that the mind is functional and is not transcended. Unless the mind is transcended, there can be no realization of the Brahman.

The diversity of the world indicates that the world is an ordered whole according to measure. It is *Maya*, meaning to measure. The etymological root of the word *maya* makes it clear that it is something that makes the objects we experience determinate through spatial, temporal and causal laws. It is only the Supreme Being that is not obtained through this measure. The Supreme Being is basically that which does the measuring and lies behind the act of measuring.

- 37-38 When once a *yogi* attains the Supreme Bliss of the *Atman*, he is no more classified as self-restrained or ecstatic. It does not matter whether he possesses wealth or not, or whether he is active or in-active.

A *yogi*, on realization of the *Atman*, is neither concerned with physical possessions nor with their absence, neither with activity nor with in-activity. He may live in the world, but not of the world.

39. For a *yogi* that is realized, there are no injunctions or prohibitions. Nor is he subject to or bound by scriptures. There is neither purity nor impurity in his undifferentiated mind. Anything forbidden to others is permissible to him as he is beyond the social rules of conduct.

40. The mind can never grasp the Brahman. The instruction or scholarship of the *guru* cannot make the seeker realize the Brahman. Only the *guru* that has realized the Brahman can reveal the Brahman to the seeker.

The seeker is to realize that scholarship or instruction of his *guru* is of no avail for realization. Any kind of discrimination or acquisition of knowledge is of no consequence. Only the *guru* that has realized the Brahman himself can reveal the Brahman to the seeker. The secret of realization is in finding intuitively the right *guru*, ordained by the Divine, who has realized the Brahman himself.

3. The Brahman

1. The Brahman is beyond the classification of merit and demerit. It has neither passion, nor dispassion. It is the purest being of the Un-manifest. It is all-pervading. How do I worship the Supreme Beatitude that has neither attributes nor attitudes, is Omniscient and Omnipresent?

At the commencement of his spiritual practice, the seeker is in the realm of his mind and the three states of human consciousness. At this stage he is aware of his ideal - the realization of the Divine. But he has no idea of the Supreme Brahman as It is beyond thought and consciousness. He is in the stage of duality, considering himself separate from the Brahman. He looks to the clue as to how he can worship the Supreme Beatitude that has no attributes or attitudes, is all-pervading, omniscient and omnipresent.

2. The Supreme Brahman is eternal and beyond any quality such as color. It is neither the cause nor the effect, and beyond the both. It is beyond the awareness of unity or diversity. As I am the Supreme Beatitude myself, who do I prostrate to offer my worship?

From the cosmological point of view, the world has colors, sounds, smells, shapes, forms, etc. The cosmos emerges out of the Brahman and dissolves into It. While the qualities such as color relate to the cosmos, the Brahman is without qualities - *nirguna*.

The Brahman has no initial cause. It is, therefore, uncreated (*anadikarana*). It has no precedent state. It is not a product. Nothing changes to be the Brahman. Nor does It change to anything else. It is changeless. It is, therefore, neither the cause nor the effect of anything and is beyond both. It does not undergo modification. As such, It is beyond the awareness of unity or diversity

The scriptures enjoin and the *guru* teaches such *mahavakyas* as '*Aham Brahmasmi*' (I am the Supreme Beatitude). The seeker contemplates who he is to worship for realization of the Supreme Beatitude when he is said to be the Supreme Beatitude himself.

3. I am neither created, nor part of creation. I always manifest. I am self-effulgent with no need to borrow light from elsewhere. I am separate from all the luminous objects of the world as I am self-luminous. I am pure existence, awareness, bliss and infinite, as I am the eternal Supreme Beatitude.

The seeker is to bear in view that his spiritual practice for realization of the Supreme Beatitude is to be consistent with the truth of his being the Supreme Beatitude himself. The spiritual exercise may be in the regulated breathing with the mind having been stilled and the *atman* (soul) activated. When the breathing is with the awareness of the mind, it is just physical breathing. When the awareness

of the mind is transcended, the breathing takes the form of *so-ham* which may eventually lead to *Aum* - the supreme *mantra* of meditation that leads to his oneness with the Divine.

4. How do I realize whether the Brahman has desires or is beyond desires, has attributes or has no attributes, is real or unreal and has form or is beyond form? I am myself being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

As long as the seeker contemplates the manner of realizing the Brahman, he is in the realm of the mind and, therefore, in the state of duality. He has no clarity as to the nature of the Brahman as It is beyond concept, thought and word.

When once the seeker experiences union with the Supreme Self he sees no distinction or classification in the Supreme Self, as he is the Supreme Self himself. He realizes that the Supreme Self is One, Eternal and All-pervading.

5. The Supreme Knowledge is the knowledge of the Divine Eternal. The philosophy of neither Non-dualism nor Dualism can be of any use to gain the knowledge of the Divine. What we consider permanent includes what is temporal. The Brahman is beyond being permanent or temporal, being infinite and eternal.

6. The Absolute Brahman is neither gross nor subtle, neither appears nor does not appear, has neither an origin, evolution nor an end, and is neither comparable to nor higher than any other thing. This is the truth and ultimate reality. Know for certain that I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

The *guru* prepares the seeker that he is no different from the Supreme Brahman that has no attributes (qualities), no origin and, therefore, no evolution and end, no form and, therefore, no appearance. The Brahman is beyond comparison as It is only one with no second. When the seeker firmly believes in his mind that he is no other than the Supreme Brahman, his meditation of the Divine transcends his mind and he enters the state of supreme consciousness for union with the Divine.

7. The sense organs and their objects hang heavily in the mind like clouds in the sky. You realize that the self-luminous Absolute is alone effulgent only when you realize that you are yourself being, awareness and bliss, eternal and all-pervading.

The mind, the ego, the sense organs and their objects try to distract the seeker from his pursuit of realization of the Divine. He is able to realize the Divine when he has firm faith that he is no other than the Divine himself. It is the firm faith of his being the Divine that leads him to his union with the Divine.

8. I am inscrutable and inaccessible as I am beyond intellect. Nor am I perceptible. I am the sight and yet impenetrable to sight as I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

The state of realization of the Divine is beyond the state of mind and intellect, and the three states of human consciousness. It is in the state of supreme consciousness which is beyond cognition.

9. I am that all-consuming fire into which all actions, reactions and inactions merge. I am that all-consuming fire which destroys all miseries associated with the senses. I am that all-consuming fire that burns up all the bodies of the *Atman*. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

When the seeker is on the path of realization, there arises a type of heat within the body that consumes organic, inorganic and bio-impurities within the body. It is this heat generated within that keeps the *yogis* physically comfortable when they do penance (*tapas*) barely clad or even naked, in the heights of the mountains. The meditation on the Divine withdraws them from their intellect and human consciousness when activity, sensations, etc do not exist for them. The *yogis* realize, in that state, their oneness with the Divine.

10. I am that all-consuming fire that burns the sins of the mind to merge the mind into the sinless *atman*. I am that all-consuming fire that annihilates all the physical attributes to make the *atman* (soul) without attributes. I am that all-consuming fire that removes all bondages to make the *atman* (soul) unbound. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

The seeker is to have absolute faith in his being the Divine Self. It is a matter of being *Faith* and not having or becoming faith. Being *Faith* that the seeker is the Divine is the doorway to self-realization.

11. Oh, Friend! The thought can neither bind me nor liberate me. I do not have any awareness of either union or separation. I am neither with mind, nor without mind. I am beyond all these (worldly existence). I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

Being in the state beyond mind and intellect is the only doorway to self-realization. The spiritual practice of the seeker is to take him to that state.

12. In the state beyond mind and intellect, that is, the *turiyatita* state - the state beyond the fourth state of consciousness - there are no alternatives like delusion or non-delusion, misery or lack of misery and greed or lack of greed. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

Supreme consciousness is the *turiya* (fourth) state of consciousness beyond the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep. This state is eternal and

the other three states come and go in it. As the *turiya* state alone exists and as the three preceding states merge into it and disappear, the *turiya* state transcends itself and becomes *turiyatita*. The Brahman is the *Turiyatita*, beyond the fourth state of consciousness.

This state of Supreme Consciousness is God Consciousness. It provides spiritual comfort. When the seeker experiences spiritual comfort, he will realize that he has no concern either for physical comfort or for other individuals. He has no awareness of delusion, misery, greed etc of the world of action.

13. I am never tied by the creeper of life or death. Nor am I tied by the supreme bliss of contentment or the shackles of ignorance. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

Only when the seeker transcends the consciousness of the body and the mind, does he step into the realm of *atman* to secure him union with the Divine. In this state of consciousness, there is no awareness of either life or death, or of bliss or ignorance. There is only an experience of bliss being the Divine himself.

14. *Prakrti* (un-manifest) has three attributes (*gunas*) - *sattva* (serenity, tendency to manifestation), *rajas* (activity) and *tamas* (inertia, obstruction to manifestation). Everything in the world of names and forms is the product of these three attributes. As for me, I do not perpetuate the world. Nor am I affected by the attributes of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. I am beyond them. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

Prakrti is the world of change in its un-manifest state. It is the source, the origin of everything therein. It cannot be an object of perception. It can only be inferred from its effects. The inner sense, the outer senses and all the objects are its effects.

The Brahman - the Supreme Being carries in It all of *Prakrti*, sometimes keeping its forces latent and other times patent, and identifying Itself with its manifestations.

From the point of view of ontology, *Prakrti* may be the process of the energy emanating from the Being, forming into objects all around. The split in the Being may be due to Becoming issuing out of Being which is the transcendental I-AM. There is no Becoming without Being. The activity of Becoming has to occur in a field, subconsciously stable in order to be recognized as the activity of Becoming. There can be no Becoming without a force behind. This force is to be operative in the Being Itself. There seems to be some primordial intention, inherent potentially in the Supreme Being to set *Prakrti* in motion. That potentiality is the potentiality of Becoming.

Prakrti is truly the inherent nature of the Supreme Being with the drive to become the world and also to return to the Supreme Being. The forward movement manifesting in the world and the return movement in dissolution are the two directions of Becoming. The two forms of the activity of *Prakrti* called evolution and involution are really the two forms of Becoming founded in Being.

Becoming that arises out of Being takes place without affecting the very nature of Being (*vivartakarana*). The Brahman is changeless.

15. I have not performed, nor do I perform, any action that gives rise to pain, anguish or misery. I do not possess a mind that experiences pains and pleasures. I have no ego in me. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

It is generally said that mind experiences pains and pleasures. In fact, it is the individual 'I' consciousness that experiences the pains and pleasures, the colors and smells, etc. The mind performs the function of receiving the impressions of the different senses and uniting them into phenomenal objects, and presents them as the sense for which pains and pleasures are objects, to the 'I' consciousness.

The objects of unified impressions and also pleasures and pains are conveyed to the individual 'I' consciousness for enjoyment and suffering, and also for appropriation as its own. This is the process responsible for the experience of 'mine', as distinguished from 'thine' and the neutral. Thus appears the ego or the ego sense.

As long as there is no awareness of mind, there is no awareness of ego or ego sense. As long as there is no awareness of ego, there is no awareness of action. As such there is no awareness of pain, anguish or misery.

16. The pairs of opposites such as stillness and vibration, doubt and determination, being awake and dreaming, good and evil, strength and weakness, mobility and immobility, etc merge (dissolve) in the Brahman. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am the eternal and all-pervading.

The cosmic principles that constitute the manifest (relative) world emerge from and merge into the Brahman, in an unending cycle. For the reason of its transience, the manifest world made of the pairs of opposites is unreal and does not deserve the attention of the seeker. The seeker is, therefore, to transcend the pairs of opposites, to be in union with the Divine.

17. The Supreme Brahman is neither the knower nor the knowledge. It is beyond comprehension and logic (dialectic). It is beyond mind and intellect. How can anyone explain the Brahman, the Ultimate Reality? I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

Valid ways of knowing for cognition of the truth and other aspects of the self and the world relate to mind and intellect. They do not move farther. As the Brahman is beyond the comprehension of human intellect, no one can ever explain the Brahman with exactitude.

The Brahman is considered the Supreme Deity. It is not one among many. Everything in the world has its being in the Brahman. It is concrete in the sense that It Is and asserts Itself in the form I-Am. We only know that It Is. It cannot be a person, as the word is generally understood. It Is, and yet indeterminate, beyond speech and concept.

18. The Brahman is neither divided nor undivided. It has no 'within or without'. It did not originate in the past. Nor does It cease to exist in the future. The Brahman is the Ultimate. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

The Brahman is beyond classification. The philosophies emanating from the *Vedanta* make 'discrimination' the corner stone of their enquiry to arriving at the nature of the Brahman within human awareness and consciousness. Discrimination may lead the seeker up to a point but not the final destination.

The Brahman is ontologically prior to everything. It is, therefore, regarded as origin of everything. The *Vedanta* Aphorisms define the Brahman as that to which the birth, maintenance and destruction of the world have to be attributed. The Brahman is, therefore, considered the creator, the sustainer and the destroyer of the world.

The Brahman has no initial cause and is, therefore, uncreated. It has no precedent state, nor is It a product. Nothing changes to be the Brahman, nor does It change to anything else. It does not undergo modification. The world of objects arising out, merging into and re-arising out of It in a cycle without end does not affect Its very nature. It is thus without any change.

The Brahman, the Highest Being is the Absolute, Transcendental Self. The three distinctions - Being (Existence), Reality and Truth become one in the Absolute Reality. The Brahman, being the Supreme Being, permeating and pervading everything in the world is the Supreme Consciousness. As Supreme Consciousness, It is One and Undivided. It is the Supreme Spirit, the *Atman*, too. It has, therefore, no 'within and without'. It is Infinite, Eternal and All-pervasive.

19. Truly I am the Supreme Self free from passion, jealousy, hatred and the like. I am the Ultimate Reality unaffected by the suffering caused by the physical, terrestrial or super-natural elements. Nor am I affected by the untold grief of the world. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

The Brahman is the Supreme I-Am, the highest level beyond which human consciousness cannot reach. It is the Supreme Being Itself. It is the innermost depth of man's own being and thought. It is in which the world including man has its roots and by which it is supported. It is the Supreme Self. As the ontological being, It is free of and beyond the attributes and the qualities of the relative world.

The Brahman is the Ultimate Reality. As the Ultimate Reality, It is the self-conscious I-Am and Pure Consciousness. Therefore, the Absolute may be known as the Absolute Truth. At the transcendental level, the Highest I-Am can justifiably be called the Highest Truth. The highest transcendental I-Am is only One. It cannot be one among many.

20. Supreme consciousness is the fourth (*turiya*) state of consciousness beyond the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep. The fourth state is eternal and the other three states of consciousness come and go in it. As the *turiya* state alone exists and the three preceding states merge into it and disappear, the *turiya* state transcends itself and becomes the *turiyatita* (beyond the fourth) state. The Brahman is the *Turiyatita* - the Supreme Self. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

21. As the *atman* in me, there is no possibility of such divisions as long or short, broad or narrow, circular or angular and the like. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

An object of cognition is measurable, or measured. But measuring is not possible without determinateness in the measured. At the cosmological level every object has its own structure and determinateness. But at the ontological level, all is one and determinateness is transcended. The *atman* is the spirit within, and ontological in nature. It is without determinateness and is, therefore, not amenable to measure.

It is futile to conceive of the *atman* in the form of symbols or objects (idols) of outward and physical worship. In the words of Shankara, '*na mantram, na yantra*' (no hymn and no mystical object) will help the seeker to realize the Divine. The symbols and idols may help the seeker to tame the mind and seek to merge it with the *atman* for meditation on the Divine.

22. As the *atman* in me, I have no mother, father or children. Nor do I have the desire for birth or death, as the unwavering, tranquil, steady, ever-lasting and the supreme Reality. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

The relationships in the world relate to the body and the mind and not the *atman* (soul). The *atman* has no relationship to parents or children of the body, and to the body itself. The *atman* is like a dried kernel in a coconut. The body arises as the result of birth and perishes as the result of death. The *atman* has no

desire for either birth or death as it has no relationship to the body. It is one with the *Atman* – the Supreme Reality.

23. The Brahman is self-effulgent, wholly pure, infinite and beyond any concept. It is sheer ignorance to think of the Brahman as polluted or unpolluted, divided or undivided. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

The seeker is to have absolute faith in the oneness of the Brahman beyond knowledge and logic. The path of knowledge and discrimination has a limited role. It may prepare a seeker but not enable actual realization of the Brahman. All the concepts, all the knowledge do not take the seeker to the final destination as they are all in the realm of the mind and intellect. The seeker is able to realize the Brahman only when his mind and consciousness are transcended. Only then does he realize that the Brahman is self-effulgent, wholly pure and infinite.

24. If the Brahman is the Supreme Self and the only One, how can there be many gods and deities, and many planes of heaven and hell? I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

The seeker is to beware of doing penance with the motive of securing happiness or bliss in another plane of spirit-life, after physical death. Some religions propagate a belief that the performance of certain rituals leads the seeker to life, in another plane, of prosperity and plenty after death. The seeker is to realize that all this is untrue and like water in a mirage. The Brahman is the Supreme Self. The realization of the Brahman in this life itself shall be the only ideal of the seeker.

25. How can I say that the Brahman is not this or not that, that It is infinite or finite, or that It is with a body or without a body? I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

It is not possible to know the Brahman either by the process of elimination or by the process of association in the realm of the mind and intellect. Neither way, nor by both the ways, is it possible.

26. I do no action, yet I am ever engaged in the highest activity. I am without desires, yet I enjoy the everlasting bliss. I am without body (form), yet I enjoy ever the bliss of bodiless-ness. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

This is the state of spiritual eccentricity. The seeker has no more consciousness of his body and mind. He is endowed with bliss in the state of union with the Divine.

27. The magnificent creation of *Maya* in the form of the world does not cause any mutation in me. Hypocrisy, deceit or ostentation does not affect me. Nor does truth or untruth have any impact on me. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

The *Svetasvatara-Upanisad* gives an idea that *Maya* is a kind of net thrown on Being, making it look like the world fixed by some laws, constituting the structure of the net. The idea of the Brahman creating the world which does not exist on its own, through His will, involves something like the idea of illusion. The etymological root of the word *maya* makes it clear that *Maya* is something that it makes the objects we experience determinate through spatial, temporal and causal laws. When the seeker's goal is salvation, what he seeks is freedom from this determinateness whether it is the life of pain or pleasure, happiness or sorrow, good or bad, knowledge or ignorance, truth or untruth, hypocrisy, deceit, ostentation or the like. It is the same as freedom from *Maya*.

28. I am beyond the division of time in the day like morning, afternoon and evening. Yet I am present in every moment as absence of awareness. I am devoid of the knowledge differentiated and classified. Yet I am free from fundamental ignorance. I am neither deaf nor dumb. Nor do I need cleansing of the mind to attain purity. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately, I am eternal and all-pervading.

When the seeker is in the *turiya* (fourth) state of consciousness, he has transcended mind and is beyond the consciousness of physical time and space. Yet he is physically present in his body in time and space. His very presence is, therefore, by way of absence of awareness. Similarly, he is devoid of the knowledge assimilated by the mind as the mind has been transcended. But the *atman* is in the awareness of true knowledge in view of its eternity, which enables his realization of the Supreme Being.

Time and space are the functions of apperception. Apperception is of the form that it collects the past and the future through memory and anticipation respectively, into the present. The objective space and time may not be the voluntary functions of one's finite apperception as one has it, but the spontaneous functioning of one's apperception in its transcendental aspects. Thus time and space are still necessary for one in that they belong to one's transcendental depths.

Time and space are the meeting points of the *I-am* and the *I-know*. But they dissolve into the *I-am* when the *I-know*, too, enters it. Thus time and space are rooted in one's transcendental apperception.

29. I have no master, nor am I master to anyone. I have stilled my mind. It, therefore, ceases to function. As such, dualities do not exist for me. I am neither perplexed. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

The role of the *guru* is to prepare the seeker to still the mind and activate the *atman* in pursuit of his ideal. When he reaches this stage, there is no further need of the *guru*. He is free of all dualities. Nor is he perplexed. The seeker is to make the spiritual exercise himself, for realization.

30. How can I say that the Brahman is like a forest or a temple? It may be both or neither. When the Brahman is all-pervading, unaffected and beyond motive, how can I declare that the Brahman is proven or doubtful? I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

The Brahman cannot be identified by knowledge, reference, deduction, evidence or any other form of cognition conceived by mind. The finite mind cannot comprehend the infinite, transcendental Brahman. Only after transcendence of the mind, the infinite *atman* can seek to realize the Brahman.

31. The Brahman shines forever, devoid of matter and life principle. The Brahman is eternal, devoid of origin and seed. Neither free nor bound, the Brahman is ever effulgent. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

Matter and life, seed and origin, freedom and bondage, etc are pairs of opposites that go into creation of the world of names and forms. They relate to the duality of existence. The world of names and forms is only the Becoming of the Supreme Being. The non self-transforming nature of evolution and involution of the world into the Brahman does not affect the Brahman. The Brahman is changeless.

The Brahman is Pure Consciousness, as permeating and pervading everything in the world. It is the ontological Being. As Pure Consciousness, It is devoid of both matter and life.

The Brahman is, ontologically, prior to everything. It is, therefore, to be regarded as the origin of everything. It has no initial cause and is, therefore, uncreated. As It is uncreated, It does not perish. What is created alone perishes. It is, therefore, eternal.

It is one. It is never bound. As such It is ever-free. It is effulgent, as otherwise It cannot be realized by the seeker in the state of supreme consciousness. But It cannot be explained by analogy as between light and darkness. It is light, but not the light that we perceive, not material light. 'What It Is' is beyond mind and word.

32. The Supreme Brahman is without origin. The effulgence the Supreme Brahman spreads ever is without phenomenal existence. The energy the Supreme

Brahman radiates ever is never extinguished. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

33. The Self does not have any name or form either in reality or in illusion. There is no substance that the Self cannot encompass or that differentiates itself from the Self. Oh, shameless mind! Why do you lament in misery? I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

The Self is pure awareness. It is pure consciousness. It is the source of all kinds of illumination. It is the infinite 'I'. It is eternal. The Self is that where there is absolutely no 'I' thought. The Self Itself is the world; the Self Itself is 'I'; the Self Itself is God; all is the Self. The Self alone exists. The Self alone is real.

Knowing the Self means being the Self. Self-knowledge is unique in that the knowing self is itself the known Self. It can never become a known or unknown object. To be the Self in the heart is supreme wisdom.

The Self is self-luminous, without darkness and light, and is the self-manifest reality. The Self is only being. It is what It Is. It is 'I-Am that I-Am'.

The mind has no role in the realization of the Self. It is a nullity. It is only the self (*atman*) that seeks realization. The mind needs only to understand the process and is to be transcended to merge into the self, to enable the seeker to be in union with the Divine.

34. My friend! Why do you weep? There is no old-age or death for you. Nor are there pangs of birth, too, for you. Why do you weep, my friend? There is no disease or decay for you. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately, I am eternal and all-pervading.

The seeker is to be aware that the physical body is in a constant process of change from birth to death. Whatever changes arise, they concern the body only and not the *atman* which the seeker is. The seeker shall not pay attention to the changes in the body including disease, by way of withdrawal of awareness of body consciousness.

35. Why do you weep, my friend? You are neither a form nor without form. Why do weep, my friend? There is neither decay nor aging for you. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

The seeker is not the body and the mind, but only the *atman* which is without form. He is, therefore, without aging or decay, and without any qualities that relate to the mind, which cause misery and distress.

36. Why do you weep, my friend? You are neither the physical nor the mental organism. Why do you weep, my friend? You are beyond senses. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately, I am eternal and all-pervading.

Constantly brooding over the fact that the seeker is not the body and the mind and the categories such as the senses that constitute the human organism, the seeker will be able to activate the *atman* (soul) on the path of realization.

37. Why do you weep, my friend? You have neither lust nor greed. Why do you weep, my friend? You have no delusion. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately, I am eternal and all-pervading.

In the ocean of the world, there are six alligators - lust, anger, avarice, delusion, pride and envy. If the seeker is able to overcome them, he overcomes delusion and he has nothing to be afraid of.

38. Why do you seek super-human powers when you do not have wealth? Why do you seek wealth when you do not have wife? What do you do with wealth when you have no sense of ownership? I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

The seeker is to give up relationships and possessions voluntarily before he sets himself on the path of realization.

39. Ultimately, the gross or the subtle world is neither for you, nor for me. The shameless mind creates the idea of diversity. There is neither unity nor diversity, nor both, either for you or for me. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

The phenomenal world creates the awareness of unity and diversity through mind and intellect. When the seeker goes beyond the awareness of the world, either gross or subtle, neither unity nor diversity of the world exists for him. He is beyond the realm of intellect and mind. He is in union with the Divine.

40. As the inner self (*atman* in you), you do not have the slightest attachment or detachment. Truly you do not have the slightest desire in you. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

The path of action as a way of realization is to work in a spirit of detachment. The spirit of detachment means not to crave for the results of the work done in the manner anticipated. Renunciation is the spirit of detachment. It is of three types - sacrifice, charity and penance. All the three are actions that purify the soul. They are obligatory actions to be performed without any attachment to the results thereof. Absence of desire for results of the action in the manner anticipated is true renunciation.

Bhagavad-Gita stresses that knowledge is higher than the practice of *yoga* (*Patanjali's*). Meditation is higher than knowledge. Renunciation of the fruits of action is higher than meditation. Finally, peace (*santhi*) is higher than even such renunciation. This may lead to the interpretation that every former leads to the latter, ultimately leading to the absolute peace of mind, that is, salvation within one's conscious self. According to it, renunciation leads to salvation, being higher than even meditation.

41. In the supreme infinitude of the Self, there is no meditator. Truly, there is no one that meditates in one's heart. Indeed, in one's heart, there is no *samadhi*, no meditation as there is no space outside for such meditation. Nor is there an object or time in the heart for meditation. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

When the seeker considers that he is in meditation, it means that his mind is active. He is aware of his meditation on some object and in time. The duality exists. Unless the seeker is beyond the awareness of meditation, with his mind transcended, there is no possibility of realization of the Divine. It is the state of *samadhi* he is to attain beyond the awareness of meditation, for realization.

42. I have explained the quintessence of the Supreme Reality. In the Supreme Reality there are neither you nor I, neither the *guru* nor the disciple. The Ultimate Reality is spontaneous. I am being, awareness and bliss. Ultimately I am eternal and all-pervading.

Supreme Reality is Being, Pure Existence and Consciousness. That alone is real which reveals itself by itself and which is eternal and changeless.

Reality alone exists as a perfect undivided whole. The awareness of this Reality alone is the truth. There is no other Reality. The Reality is in the form of experience throbbing within one's real self.

Reality must always be real. It has no names or forms. It underlies all limitations, It being without limit. Nor is It bound in anyway. Being real, It is That Which Is. It transcends mind and word and is beyond description such as being or non-being.

The Absolute and the Relative belong to the same Reality. It is the eternal substance.

43. If the Supreme Self alone exists, eternal and all-pervading, how can I say that the Supreme Reality is full of bliss or without bliss? How can I say that the Supreme Reality is to be attained by knowledge or by realization?

The Supreme Self is the Supreme Reality, and is beyond thought and word. The Supreme Reality is attained and experienced by Divine grace.

The paths pursued by the seekers for realization are generally classified as the path of ethical action, the path of devotion, the path of *yoga* and the path of discrimination and knowledge. The experience of the sages and the seers that have realized the Supreme Self is that the paths are not exclusive, but interrelated at different levels, one or more leading to another. Each seeker on the path of realization is to choose the path he considers best, intermingling with other paths at such levels, as he considers most suited to his self.

44. Realize that the Supreme Brahman is devoid of the elements of fire, air, earth and water. Realize that the Supreme Brahman is neither mobile nor immobile. Realize that the Supreme Brahman is eternal and all-pervading.

45. I am neither with form, nor without form. I am beyond purity and impurity. I am neither ugly nor beautiful. My effulgence is beyond comparison. I am the Supreme Reality that is self-effulgent.

The ideal of the seeker is only to experience and attain the Brahman and not to have awareness at the level of the mind. In the absence of such awareness, there arises no comparison, no perception of qualities, no differentiation and the like.

46. Renounce existence in the world. Then give up renunciation, too. Give up the idea whether or not to accept the world. The idea itself is poisonous and egoistic. Then you become pure, simple, firm and immortal.

The idea whether or not to accept the world is itself related to the mind and the world. This idea is the off-shoot of the ego. Unless the ego is transcended, the *atman* is not activated. This becomes possible when the seeker renounces his very existence in the world. This does not mean physical annihilation, but annihilation of the mind and the ego by way of their dissolution into the *atman*. When the seeker is in this state, he has nothing left to renounce. He will have renounced renunciation itself. He becomes immortal.

4. Supreme Beatitude

1. The Brahman can neither be prayed for, nor abandoned as the Brahman is without name and form. What kind of worship can be offered with flowers and leaves to the Brahman without form? What type of hymn (*mantra*) and meditation can be rendered while praying to the Brahman? Is it possible to worship the Supreme Beatitude that includes both unity and diversity?

Worship, prayer, incantation, etc are at the level of the mind when the seeker feels duality and his ego being different from the Supreme Beatitude. The state of realization of the Divine is beyond duality and, therefore, beyond physical prayer, worship, incantation and the like.

2. The Brahman is neither bound, nor liberated. It is neither pure nor impure. It is neither united nor separated. It is free of everything, sacred or holy. I am that Brahman, eternal and all-pervading.

3. The issue whether the manifested world is real or unreal is of no consequence to me. By my very nature, I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

Oneness with the Supreme Being, on attainment, makes the seeker blissful, free and all-pervading as he is no other than the Supreme Being.

4. Neither darkness nor illumination, neither within nor without, nor any diversity of truth appears in me. I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

The state of pure bliss is the state of the *atman*. It is the state of mind transcended. As such there is no awareness of physicality related to the mind and the ego.

5. Ignorance and wisdom do not originate in me. Nor does the knowledge of *self* take birth in me. How can I say that I have either knowledge or ignorance? I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

The seeker, as *atman*, is ever in bliss beyond the state of mind. Knowledge or ignorance is related to the mind. When the seeker is in a state of bliss, he is beyond the awareness of knowledge or ignorance.

6. The Brahman is associated neither with virtue nor with vice, neither with bondage nor with freedom. The Brahman is neither united, nor separated. I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

Virtue or vice, bondage or liberation, unity or separation are all related to the created, the manifest world, not to the Creator.

7. No one is greater than, or inferior to, me. I am the Whole and the Infinite. How can the Infinite be considered in relative concepts? I am beyond mutuality. Nor do I have a friend or an enemy. How can I speak of good or evil? I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

8. I am neither the worshipper nor the object of worship. Neither incantations nor rituals are for me. How can I describe the nature of Supreme Consciousness? I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

The Supreme Consciousness is beyond description as it is beyond mind and human consciousness. The seeker only experiences the Supreme Consciousness when he is in union with the Divine.

9. Nothing pervades the Brahman, nor is pervaded by the Brahman. The Brahman is neither an abode. Nor is It without an abode. How can I describe It either as full or empty? I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

10. I am neither the perceiver, nor the object of perception. When the Brahman is beyond cause and effect, how can I say that the Brahman is either conceivable or inconceivable? I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

11. The self neither destroys anything, nor is it destroyable. It is neither the knower, nor the knowable. How can one describe it as arising or withdrawing? I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

The seeker is to have firm faith in the eternity of the self (soul - *atman*) and its immutability. Because of its eternity and immutability, it is not knowable either. When it is not known, it admits of no description.

12. The *atman* in me has no form. Nor can it be said to be without form. As 'All I-am' is the *atman*, I have no awareness of senses, mind or intellect. How can I say that I have attachment or detachment? I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

When the seeker has firm faith that he is the *atman*, and not the body and the mind, the organs of senses, the mind and the intellect within him get petered off and lose their awareness. When once their awareness is lost, there is no attachment to or detachment from the objects of the senses.

13. Forceful assertions do not create the Brahman. Nor do denials make the Brahman disappear. Friend, I cannot say whether the Brahman is ever the same or not. I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

Human perception of the Brahman is of no consequence or relevance to experience the Brahman. Human perception is finite and limited and there is no way for a finite category of cognition to measure the Infinite.

14. I subdue the senses that agitate, for a while. Soon they rebel against me. As a result, neither self-restraint nor religious austerities can be cultivated. Friend, what can I say of success or defeat? I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

The path of realization of the Divine is fraught with serious impediments as they concern traversing beyond the realm of the body and the mind. Whatever we resist in the realm of the mind, it persists. If we seek to subdue the senses, they reappear with added strength in another form. There is neither success nor defeat in the process as they are within the realm of the mind. The only way is to transcend the mind and the human consciousness. The seeker is to pursue the path with faith in the Divine that the Divine will take him to the destination.

15. I do not have a form. Nor am I without form. As the Brahman, I do not have the beginning, the middle or the end. Friend, how do I relate my situation to be weak or strong? I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

The philosophies of the *Vedanta* relate to worshipping the Brahman, in the early stages of spiritual exercise, with attributes. As the seeker advances in spirituality, he is to conceive the Brahman without attributes. The first stage is worshipping the *murta* Brahman. The next stage is worshipping the *amurta* Brahman. The *guru* here recommends meditating on the *amurta* Brahman considering that the seeker is already advanced spiritually on the path of realization.

16. Neither mortality nor immortality, neither poison nor has nectar ever emanated from me. How can I say that I am pure or impure? I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

Poison is the cause; mortality is the effect. Nectar is the cause; immortality is the effect. They relate to the world of action. The Brahman is beyond all cause and effect.

17. There is no waking state or the state of dream for me. Nor is there any need for me to exercise *yoga*. There is neither day nor night for me. How can I say that I am in the third or the fourth state of human consciousness? I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

The seeker, in the *turiyatita* (beyond the fourth) state alone, is in union with the Brahman. The states of waking, dream and deep sleep are the general states of human consciousness. Even the fourth state of supreme consciousness beyond the three states of normal human consciousness is also related to human consciousness, but at a deeper level. When this consciousness is transcended, it turns out to be the *turiyatita*. In this state, the human consciousness of the seeker dissolves into the Supreme Consciousness of the Divine. This is the state beyond

the fourth (*turiya*) state of human consciousness. The state of Supreme Consciousness is *samadhi* which is wholly beyond the awareness of physicality.

18. Know that I am free from everything; nor am I free from everything, too. I am beyond *Maya* and its effects. How can I say that I observe and practise the obligatory religious rites? I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

As the *atman* in him, the seeker is free of the activity of the body. But the *atman* is tied to the body while alive. So, the seeker is not totally free from everything. As such, the practice and observance of religious rites as enshrined in the scriptures is only the activity the seeker is to be engaged in. As long as the seeker acts in regard to his scriptural rites with a detached spirit and with no desire for its results, he can be united with God.

19. Know that I am totally absorbed in the Brahman. Know that I am beyond motivation and non-motivation. How can I speak of union or separation? I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

In a state of total absorption in the Brahman (*purna-samadhi*), there is no knowing of union or separation even for the soul (*atman*). The *atman* gets merged into the Supreme *Atman*. It is like the water in a small jar getting merged into the water of a mighty river when poured in.

20. I may not be considered a fool or a scholar. I am neither silent nor talkative. How can the Brahman be described through logic and dialectic? I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

On realization of the Brahman, the seeker may seem a lunatic. But he is neither a fool nor a scholar. He neither speaks out nor remains silent, intentionally. He has transcended the awareness of logic and dialectic about the nature of the Brahman. He is in eternal bliss.

21. I have no father or mother. I have no caste or race. I was never born. Nor shall I ever perish. I am beyond evolution. I am the ever-lasting *atman*. How can I say I have affection or delusion? I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

22. I am not lost. I am ever present. In me there is neither light nor darkness seen as such. How can I say that the religious rites enjoined in the scriptures are for me? I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

The religious rites are for one of the world as one step on the path of realization. The seeker who is in union with the Divine (Brahman) has no awareness of the union, too. There may only be the awareness of the Brahman which is Eternal Bliss.

23. Know for certain that I am free from any kind of perplexity. Know for certain that I am eternal. Know for certain that I am immaculate. I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

The quality of perplexity is of the mind. The seeker who is beyond the realm of the mind is in union with the Divine.

24. The true meditator leaves all types of meditation, all types of action, be they good or bad, in the end. The true meditator takes the nectar of renunciation by sacrificing his ego-centered nature. I am ever blissful, free and all-pervading.

The law of action (*karma*) exists. But this law works differently for the devotees of God. The work that is done in the name of God produces only good results. The seeker is to undertake only those works that present themselves to him and are of pressing necessity. Even meditation is a kind of work. He is to undertake those works in a sense of detachment. It is not good to become involved in many activities. That makes the seeker to forget God. When he takes up more and more work, he becomes more and more attached to lust and greed. Renunciation is the true spirit of detachment, arising by sacrificing his ego-centered nature.

When the seeker is in union with the Brahman, on realization, he does no more meditation or action. His ego sense totally dissolves into the Supreme Self. There is no more of him, known to him, than the Brahman.

25. When the intellect cannot comprehend the Brahman, how can the Brahman be conceived in human perception? The Brahman is verily beyond thought and can only be experienced in *atman*. This experience is beyond expression.

5. Aum

1. The all-pervading Brahman is expressed in the syllable *Aum*. The essence of the Brahman cannot be ascertained in either higher or lower type of knowledge. Both noumenon and phenomenon are of no consequence to understand the Brahman. How can *Aum* explain it?

Aum is a spontaneous sound constantly going on by itself. It is the sound of *Pranava*. It originates in the Supreme Brahman. *Yogis* hear it. A *yogi*, following the trail of the sound *Aum*, gradually merges himself in the Supreme Brahman.

The sound *Aum* is the Brahman. The *yogis* practise austerity to realize that Sound-Brahman. Let us suppose that one hears the roar of the ocean from a distance. By following the roar, one can reach the ocean. As long as there is a roar, there must also be the ocean. Similarly, by following the trail of *Aum* one attains the Brahman of which the word is the symbol. *Aum* is described in the scriptures like the unceasing flow of oil, like the long peal of the bell. The letters a, u and m are considered to stand for creation, preservation and dissolution of the universe.

2. The *Srutis (Upanisads)* reveal, through such dictums as ‘Thou art That’, ‘I am the Brahman’, that your innermost self (*atman*) is the Brahman. There is absolutely no difference between your innermost self and the Supreme Self. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? Realize that the Brahman is within you.

The Brahman, permeating and pervading everything in the cosmos, is the Supreme Consciousness. It is also the Supreme Spirit. Its phenomenon is to encompass and pervade everything everywhere. It is, therefore, to be the innermost attribute or constituent of the finite (individual) spirits or *atmans*. The Brahman thus is the Universal Spirit - the *Atman* residing in all finite spirits - *atmans*. The Supreme Spirit inwardizes into the individual spirits. As such there is no difference between the innermost self of a finite individual and the Supreme Self. The Brahman is very much within, subtler than the subtlest in the cosmos.

3. The all-encompassing Brahman is beyond direction. It does not possess anything below or above. It has no interior or exterior. It cannot be described by numbers (numerically), too. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the Brahman yourself.

On the basis of the *Upanisads*, *dik* (direction) and *akasa* (ether) are associated with the ear and sound. Often it is space that is associated with the ear (*srotra*). We know by experience that our ears recognize the directions from which sounds come. As in the case of time and space, *dik* and *akasa* are not mere physical substances existing independently and apart from the seeker’s personality. They constitute the basis of his personality - his I-am.

Similarly, one-point event may not produce the idea of space. The idea of space is brought to the surface of consciousness when the locating of one event by the side of another is involved. As the Brahman is One, there can be no locating It in space even for that reason. As It is Infinite, how can It be related in numbers?

The Brahman is beyond time, space and human consciousness that are all the Becoming of the Brahman. The Brahman is, therefore, beyond measure.

4. Any rules and rites prescribed cannot explain the Brahman. 'The cause and the effect' principle cannot assess the Brahman. The Brahman is beyond all possible explanation. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

Ritual worship, physical cognition of cause and effect, outward knowledge, etc of the Brahman will not help the seeker to realize the Brahman. It is the actual realization, transcending the mind, that brings the seeker into union with the Divine.

5. The Brahman is not the union of consciousness and unconsciousness. It is also not the convergence of time and space. Neither is It the convergence of inner and outer spaces, nor is It the convergence of time and timelessness. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

The Brahman is Pure Consciousness. Ontologically there is no unconsciousness for any category. *Prakrti* is the facet of the Brahman, but is generally considered unconscious. It is not. It is a form of consciousness. Even the unknown cannot be known as the unknown unless it is a block of consciousness known as the unknown. Only the conscious can be known as the object of consciousness. As *Prakrti* is known as the object of consciousness, it has necessarily to be inherently conscious. According to *Rigveda*, *Prakrti* is the personified will of the Supreme Spirit in creation and is inherently 'Consciousness'. The *Avadhuta* stresses here that the Brahman is Pure Consciousness and It is no union of consciousness and unconsciousness.

Time and space are the aspects of action, process and growth. Action is primary. They are part and parcel, ingredients and constituents of the force (*Sakti*) of becoming. The activities of analysis and synthesis are elements of the processes of time and space. Apperception contains the unending process of becoming. Time and space and their variants, therefore, exist within apperception, with no empirical existence outside it. Apperception is always of the form that it collects the past and the future through memory and anticipation, into the present. As a collecting instrument, it is a means in the hands of the Brahman into which everything finally enters.

6. The Brahman is neither the space reflected in the water in a jar, nor the jar itself. The Brahman is neither the individual body nor the soul within. It is beyond the relationship of cause and effect. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

The human body and the jar are perishable objects of the world. As long as the body is alive, the *atman* remains within. When the body perishes, the *atman* of the individual merges into the Supreme Self. Similarly as long as the jar with water is intact, the space above is reflected in the water within the jar. When the jar is broken, the water spills and the space earlier reflected in the water merges into the all-pervading space. So is the case with the cause and its effect. Both are related to the world of names and forms following the laws of nature. The Brahman is beyond the world and its constituent functions.

7. The omniscient Brahman is totally free, independent and indivisible. Any attempt to divide the Absolute is totally wrong. One is a fool to describe the Brahman as short or long, circular or angular. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

8. The Brahman is neither void, nor whole (non-void). It is neither pure, nor impure. It is neither everything, nor nothing. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

9. The Brahman cannot be discerned as divided or undivided. It has no 'within' or 'without'. It has neither gap nor joint (meeting). It is equal to everybody, friend or foe. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

10. For the Brahman, there is no differentiation between a disciple and a *guru*. Nor is there any differentiation between the movable and the immovable. The all-pervading Reality is liberation itself. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

A *guru* will only prepare the disciple to get on to the path of realization. But the disciple is to work on his own for realization. In the state of realization there is neither relation nor distinction between the *guru* and the disciple as the Brahman is One Whole and the disciple is one with the Brahman. This is total liberation.

11. The Brahman possesses neither form, nor formlessness. It is neither divided, nor undivided. It is beyond creation or destruction (dissolution). Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

12. I am not bound by the shackles of good and evil qualities. How can I be involved in the activity of living and dying? Truly, I am the sacred, effulgent and

omnipresent Reality. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

The ideas of good and evil are the cause of bondage to the world of action. When the seeker is beyond the impact of the qualities of good and evil, he is beyond the consciousness of his body and the mind. The mere living or dying is of no relevance or consequence to him. He is in union with the Divine.

13. The Brahman is devoid of emotion or excitement, desire or desirelessness. The Brahman is the Supreme Consciousness. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

14. The true nature of the Brahman is eternal reality. It is bound neither by separation nor by union. It is above every concept, every idea. Yet the grace of the Brahman extends to everything as a matter of sport (*lila*) for its own sake. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

15. The Supreme Brahman is alike in an open space, a hut (hermitage) or a family. The Supreme Brahman has neither attachment nor detachment. It is bound neither by knowledge, nor by ignorance. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

The Brahman is the minutest of the minutest and the mightiest of the mightiest in the cosmos. As the Supreme Consciousness, It is everywhere and all-pervading. It is beyond knowledge and ignorance. All creation is the sport of the Brahman. The ego-sense of individuals creates attachment and detachment to the objects of the senses. As the creation arises, as sport of the Brahman, so does it dissolve into the Brahman, in a cycle without end. The Brahman is beyond attachment and detachment.

16. The cosmos is the transformation (creation) of the immutable Supreme Self. Yet the cosmos is unreal. It is like dream. All that arises out of the Brahman is subject to birth and death. All that arises is, therefore, unreal as it is transient and not permanent. *Atman* alone is the Reality. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

17. Truly, the Brahman is identical with, the same as, the Soul. It exists in all animate and inanimate beings. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

18. It is ignorance to discriminate the Brahman as being this or that. It is equally ignorance to cognize diversity in unity. Verily, the Brahman is uninterrupted consciousness. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

19. The Brahman is not a state of liberation or bondage. Nor is It a state of virtue or vice. It is neither fullness, nor emptiness. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

Liberation is liberation from the mind. Bondage is bondage to the mind. Similarly, virtue and vice are the concepts of judgment by the mind, in relation to acts. Fullness or emptiness is a concept of cognition by the mind. Realization of the Brahman is possible only after the mind is transcended in all its activity.

20. The omnipresent Brahman is bereft of caste (*varna*) and beyond caste. It is beyond cause and effect, and unity and diversity. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

Attainment of the Brahman is not limited to people born into any particular caste group. Any seeker, with firm determination to realize the Brahman, irrespective of the caste into which he is born, will be able to realize the Brahman, if only he treads on the path with unflinching faith in the Divine.

21. The Brahman is omnipresent and eternal. It exists in every living being. It exists in all inanimate objects of the world. It is self-effulgent. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

22. The omnipresent Brahman is beyond everything and also all-pervading. The Brahman is supremely pure and tranquil. It is undetected. It has neither day nor night, in other words, neither physical light nor darkness. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

23. Bondage and liberation, union and separation, reasoning and blind belief, etc are pairs of opposites that are part of the nature of the relative world. They never lead to realization of the Brahman. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

24. In the Brahman, no divisions in time such as morning, evening exist. Even the atoms of matter, the gross elements such as air, fire, etc are negated. The Ultimate Reality alone remains and cannot be denied. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

25. The Brahman is a reality without form. It does not possess the four states of human consciousness. It is beyond all established canons of rules and names. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

The Brahman is the Supreme Reality, beyond form. It is the *turiyatita* (beyond the fourth) state of consciousness which is the transcended consciousness of the *turiya* (fourth) state. While the *turiya* (fourth) state of consciousness is the supreme human consciousness, the *turiyatita* (beyond the fourth) state of consciousness is the supreme consciousness of the Brahman.

26. The all-pervading Brahman is pristine Purity. It transcends and permeates everything. It is present in all essential and non-essential entities and the modifications thereof. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.
27. The Brahman is not concerned with virtue or vice. It is indifferent to wealth or poverty. It is free of passion or dispassion. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.
28. The Brahman is beyond pleasure and pain, and beyond happiness and sorrow. In the Brahman, there is no *guru*-disciple relationship. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.
29. In the Brahman there is no amorous play of the offspring, neither strength nor weakness. The Brahman is beyond mobility and immobility, equality and inequality, discrimination and indiscrimination, and ego. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.

Ego and the ego-sense are the bottom line to be transcended to move into the realm of the Brahman. The relationships, qualities, possessions etc are related to the ego-sense of the seeker. In their transcendence is the way to realization.

30. The Brahman is the only one without any second. It is the quintessence of existence. It is the whole without attributes. Any action prompted by the senses in the relative world is unreal. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.
31. In many ways, the *Srutis (Veda)* declare that whatever manifests as relative world is like water in a mirage. Truly, the Brahman alone exists in everything, undetected. Oh, mind! Why do you weep? You are the very same Brahman.
32. One cannot realize the Brahman by chanting Veda mantras (hymns), recitation of scriptures or practice of *Tantra*. The *Avadhuta*, being realized, becomes one with the continuous bliss of the Brahman. Such *Avadhuta* (Datatreya) sings this Gita out of his ecstatic bliss emanating from the *turiyatita* (beyond the fourth) state of consciousness.

(Repetition of the 75th sloka in Chapter I)

6. Srutis

1. The *Srutis* declare in different ways that the entire cosmos is like an image of the Brahman reflected in a pool of water. The Brahman is Alone, Indivisible and Supreme Beatitude. How can the Brahman be compared to any other entity? How can any other entity be superior to It?

The *Sankhya* philosophy states that the original state of *Prakrti* is of dormancy when its three attributes - *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are in perfect equilibrium. Then there is no world of forms and names - objects. When the reflection of the Brahman is thrown in *Prakrti* in such state, *Prakrti* is disturbed. This disturbance upsets the original equilibrium of the three attributes. As a result, any one attribute dominates the other two. Evolution ensues into the world of forms.

Ontologically, the attributes constituting *Prakrti* are ever active. The stability of *Prakrti* means that the forces inherent in it are in a state of equilibrium, none becoming dominant over the others, all being equally active and the activities of each force being harmonious with the activities of the others. Stability then does not mean inactivity, but harmony in activity. What is essentially and by nature force cannot but be active. What we call its inactivity may really be its pulsations of activity under the same conditions and in the same circumstances and pattern. In such an event, the change is not observable, though it always exists.

For the Supreme Being to throw Its reflection into *Prakrti*, Its consciousness must have a direction towards *Prakrti* into which Its reflection is to be thrown. The Supreme Being is, therefore, to hold *Prakrti* as Its innate part. The *Svetasvatara-Upanisad* explains that *Prakrti* is an ingredient of the Supreme I-Am. This directionality or intentionality has its orientations within Existence itself, in which a split is introduced. It is a matter of experience of Its Being. This experience cannot be explained without assuming transcendental implications pointing to the ultimate unity of Existence or Being.

2. The Brahman is beyond division and non-division. It is beyond action, modification and definition. The Brahman is the Supreme Beatitude. As such, where is the possibility (scope) for rites, worship and austerity?

Realization of the Brahman is beyond the state of idol worship, ethical action, *yoga*, knowledge and discrimination. All the spiritual practices help the seeker to be on the path, but not take him to the destination. The seeker attains realization when he transcends his ego-sense and the realm of the mind.

3. Truly, the eternal, omnipresent and creative intellect is beyond vastness and subtlety. That intellect is the indivisible Supreme Brahman. How can anyone realize It with thought or give expression to It through speech.

The *atman* is the one that realizes the Brahman. This is referred to as intellect in the nature of its being supreme wisdom of the seeker. This intellect (wisdom) is beyond mind and senses in that it is beyond thought and speech.

4. There is no division of day or night in the self-luminous Brahman. When the Brahman is self-effulgent, how can the sun, the moon and fire illumine It?

The cosmos including the sun, the moon and the fire is the evolution out of the Brahman. It dissolves into the Brahman, too. The created entities that are transient cannot illumine or darken the Creator.

5. The distinctions of desire and desirelessness, action and inaction (including reaction), etc are totally absent in the Brahman. The Brahman is Alone (One) and true. What else can be the true Brahman?

6. The Brahman is devoid of expansion and contraction. It is neither fullness, nor emptiness, and beyond both. It is the indivisible Supreme Beatitude. How can anyone project It as the first or the last?

If any one relates to the Brahman as the first or the last, it amounts to measuring the Brahman and conceiving of entities other than the Brahman. The mind is a finite entity. It is never possible for a finite entity to measure the Infinite Being. The only being beyond measure is the Infinite Being, the Brahman. Being infinite and eternal, the Brahman is the only one with no second. As there is no other than the Brahman, there is no possibility of comparison as the first or the last.

7. In the Brahman, ideas of sameness or difference, knower or knowable are irrelevant. The Brahman is Supreme Consciousness. How can there be the third state of deep sleep and the fourth state of supreme human consciousness?

The Brahman is the *Turiyatita* (beyond the fourth), the state of Supreme Consciousness. When the first three states of waking, dream and deep sleep consciousness of the seeker merge into his supreme consciousness, the *turiya* state, the latter transcends itself into the Supreme Consciousness of the Brahman. That is the state of his realization of the Brahman.

8. It is ignorance to consider the Brahman as definable or indefinable, knowable or unknowable, etc. The Brahman alone is the Ultimate Reality. It is the Supreme Beatitude. How can objects, senses, mind, intellect, etc be termed as the Brahman?

9. In the Brahman, the gross elements such as space, air, fire, earth and water do not exist. The indivisible Supreme Beatitude is the only Reality.

All the gross elements (*mahabhutas*) are considered to constitute the relative world of names and forms. Every object in the world is considered to

contain all the five elements, but in different proportion. When the relative world itself is a superimposition on the Brahman and dissolves into It without affecting the Brahman at all, how do the gross elements affect the Brahman?

This doctrine of every object containing all the five elements is called *Quintuplication*. It is doubtful whether this doctrine can have a scientific basis. Even the doctrine of the five elements being based on the five senses may not be scientific in the modern sense of the term.

10. The different worlds and gods (stated in mythology) are mere imagination. If the Brahman is the indivisible Supreme Beatitude, how can there be any merit or demerit, reasoning or understanding?
11. The Brahman is Infinite Bliss. It is beyond immortality and mortality. It is beyond action and inaction. When the Brahman is the all-pervading Supreme Beatitude, how can one speak of It emerging and dissolving?
What is born in the world perishes. What emerges out of the Brahman merges into It. What emerges out and merges into the Brahman is not the Brahman, but the creation (evolute) of the Brahman.
12. There is no difference between the *Purusa* (Brahman) and *Prakrti*. In the Brahman there is no difference between cause and effect. The Brahman is the eternal Supreme Beatitude.

Prakrti is the world of change in its *un-manifest* state. It is the origin of everything in the relative world. The three attributes of *Prakrti* - *sattva* (serenity, tendency to manifestation), *rajas* (activity) and *tamas* (inertia, obstruction to manifestation) - are considered to create everything in the world.

Prakrti cannot be an object of perception. It can only be inferred from its effects. The Supreme Being (*Purusa*) carries in It all of *Prakrti*, sometimes keeping its forces latent and other times patent, and identifying It with its manifestations. Thus there is no difference between the *Purusa* and *Prakrti*.

Logically and ontologically, the Brahman is prior to everything. It is, therefore, to be regarded as the origin of everything. It only means that the Brahman is the ground of everything. As the ground or basis, the Brahman is called the cause (*karana*), in the ordinary sense of the term, of the world. Incidentally, the Sanskrit word '*karana*' means ground, support and reason besides cause. It, therefore, follows that the Brahman is only the supporting being (ground) of the forms of the world. What constitutes the forms of the world is *Prakrti* (the un-manifest - *Maya*).

There is neither cause nor effect in the Brahman. When the Brahman is considered the creator, the sustainer and the destroyer of the world, then It must be the personal God. This interpretation does not conflict with the position that

the Brahman is without qualities (*nirguna*). It only means that the Brahman is only the ground of everything. Even if the Brahman is considered the cause, It is only the non self-transforming cause that remains aloof from the created world, while being immanent everywhere as being, though transcendent, too.

13. The Brahman has association neither with the decrepit, decaying old-age in its suffering, nor youth in its happiness. If the Brahman is the One, Indivisible and Supreme Beatitude, how can there be infancy, youth or old-age to the Brahman.

In Hindu mythology, there are references to the Brahman being the ‘*Vruddha Prajapati*’ by a few seers. Their concept seems to have been that the Brahman is the first to emerge from and the last to merge into the Supreme Being. This concept seems to make a distinction between the Brahman being the Supreme Being, the Supreme Spirit, and the Brahman being the ‘*Vruddha Prajapati*’.

The *Avadhuta* reciting the Gita demolishes this concept. The Brahman is One and Alone. Any created being emerges out of the Being of the Brahman, and withdraws into It. Infancy, youth or old-age has no relevance to the Brahman.

14. The Brahman is devoid of the four stages of life (*asramas*) and the four castes (*varnas*). The Brahman is beyond any cause. Nor is It an agent. The Brahman is One, Indivisible and the Supreme Beatitude. How can anyone think of the Brahman as being destructible or indestructible?

The division of human life into four stages and of human society into four castes is for self-realization of the seeker, and harmonious living of the society respectively. These divisions are rooted in duality and are in no way concerned with realization of the Brahman.

Capable of being destroyed or not being destroyed is a quality attaching to an object of the relative world. The Brahman is without qualities. The destructible or indestructible nature has no relevance to the Brahman.

15. It is ignorance to consider that the Brahman is bound or released from bondage, created or uncreated. The Brahman is One, Indivisible and the Supreme Beatitude. How can anyone think of the Brahman as being mortal or immortal?

Mortality is related to living beings. Whatever comes into being with the life principle is bound to be mortal in the sense that it is bound to die (perish). Immortality is as opposed to mortality. As a living being is mortal, an ontological being - the spirit or the soul or the *atman* - is immortal. The Brahman, the Supreme Spirit, the Supreme Being is beyond mortality and immortality.

16. The concepts of husband and wife, man and woman are not in the Brahman. The Brahman is without name, form and gender. It is the inconceivable Absolute. The Brahman is One, Indivisible and the Supreme Beatitude. How can anyone attribute pleasure and pain to the Brahman?

The religious consciousness of the seeker generally gives rise to the concept of a form for worship. The form is either male or female depending upon the tradition the seeker is born into, or led to believe by faith or conviction that the form will lead him to his ideal. In Hindu religion, most people worship both male and female deities in the form of Siva and Sakti, Vishnu and Lakshmi, etc.

This concept of worship of male and female together, considering them to be wife and husband as in the human social tradition, may have been derived from the consideration that the male represents the Brahman while the female represents the power of the Brahman symbolized in *Prakrti* or *Maya*. The male-female pair is, in fact, made into one in the form of Arthanarisvara, Isvara including the form of his consort within Himself. All these concepts give form to the personal gods for worship and, in the process, elevate the seeker on the path of spirituality. But the ultimate reality is the Brahman, the Supreme Being, One, Indivisible, Eternal and All-pervading Spirit.

17. The Brahman is free from delusion and depression, doubt and distress. The Brahman is One, Indivisible and the Supreme Beatitude. How can anyone consider that the Brahman is subject to distress, depression or discord?

Distress, depression, discord, etc relate to human mind and consciousness at the elementary level. The Brahman is beyond the state of human mind and consciousness.

18. Truly, the distinctions of merit and demerit, bondage and freedom do not exist in the Brahman. The Brahman is One, Indivisible and the Supreme Beatitude. How can there be in the Brahman the feelings of misery or happiness?

19. In the Brahman, there is no distinction between the sacrificer and the sacrifice, or between the sacrificial fire and the oblation. The Brahman is One, Indivisible and the Supreme Beatitude. How can anyone think of results of action?

The path of action as a way of realization of the Divine - *Karma-yoga* - is very hard indeed. Action, here, relates to performing the rites enjoined in the scriptures. The seeker cannot perform many scriptural rites. Therefore, the scriptures suggest that the seeker is to work in a detached spirit. That is to say that he shall not seek the results of the work done in the manner anticipated. The aim of all work for a seeker is to fix his mind on God while at work, without any concern for the results.

20. The Brahman is free from memory and misery, joy and depression, and pride and humility. The Brahman is One, Indivisible and the Supreme Beatitude. How can there be any thought of passion or dispassion for the Brahman?

Passion and dispassion, joy and depression, pride and humility, etc are emotions arising out of the mind of living beings. The Brahman is beyond the state of mind itself. Such emotions dissolve in the supreme consciousness of the seeker when he attains the Brahman.

21. The Brahman is beyond infatuation and temptation, greed and delusion, etc. The Brahman is One, Indivisible and the Supreme Beatitude. How can there be any thought of discrimination or absence of discrimination for the Brahman?

22. Assume you and I have no (independent) existence. In that event, it is sheer ignorance to consider our having a family or belonging to a caste (*varna*) or race. The Brahman is One, Indivisible and the Supreme Beatitude. How can I make salutation to the Brahman?

In the relative world, there is identity of difference. The objects and individuals are separate. But in the realm of ontology, all is one and there is no identity of difference. Where does then arise independent existence for what we consider finite individuals as *atmans*?

When the seeker realizes that he is not the body, but the *atman*, he loses all awareness of the body and the mind. The caste or race into which the seeker is born relates to the body and the mind, and not to the *atman*. It may be that those born in higher castes are shown reverence in the society. This is based on social relationships related to the body and the mind such as castes or races. When the seeker transcends his body and the mind, the social relationships cease to exist for him. There is no need for him either to show reverence to others, or to be revered by others for reasons of caste or race.

23. In the Brahman, there is no discrimination between *guru* and disciple, between instruction and deflection, and the like. The Brahman is One, Indivisible and the Supreme Beatitude. How can I make salutation to the Brahman?

The *guru* is the medium for imparting knowledge to the disciple. But the Brahman is beyond knowledge, for knowledge is what is known. As such, the realization of the Brahman does not admit of and is beyond the relationship between the *guru* and the disciple, and between instruction and learning.

24. In the Brahman, there are no imaginary worlds. Nor is there division of physical forms. The Brahman is One, Indivisible and the Supreme Beatitude. How can I make salutation to the Brahman?

The Brahman is no object, like an idol, for worship. The Brahman is the Supreme Beatitude for meditation and contemplation, and through meditation and contemplation, for union.

25. The Brahman is free from passion and dispassion. The Brahman is resplendent, immobile and pure. The Brahman is One, Indivisible and the Supreme Beatitude. How can I make salutation to the Brahman?
26. It is ignorance to think that the Brahman has a form or is without form. The apparent activity of living beings is unreal for the Brahman. The Brahman is One, Indivisible and the Supreme Beatitude. How can I make salutation to the Brahman?
27. One cannot realize the Brahman by chanting Veda mantras (hymns), recitation of scriptures or practice of *Tantra*. The *Avadhuta*, being realized, becomes one with the continuous bliss of the Brahman. Such *Avadhuta* (Datatreya) sings this Gita out of his ecstatic bliss emanating from the *turiyatita* (beyond the fourth) state of consciousness
(Repetition of the 75th *sloka* in chapter 1)

7. Yogi

1. The realized *yogi* wears a patched garment made of rags or is naked. He treads the path free of merit and demerit. He lives in a lonely place, absorbed in the pure, all-pervading Brahman and immersed in the Divine Bliss.

The realized *yogi* - the *Avadhuta* - is said to be '*suddha niranjana samarasa magnaha*', meaning that he is pure in his action and motivation. He is unconcerned by the actions and judgments of others about him. He is beyond assessment. He is ever composed, and is of perfect equanimity.

The realized *yogi* has no concern of the clothes he wears. He may put on rags or may be naked. There is no difference for him in being naked physically and in removing the veils of ignorance spiritually.

2. The signs of an *Avadhuta* may or may not be visible. He is absolutely honest. His real nature is perfect, pure and without blemish. He is beyond being right and wrong. Such an illumined soul never gets involved in arguments and disputes with less realized disciples.

The *Avadhuta* is always in a state of ecstatic bliss related to the *atman*. This state does not admit of arguments or disputes related to the mind.

3. An *Avadhuta* is free of captivating desire and shuns physical tidiness and social niceties. Ever absorbed in the Supreme Spirit, he becomes one with the pure and unstained Brahman.

4. In the state of realization, an *Avadhuta* is beyond the consciousness of his body and attachment to objects. He, himself, is the immaculate, immobile, innate and all-pervading Reality.

5. In the state of realization, how and where can one realize the Reality? How can one visualize any form or formlessness of the Reality? How and by what means can one objectify the all-pervading Supreme Reality?

6. The Brahman is omnipresent and all-pervading. It is pristine crystal-like purity. How can there be division or multiplication, bondage or liberation or any modification to the realization of oneness with the Brahman?

7. The Supreme Brahman pervades everywhere equally and wholly. How can one feel union or separation there? The Supreme Brahman dwells in everything. How can there be any variation of strength or weakness in anything?

8. The Absolute Brahman is effulgent in everything alike. It is pure and all-pervading. Truly, how can there be friendship or enmity, mirth or misery in the Brahman?

9. The *yogi (Avadhuta)* may or may not follow the practices of *yoga*. He does not manifest outwardly his practices so that others form an impression that he is observing great penance. Still he is a *yogi*.
10. As long as a seeker has both knowledge and ignorance, and the awareness of duality and non-duality, how can he be liberated? Be like a *yogi* who always enjoys the pure unadulterated bliss of the Brahman, with his innate nature being ever free from desire and ignorance.
11. The Brahman is beyond the whole and the parts. The Brahman is absolutely indivisible. It is neither attached to, nor detached from anything. The Brahman is all-pervading, existence, knowledge, bliss and beyond contraction or expansion.
12. Renouncing the world, the *yogi (Avadhuta)* is always united with the Brahman. Transcending the gross elements, he is free of the complexity of the mind. He is beyond the awareness of life or death. What does it matter whether he practises meditation or not?
13. In the ultimate analysis, the relative world of names and forms is an illusion as it had a beginning and will have an end. The truth is that the Brahman alone is real as It is eternal.
14. The *yogis (Avadhutas)* never desire righteousness, wealth, enjoyment and liberation. How do the scholars imagine that they have attachment or renunciation?
- An *Avadhuta*, in a state of realization, is beyond the state of mind and intellect. As such he is beyond the realm of the relative world of names and forms. Righteous conduct, wealth, enjoyment, liberation, attachment, renunciation, etc relate to the world of activity. An *Avadhuta* is beyond this realm of activity.
15. One cannot realize the Brahman by chanting Veda mantras (hymns), recitation of scriptures or practice of *Tantra*. The *Avadhuta*, being realized, becomes one with the continuous bliss of the Brahman. Such *Avadhuta (Datatreya)* sings this Gita out of his ecstatic bliss emanating from the *turiyatita* (beyond the fourth) state of consciousness
(Repetition of the 75th *sloka* in chapter 1)

8. Avadhuta

1. While being on my path to realizing the Brahman, I have denied the omnipresence of the Brahman by meditating on It. I have given the Brahman form in my mind, denying the formlessness of the Brahman. I have described the Brahman by singing hymns, denying the indescribable nature of the Brahman. I beg pardon for the three offences.
2. A sage is one who has overcome his senses and whose intellect is not agitated by desires. He is pure, gentle, steady, without possessions, not covetous, and not greedy for serene food. He is the one who takes refuge in the self.
3. A sage is one who is vigilant, profound and steady, and has conquered the mind and the senses totally. He is humble and respects all. He is well mannered, friendly, compassionate and far-sighted.
4. A sage is gracious, non-violent and forbearing towards all. He is established in truth, impartial and beneficial to all. He is one without any blemish.

The characteristics of a sage stated above are the characteristics of an *Avadhuta* who is the sage of the highest order.
5. One is to learn the characteristics of a supreme *Avadhuta*, syllable by syllable, from the teachers of the *Veda* and the *Vedanta* who are adept in understanding the inner meaning of their content.
6. The syllable *a* in the word *Avadhuta* signals that he is free from the snares of hope and expectation. He is ever free from the beginning, through the middle, to the end. He ever dwells in bliss, profoundly enlightened.
7. The syllable *va* in the word *Avadhuta* signals that he is the one that has discarded all the desires of the world of names and forms. His speech is pure. He always lives in the ever present Brahman and speaks always of the Supreme Beatitude without form.
8. The syllable *dhu* in the word *Avadhuta* signals that he is the one beyond the illusions of the mind. He is beyond desires. His consciousness is always pure.
9. The syllable *ta* in the word *Avadhuta* signals that he is the one ever absorbed in the contemplation of the Brahman. He is free of anxiety or any obligation to exert himself. He is also free from both egotism and ignorance.
10. This is the joyous *Gita* (song of joy) by Dattatreya Avadhuta, the embodiment of Supreme Bliss. Whoever reads or listens to this *Gita* realizes the Brahman, and is not reborn.