

EKAM SAT

2

K.R.Paramahansa

**Anu-Gita
&
Uddhava-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 bring out a series of 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, the first volume of the series containing Ashtavakra-Gita and Avadhuta-Gita, has already been published.

Ekam Sat 2, the second volume of the series, contains a detailed exposition of the Anu-Gita and the Uddhava-Gita. The translation into English of each sloka (verse) of the two Gitas is rendered corresponding to the verse of the text in Sanskrit of the Gita concerned. Explanatory paragraphs are added wherever considered necessary, to elaborate the essence of the content of the verse from the point of view of Monism.

Anu-Gita

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Introduction

The Anu-Gita is contained in chapters 16 to 51 of Aswamedha-Parva of the Mahabharata.

In the world of classical literature, the Mahabharata is unique in many respects. As an epic, it is the greatest in all literatures. It is considered the mightiest single human endeavour of literary creation of any culture in human history. The effort to conceive the mind that conceived the epic is itself considered great education. It is the stupendous ocean of all-embracing knowledge. It is a wonderful production, benchmarking the high state of Indian civilization long before the Christian era.

The Anu-Gita is an exposition of the concept of the Brahman as propounded in the Vedanta in its entirety. It is, like the Bhagavad-Gita, one of the numerous episodes of the Mahabharata.

We find some quotations from it in the Bhashyas of Sankaracharya and also in the Sankhya-sara of Vijnana Bhikshu. The work affords an interesting glimpse of sundry old passages of the Upanisad literature in a somewhat modified form.

Incidentally, the Anu-Gita professes to be a sort of continuation, or rather recapitulation of the Bhagavad-Gita. On the request of Arjuna to repeat the instruction which had already been conveyed on 'the holy field of Kurukshetra', but which had gone out of his 'degenerate mind', Krisna agrees to impart to Arjuna the same instruction in other words, through the medium of a certain 'ancient story', before his departure for Dwaraka. The instruction thus conveyed constitutes what is called the Anu-Gita, a name which is, in itself, an embodiment of this anecdote.

The content of the Anu-Gita is a forceful exposition of Monism, of the God-head being One, Indivisible, Immutable, Eternal and All-pervading, attainable only by knowledge of the Self.

1. Anu-Gita

Janamejaya said:

(He is the prince to whom the Mahabharata, as we have it, purports to have been related.)

When the high-souled Kesava and Arjuna, after slaying their enemies, repaired to the assembly rooms in that palace, what conversation, O regenerate one, took place between them?

(The palace, the venue of the dialogue, appears to have been situated at Indraprastha, and to have been the one built for the Pandavas by the demon Maya, as related in the Sabha-parva.)

Vaisampayana said:

(He is the Rishi who related the Mahabharata to Janamejaya.)

The son of Pritha (Arjuna), having recovered his own kingdom joyously, spent his time, without doing anything else, in the company of Krisna, his heart filled with delight, in that palace of celestial beauty.

One day, those two listlessly proceeded to a particular part of the palace that looked, O King, like a veritable portion of heaven. They, filled with delight, were then surrounded by their relatives and attendants.

Pandu's son, Arjuna, filled with joy in the company of Krisna, surveyed that delightful mansion, and then addressed his companion, saying:

O mighty-armed one! Your greatness became known to me upon the approach of the battle. O son of Devaki! Your form, as the Lord of the universe, then became known to me! What your holy self said to me at that time, O Kesava, through affection, has all been forgotten by me, O chief of men, in consequence of the fickleness of my mind. You, O Madhava, will repair to Dwaraka soon.

Vaisampayana continued:

Thus addressed by him, Krisna of mighty energy, that foremost of speakers, embraced Phalgunas and replied to him as follows.

Vasudeva said:

I made you listen to truths that are regarded as mysteries. I imparted to you truths that are eternal. Verily, I discoursed to you on religion in its true form, and on all

the eternal regions. It is exceedingly disagreeable to me to learn that you did not, from folly, receive what I had imparted. The recollection of all that I told you on that occasion will not come to me now.

Without doubt, O son of Pandu, you are destitute of faith, and your understanding is not good. It is impossible for me, O Dhananjaya, to repeat, in detail, all that I said on that occasion. That religion (about which I discoursed to you then) is more than sufficient for understanding the Brahman. I cannot discourse on it again in detail.

I discoursed to you on the Supreme Brahman, having concentrated myself in Yoga. I shall now, however, recite to you an old story upon the same topic. O foremost of all persons! Observant of duty, listen to everything I now say, so that, with an understanding adapted to my teaching, you may succeed in attaining to the highest end.

O chastiser of foes! On one occasion, a brahmana came to us from the regions of heaven. Of irresistible energy, he came from the regions of the Grandsire. He was duly revered by us. Listen, O son of Pritha, without yielding to scruples of any kind, to what he, O chief of Bharata's race, said, in answer to our enquiries, agreeably to heavenly forms.

The Brahmana said:

That which you asked me, O Krisna, connected with the religion of Moksha (Emancipation), led by your compassion for all creatures (and not for your own good). That, indeed, which destroys all delusion, O you that are possessed of supreme puissance, I shall now tell you duly, O slayer of Madhu. Do you listen with concentrated attention as I discourse to you, O Madhava?

A brahmana of the name of Kasyapa, possessed of penances, and the foremost of all persons conversant with duties, came to a certain other brahmana who had become conversant with all the mysteries of religion. Indeed, the latter had mastered all the knowledge which the scriptures teach regarding the departure and reappearance of beings, and possessed that direct knowledge of all things which Yoga gives.

He was well skilled in the truths of all topics relating to the world. He had mastered the truth about pleasure and pain. He knew the truth about birth and death, and understood the distinctions between merit and demerit. He was a beholder of the ends attained to by embodied creatures, high and low, in consequence of their acts. He lived like one emancipated from the world.

Crowned with ascetic success and possessed of perfect tranquility of soul, he had all his senses under complete control. He seemed to blaze with the resplendence of Brahma, and was capable of going everywhere at will. He knew the science of disappearing at will from before the eyes of all. He used to rove in the company of

invisible Siddhas and celestial musicians. He used to sit and converse with them on some spot, retired from the bustle of humanity. He was as unattached to all things as the wind.

Kasyapa, having heard of him truly, desired to see him. Possessed of intelligence, he, the foremost of all brahmanas, approached the sage. Himself possessed of penances, Kasyapa, moved by the desire of acquiring merit, fell, with a rapt heart, at the feet of the sage when he had seen all those wonderful attributes.

Filled with wonder at the sight of his extraordinary accomplishments, Kasyapa began to wait upon that foremost of all brahmanas, with the dutiful reverence of a disciple waiting upon his preceptor, and succeeded in propitiating him.

By his devotion, O scorcher of foes, and rendering to him the obedience due from a disciple to a preceptor, Kasyapa gratified that brahmana who possessed all these accomplishments and was endued, besides, with scriptural learning and excellent conduct. Gratified with Kasyapa, that brahmana, one day, addressed him cheerfully and spoke as follows, with an eye to the highest success. Listen to those words, O Janardana, as I repeat them.

The ascetic crowned with success said:

By diverse acts, O son, as also by the aid of merit, mortal creatures attain to diverse ends here, and residence in heaven. Nowhere is the highest happiness; nowhere can residence be eternal. There are repeated falls from the highest regions acquired, with great sorrow.

In consequence of my indulgence in sin, I had to attain to diverse miserable and inauspicious ends, filled as I was, with lust and wrath, and deluded by cupidity. I have repeatedly undergone death and rebirth. I have seen diverse kinds of mothers, and diverse fathers dissimilar to one another. Diverse kinds of happiness have been mine, and diverse kinds of misery, O sinless one!

On diverse occasions have I been separated from what was agreeable, and united with what was disagreeable. Having earned wealth with great toil, I have had to put up with its loss. Insults and excessive misery I have received from the kings and relatives. Mental and physical pain, of great severity, has been mine. Humiliations I have undergone, and death and immurement under circumstances of great severity. Falls into hell have been mine, and great tortures in the domains of Yama. Decrepitude and diseases have repeatedly assailed me, and calamities, as frequent, in copious measure.

In this world, I have repeatedly undergone all those afflictions that flow from perception of all pairs of opposites. After all this, one day, overwhelmed with sorrow, blank despair came upon me. I took refuge in the Formless. Afflicted as I was with great distress, I gave up the world with all its joys and sorrows. (Giving up joys and

sorrows means relying on the Brahman by having recourse to Samadhi, or suspension of all functions of both body and mind through yoga, and arrival at that state which is of Supreme Consciousness.)

Understanding, then, this path, I exercised myself in it in this world. Afterwards, through tranquility of soul, I attained to this success that you see. I shall not have to come to this world again (after my departure hence).

Verily, till I attain to absorption into the eternal Brahman, till, in fact, the final dissolution of the universe, I shall look on those happy ends that will be mine, and on those beings that constitute this universe. (The dissolution spoken of is the Mahapralaya. Till then, the sage will look upon all beings, that is, their repeated migrations.)

Having acquired this excellent success, I shall, after departing from this world, proceed, to what is above it (that is, Satyaloka) and thence, to what is higher (that is, absorption into the Brahman). Verily, I shall attain to the condition, which is the unmanifest aspect of the Brahman. Let there be no doubt as regards this.

O scorcher of foes! I shall not return to this world of mortal creatures. O you of great wisdom! I have become gratified with you. Tell me what I shall do for you. The time has come for accomplishment of that purpose for which you have come here. Verily, I know the object for which you have sought me.

I shall soon depart from this world. Hence it is that I have given you this hint. O you of great wisdom and experience! I have been highly gratified with you, for your behaviour. Do you question me? I shall discourse on what is beneficial to you, agreeably to your desire. I think your intelligence is great. Indeed, I applaud it much, for it was with the aid of that intelligence that you were able to recognize me. Surely, O kasyapa, you are possessed of great intelligence.

Vasudeva said:

Touching the feet of that sage, the brahmana asked him some questions that were exceedingly difficult to answer. The foremost of all righteous persons, then, discoursed on those duties that were referred to him.

Kasyapa said:

How does the body dissolve away, and how is another acquired? How does one become emancipated after passing through a repeated round of painful rebirths? Enjoying Prakrti for sometime, how does the Jiva cast off the particular body (which Prakrti gives)? How does the Jiva, freed from the body, attain to what is different from it (that is, the Brahman)? How does a human being enjoy (and endure the fruits of) the good and bad acts done by him? Where do the acts of one exist, that is devoid of body?

(Altogether seven questions are raised. The first relates to the dissolution of the body. The second relates to the manner of reacquiring it. The third relates to the manner in which rebirth may be avoided. The fourth relates to causes that operate for giving a body to the Jiva. The fifth relates as to how Emancipation or absorption into the Brahman takes place. The sixth relates to the manner in which the fruits of acts are enjoyed, or endured. The seventh relates to the way in which acts attach to the Jiva, even when devoid of a body.)

The Brahmana said:

Thus urged by Kasyapa, the emancipated sage answered those questions one after another. Do you listen to me, O scion of the Vrishi race, as I recite to you the answers he made?

The Emancipated sage said:

Upon the exhaustion of those acts capable of prolonging life and bringing on fame which are done in a particular body that the Jiva assumes, the embodied the Jiva, with the span of its life shortened, begins to do acts hostile to life and health. On the approach of destruction, its understanding turns away from the proper course.

The man of un-cleansed soul, after even a correct apprehension of his constitution and strength, and of the season of both his own life and of the year, begins to eat at irregular intervals, and to eat such food as is hostile to him. (Food that is beneficial in one season, say summer is not so in winter. Similarly, what is beneficial in youth is otherwise in old age.) At such a time, he indulges in practices that are exceedingly harmful.

He, sometimes, eats excessively and, sometimes, abstains altogether from food. He eats bad food or bad meat or takes bad drinks, or food that has been made up of ingredients incompatible with one another. He eats food that is heavy in excess of the measure that is beneficial, or before the food previously taken has been digested.

He indulges in physical exercise and sexual pleasure in excess of the due measure, or through avidity for work, suppresses the urgings of his corporeal organism even when they become pronounced. Or, he takes food that is very juicy, or indulges in sleep during daytime. Food that is not properly digested, of itself, excites the faults, when the time comes. From such excitement of the faults in his body, he gets disease ending in death itself.

(The faults are three, namely, wind, bile, and phlegm. When existing in a state of harmony, they produce good health. When one is excited, or two, or all, indisposition sets in. They are called dosha or faults, because of their liabilities to be excited, and produce disease. These laws of health are also those expounded by Charaka.)

Sometimes the person engages in perverse or unnatural acts like hanging (for bringing about his death). Through these causes, the living body of the creature dissolves away.

Understand correctly the manner, as I declare it to you. Urged on by the wind which becomes violent, the heat in the body, becoming excited, and reaching every part of the body one after another, restrains all the (movements of the) vital breaths. Know, truly, that, excited, all over the body, the heat becomes very strong, and pierces every vital part where life may be said to reside. In consequence of this, the Jiva, feeling great pain, quickly takes leave of its mortal casement.

Know, O foremost of regenerate persons, that when the vital parts of the physical organism become thus afflicted, the Jiva slips away from the body, overwhelmed with great pain. All living creatures are repeatedly afflicted with birth and death. It is seen, O chief of brahmanas, that the pain which is felt by a person when casting off his body is like what is felt by the Jiva when first entering the womb or when issuing out of it.

His joints become almost dislocated and he derives much distress (as the fetus enters the womb after casting off the body appertaining to the other world). Urged on by (another) violent wind, the wind that is in the body becomes excited through cold, and dissolves away the union of matter (called the body) into its respective elements numbering five. (The number refers to the five Gross Elements.)

That wind which resides in the vital breaths called Prana and Apana occurring within this compound of the five primal Elements, rushes upwards, from a situation of distress, leaving the embodied creature. It is even thus that the wind leaves the body. Then is seen breathlessness. The man then becomes destitute of heat, of breath, of beauty, and of consciousness. Deserted by the Brahman (for the Jiva is the Brahman), the person is said to be dead.

By those ducts through which all sensuous objects are perceived, the bearer of the body, no longer, perceives them. It is the eternal the Jiva that creates in the body, in those very ducts, the life-breaths that are generated by food.

The elements gathered together become in certain parts firmly united. Know that those parts are called the vitals of the body! It is said so in the Sastras. When those vital parts are pierced, the Jiva, rising up, enters the heart of the living creature and restrains the principle of animation without any delay. The creature, then, though still endued with the principle of consciousness, fails to know anything. The vital parts being all overwhelmed, the knowledge of the living creature becomes overwhelmed by darkness.

The Jiva that has been deprived of everything upon which to stay is then agitated by the wind. It, deeply breathing a long and painful breath, goes out quickly, causing the inanimate body to tremble. Dissociated from the body, the Jiva, however,

is surrounded by its acts. It becomes equipped on every side with all its auspicious acts of merit and demerit.

The brahmanas endued with knowledge and equipped with the certain conclusions of the scriptures, know it, from indications, as to whether it is possessed of merit or demerit. Even as men possessed of eyes behold the fire-fly appearing and disappearing amid darkness, men possessed of the eye of knowledge and crowned with the success of penances, behold, with spiritual vision, the Jiva as it leaves the body, as it is reborn, and as it enters the womb.

It is seen that the Jiva has three regions assigned to it eternally. This world where creatures dwell is called the field of action. Accomplishing acts good or bad, all embodied creatures attain to the fruits thereof. In consequence of their own acts, creatures acquire even here superior or inferior enjoyments. Doers of evil deeds here, in consequence of those acts of theirs, attain to hell. This condition of sinking with head downwards, in which creatures are cooked, is one of great misery. It is such that a rescue there-from is exceedingly difficult. Indeed; one should strive hard for saving oneself from this misery.

Those regions where creatures dwell when they ascend from this world, I shall now declare truly. Do you listen to me with attention? By listening to what I say, you shall attain to firmness of understanding, and a clear apprehension of (good and bad) acts.

Know that even those are the regions of all creatures of righteous deeds, that is, the stellar worlds that shine in the firmament, the lunar disc and the solar disc, as well that shine in the universe in their own light. Upon the exhaustion, again, of their merits, they fall away from those regions repeatedly. There, in heaven, is the distinction of inferior, superior and middle-level felicity. There, in heaven, is discontent at sight of prosperity, more blazing than one's own. Even these are the goals which I have mentioned in detail.

I shall, after this, discourse to you on the attainment by the Jiva of the condition of residence in the womb. Do you here me, with concentrated attention, O regenerate one, as I speak to you!

The Brahmana said:

The acts, good and bad, that the Jiva does are not subject to destruction. Upon attainment of body after body, those acts produce fruits corresponding to them. As a fruit-bearing tree, when the season comes of productivity, yields a large quantity of fruit, similarly merit, achieved with a pure heart, yields a large crop (of felicity). After the same fashion, sin, done with a sinful heart, produces a large crop of misery.

The soul (or the Jiva), placing the mind ahead, addresses itself to action. Hear, then, how the Jiva, equipped with all its acts, and overwhelmed with lust and wrath,

enters the womb. The vital seed, mixed with blood, enters the female womb, and becomes the field (of the Jiva), good or bad, born of (its) acts. In consequence of its subtlety and the condition of being un-manifest, the Jiva does not become attached to anything even after attaining to a body. Therefore, it is called the Eternal Brahman.

That, (the Jiva or the Brahman), is the seed of all creatures. It is in consequence of Him that living creatures live. That the Jiva, entering all the limbs of the fetus, part by part, accepting the attribute of mind, and residing within all the regions that belong to Prana, supports (life). In consequence of this, the fetus, becoming endued with mind, begins to move its limbs.

As liquefied iron, poured (into a mould), takes the form of the mould, know that the entrance of the Jiva in the fetus is even such. As fire, entering a mass of iron, heats it greatly, know that manifestation of the Jiva is such.

As a lamp, burning in a room, discovers (all things within it), after the same manner, mind discovers the different limbs of the body. Whatever acts, good or bad, the Jiva does in a former body, have certainly to be enjoyed or endured by it. By such enjoyment and endurance, former acts are exhausted, and other acts, again, accumulate, till the Jiva succeeds in acquiring knowledge of the duties included in that contemplation which leads to Emancipation.

Regarding this, I shall tell you of those acts by which the Jiva, O best of men, while coursing through a repeated round of re-births, becomes happy.

Gifts, observances of austerity, brahmacharya, contemplating the Brahman according to the ordinances laid down, self-restraint, tranquility, compassion for all creatures, restraint of passions, abstention from cruelty as also from appropriating what belongs to others, refraining from doing even mentally all acts that are false and injurious to living creatures on the earth, reverently serving mother and father, honouring deities and guests, worship of preceptors, pity, purity, constant restraint of all organs, and causing of all good acts are said to constitute the conduct of the good.

From observance of such conduct arises righteousness which protects all creatures eternally. Such conduct resides there eternally. That course of practices to which persons of tranquil souls adhere indicates righteousness. Among them is thrown that course of practices which constitutes eternal righteousness.

He who would betake himself to that righteousness would never have to attain to a miserable end. It is by the conduct of the good that the world is restrained in the paths of righteousness when it falls away.

He that is a yogi is emancipated, and is, therefore, distinguished above these (that is, the good). Deliverance from the world takes place, after a long time, of one who acts righteously and well, on every occasion as one should.

A living creature, thus, always meets with the acts done by it in a former life. All these acts constitute the cause in consequence of which it comes into this world in a state different from its true form.

There is a doubt in the world as regards the question, 'by what was the acceptance (by the Jiva) of a body first determined?' The Grandsire of all the worlds, that is, Brahma, having first formed a body of his own, created the three worlds, in their entirety, of mobile and immobile creatures.

Having first himself assumed a body, he then created Pradhana. That Pradhana is the material cause of all embodied creatures, by which is all this covered and which is considered the highest. This, that is seen, is said to be destructible (kshara); while the other (para) is immortal and indestructible (akshara).

Of each Purusa taken distributively, the whole is duality. (One is kshara, the material case or body. The other is para, the other. This 'other' is of two kinds, that is, amritam and suddha-chaitanayam, implying the Brahman in Its condition of purity. What is stated in this verse is that every Purusa is a duality made up of kshara and akshara.)

Seen first (to appear in an embodied form), Prajapati (then) created all the primal elements and all immobile entities. Even this is the ancient audition. Of that (acceptance of body), the Grandsire ordained a limit in respect of time, and migrations among diverse creatures, and return or rebirth.

All that I say is proper and correct. It is similar to what a person, who is endued with intelligence and who has seen his soul, would say on this topic of previous births. That person who looks upon pleasure and pain as inconstant, which, indeed, is the correct view, who regards the body as an unholy conglomeration subject to destruction, and who remembers that what little pleasure there is, is really all pain, will succeed in crossing this terrible ocean of worldly migration that is so difficult to cross.

Though assailed by decrepitude, death and disease, he that understands Pradhana beholds, with an equal eye, that Consciousness which dwells in all beings endued with consciousness. Seeking the Supreme Seat, he then becomes utterly indifferent to all (other) things.

O best of men! I shall now impart instruction to you, agreeably to truth, concerning this. O learned brahmana! Understand in full that which constitutes the excellent knowledge, as I declare it, of that indestructible Seat.

The Brahmana continued:

He who becomes absorbed in the one receptacle (of all things--the Brahman), freeing himself from even the thought of his own identity with all things, indeed,

ceasing to think of even his own existence, gradually casting off one after another, will succeed in crossing his bonds.

That man who is the friend of all, who endures all, who is attached to tranquility, who has conquered all his senses, who is divested of fear and wrath, and who is of restrained soul succeeds in emancipating himself. He, who behaves towards all creatures as towards himself, and who is restrained, pure, free from vanity and divested of egoism is regarded as emancipated from everything.

He, who looks, with an equal eye, upon life and death, pleasure and pain, gain and loss, and agreeable and disagreeable is also emancipated. He, who does not covet what belongs to others, who never disregards any body, who transcends all pairs of opposites, and whose soul is free from attachment is in every way emancipated.

He, who has no enemy, no kinsman, and no child, who has cast off religion; wealth, and pleasure, and who is freed from desire or cupidity is emancipated. He, who acquires neither merit nor demerit, who casts off the merits and demerits accumulated in previous births, who wastes the elements of his body for attaining to a tranquilized soul, and who transcends all pairs of opposites becomes emancipated.

He, who abstains from all acts, who is free from desire or cupidity, who looks upon the universe as un-enduring, or as like an Aswattha tree, ever endued with birth, death and decrepitude, whose understanding is fixed on renunciation, and whose eyes are always directed towards his own faults, soon succeeds in emancipating himself from the bonds that bind him.

He that sees his soul void of smell, of taste and touch, of sound, of belongings, of vision, and unknowable, becomes emancipated. (The soul devoid of these qualities becomes chinmatra, that is, pure chit without the attributes super-induced on it by ignorance.)

He who sees his soul devoid of the attributes of the five elements, to be without form and cause, to be really destitute of attributes though enjoying them, becomes emancipated. (Formlessness implies subtlety. 'Without cause' implies increate or as identical with the eternal Brahman. Dissociation from attributes, while enjoying them, implies an emancipate condition.)

Abandoning, with the aid of the understanding, all purposes relating to body and mind, one gradually attains to cessation of separate existence, like a fire unfed with fuel. (Nirvana implies the annihilation or cessation of separate or individual existence by absorption into the universal and eternal Brahman.)

One who is freed from all impressions, who transcends all pairs of opposites, who is destitute of all belongings, and who uses all his senses under the guidance of penances, becomes emancipated. (The impressions caused by objects outside 'self' are

destroyed by those belonging to contemplation. The latter, again, should be destroyed before absorption into the Brahman can occur.)

Having become freed from all impressions, one then attains to the Brahman which is eternal and supreme, tranquil, stable, enduring and indestructible.

After this, I shall declare the science of Yoga to which there is nothing superior; and how yogis, by concentration, behold the perfect soul. I shall declare the instructions regarding it duly. Do you learn from me those doors, by which, directing the soul within the body, one beholds that which is without beginning and end?

Withdrawing the senses from their objects, one should fix the mind upon the soul; having previously undergone the severest austerities and one should practise that concentration of mind which leads to Emancipation.

Observant of penances and always practising concentration of mind, the learned brahmana, endued with intelligence, should observe the precepts of the science of Yoga, beholding the soul in the body. If the good man succeeds in concentrating the mind on the soul, he then, habituated to exclusive meditation, beholds the Supreme Soul in his own soul.

Self-restrained, and always concentrated, and with all his senses completely conquered, the man of cleansed soul, in consequence of such complete concentration of mind, succeeds in beholding the Soul by the soul. As a person beholding some unseen individual in a dream recognizes him saying, 'this is he', when he sees him after waking, after the same manner, the good man having seen the Supreme Soul in the deep contemplation of samadhi recognizes it upon waking from samadhi. (Having seen the Supreme Soul in samadhi, upon awaking from it, he recognizes it in the universe. In other words, he regards the universe nothing else than the Supreme Soul.)

As one beholds the fibrous pith after extracting it from a blade of the Saccharum Munja, even so the yogi beholds the soul, extracting it from the body. The body has been called the Saccharum Munja, and the fibrous pith is said to stand for the soul. This is the excellent illustration propounded by persons conversant with Yoga.

When the bearer of a body adequately beholds the soul in Yoga, he has no one that is master over him, for, he then becomes the lord of the three worlds. (This may mean that 'he has none superior to him; not even he that is the Lord of the universe'.) He succeeds in assuming diverse bodies according as he wishes. Turning away decrepitude and death, he neither grieves nor exults. The self-restrained man, concentrated in Yoga, can create (for himself) the God-head of the very gods.

Casting off his transient body, he attains to the immutable Brahma. (Such a person becomes the god of the very gods.) No fear springs up in him at even the sight of all creatures falling victims to destruction (before his eyes). When all creatures are afflicted, he can never be afflicted by any one.

Devoid of desire and possessed of a tranquil mind, the person in Yoga is never shaken by pain, sorrow and fear, the terrible effects that flow from attachment and affection. Weapons never pierce him; death does not exist for him. Nowhere in the world can be seen any one that is happier than he. Having adequately concentrated his soul, he lives steadily on himself.

Turning off decrepitude, pain and pleasure, he sleeps in comfort. Casting off this human body, he attains to (other) forms according to his pleasure. While one is enjoying the sovereignty that yoga bestows, one should never fall away from devotion to yoga. (One should not fall away from the practice of yoga, tempted by the puissance that yoga brings.)

When one, after adequate devotion to yoga, beholds the Soul in oneself, one then ceases to have any regard for even him of a hundred sacrifices (Indra). (The yogi who has not advanced much may be tempted by the desire of enjoyment. However, he who has adequately devoted himself to yoga feels no regard even for Indra, but can turn him away.)

Hear now how one, habituating oneself to exclusive meditation, succeeds in attaining to yoga! Thinking of that point of the compass which has the sun behind it, the mind should be fixed, not outside, but in the interior of that mansion in which one may happen to live. (What this means is that the instructions laid down in the Vedanta as based on 'Srutis' be followed.) Residing within that mansion, the mind should then, with all its outward and inward (operations), behold in that particular room in which one may stay.

At that time when, having deeply meditated, one beholds the All (the Brahman, the Soul of the universe), there is then nothing external to the Brahman where the mind may dwell. Restraining all the senses in a forest that is free from noise, and that is uninhabited, with mind fixed thereon, one should meditate on the All (the universal Brahman) both outside and inside one's body. One should meditate on the teeth, the palate, the tongue, the throat, and the neck; likewise, one should also meditate on the heart and the ligatures of the heart! (The several parts of the body named, beginning with teeth, etc, refer to eating and other operations all of which influence the mind, and dispose it for purity or otherwise.)

The Brahmana continued:

Thus addressed by me, that intelligent disciple, O slayer of Madhu, once more asked me about this religion of Emancipation that is so difficult to explain. How does this food that is eaten from time to time become digested in the stomach? How does it become transformed into juice and, how, again, into blood? How does it nourish the flesh, the marrow, the sinews, and the bones? How do all these limbs of embodied creatures grow? How does the strength grow of the growing man? How does the escape occur of all such elements as are not nutritive and of all impurities separately? How does one inhale and again, exhale? Staying upon what particular part does the

soul dwell in the body? How does the Jiva, exerting itself, bear the body? Of what colour and of what kind is the body in which it dwells again (leaving a particular body)?

‘O holy one! It behooves you to tell me all this accurately, O sinless one!’ even thus was I interrogated by that learned brahmana, O Madhava!

I replied to him, O you of mighty arms, after the manner I myself had heard, O chastiser of all foes!

As one placing some precious object in one’s store-room should keep one’s mind on it, so, placing the mind within one’s own body, one should then, restraining all the senses, seek after the soul, avoiding all heedlessness. One would, becoming always assiduous in this way and gratified with one’s own self, within a very short time, attain to the Brahman by beholding which one would become conversant with Pradhana.

Such a person is not capable of being seized by the eye; nor even by all the senses. It is only with the lamp of the mind that great soul can be seen. He has hands and feet on all sides; he has ears on all sides; he dwells, pervading all things, in the world. The Jiva beholds the soul as extracted from the body (like the stalk from a blade of Saccharum Munja, when knowledge comes).

Then casting off the Brahman as invested with form, by holding the mind in the body, he beholds the Brahma as freed from all attributes. (This refers to the ascension in the perception of the yogi from the Brahman vested with attributes to the Brahman divested of all attributes.) He sees the soul with his mind, smiling as it were at the time. Depending upon that Brahman, he then attains to Emancipation in me.

O foremost of regenerate ones! All this mystery has now been declared by me. I ask your permission, for I shall leave this spot. Do you (also) go where so ever you please?

Thus addressed by me, O Krisna, on that occasion, that disciple of mine, endued with austere penances, that brahmana of rigid vows, went away according to his pleasure.

Vasudeva said:

That best of brahmanas, O son of Pritha, having said these words to me, on that occasion, properly relating to the religion of Emancipation disappeared then and there. Has this discourse been heard by you, O son of Pritha, with mind directed solely towards it?

Even this was what you did hear on that occasion while you were on your car. It is my opinion, O son of Pritha, that this is difficult of being comprehended by one

whose understanding is confused, or who has acquired no wisdom by study, or who eats food incompatible with his body, or whose soul is not purified.

O chief of Bharata's race! This is a great mystery among the deities that has been declared (to you). At no time or place, O son of Pritha, has this been heard by man in this world. O sinless one! No man other than you deserves to hear it.

It is not, at this time, capable of being easily understood by one whose inner soul is confused. The world of the deities is filled, O son of Kunti, with those who follow the religion of actions. The cessation of the mortal form (by practising the religion of inaction) is not agreeable to the deities. That goal, O son of Pritha, is the highest, which is constituted by the eternal Brahman where one, casting off the body, attains to immortality and becomes always happy.

By adhering to this religion, even they who are of sinful birth such as women, vaisyas and sudras, attain to the highest goal. What need be said then, O son of Pritha, of brahmanas and kshatriyas possessed of great learning, always devoted to the duties of their own orders and who are intent on (the acquisition of) the region of Brahman?

This has been laid down with the reasons (on which it rests): and also the means for its acquisition; and its complete attainment and fruit, that is, Emancipation and the ascertainment of the truth regarding pain.

O chief of Bharata's race! There is nothing else that is fraught with happiness greater than this. That mortal, O son of Pandu, who, endued with intelligence, and faith, and prowess, renounces as unsubstantial what is regarded as substantial by the world, succeeds within a short time, in obtaining the Supreme by these means. This is all that is to be said; there is nothing else that is higher than this. Yoga takes place in his case, O son of Pritha, who devotes himself to its constant practice for a period of six months.

2. Brahma-Gita

Vasudeva continued:

In this connection is cited the ancient narrative, O son of Pritha, of the discourse that took place between a married couple. A certain brahmana's spouse, beholding the brahmana, her husband who was a complete master of every kind of knowledge and wisdom, seated in seclusion, said to him, 'into what region shall I go, depending on you as my husband, with you that are seated having cast off all (religious) acts, that are harsh in your conduct towards me, and that are so undiscerning? It has been heard by us that a wife attains to those regions which are acquired by her husband. What, indeed, is the goal that I shall attain, having obtained you for my husband?'

Thus questioned, that brahmana of tranquil soul, then said to her, smilingly, 'o blessed dame, I am not offended with these words of yours. O sinless one! Whatever acts exist that are adopted with the aid of others, that are seen (in consequence of their grossness), and that are true, are done as acts by men devoted to acts. Those persons that are destitute of knowledge, only store delusion by acts. Freedom from acts, again, is incapable of being attained in this world for even a moment. From birth to the attainment of a different form, action, good or bad, and, accomplished by acts, mind or speech exists in all beings.

Those paths (of action) which are characterized by visible objects (such as Soma-juice and ghee for libations) being destroyed by rakshasas, turning away from them, I have perceived the seat (of the soul) that is in the body, with the aid of the soul. There dwells the Brahman transcending all pairs of opposites; there Soma with Agni: and there the urger of the understanding (that is, Vayu) always moves, upholding all creatures.

It is for that seat that the Grandsire Brahma and others, concentrated in yoga, worship the Indestructible. It is for that seat that men of learning and excellent vows, of tranquil souls, and of senses completely vanquished, strive. That is not capable of being smelt by the sense of smell; nor tasted by the tongue; nor touched by the organs of touch. It is by mind that that is attained.

It is incapable of being conquered by the eye. It transcends the sense of hearing. It is devoid of scent (smell), taste, touch and form as attributes. It is that from which proceeds the well-ordained universe, and it is that upon which it rests. The life-breaths called Prana, Apana, Samana, Vyana and Udana flow from it, and it is that into which they again enter.

The breaths Prana and Apana move between Samana and Vyana. When the soul sleeps, both Samana and Vyana are absorbed. Between Apana and Prana, Udana dwells, pervading all. Hence, Prana and Apana do not desert a sleeping person. In consequence of its controlling all the life-winds, the controlling breath is called Udana.

Hence, those seeking the Brahman undergo penances which have Me as their goal. (Worldly life is regulated by the life-deaths. These are attached to the soul, and lead to its individual manifestations. Udana controls all the breaths. Udana is controlled by penance. It is penance, then, that destroys the round of re-births, and leads to absorption into the Brahman.)

In the midst of all those life-breaths that swallow up one another and move within the body, blazes forth the fire called Vaiswanara made up of seven flames. The nose, the tongue, the eye, the skin, the ear, the mind and the understanding are the seven tongues of that Vaiswanara flame. That which is smelt, that which is seen, that which is drunk, that which is touched, that which is heard, that which is thought of, and that which is understood are the seven sorts of fuel for me. That which smells, that which eats, that which sees, that which touches, that which hears, that which thinks, and that which understands are the seven great officiating priests.

Behold, O blessed one! Learned sacrificers duly casting seven libations in seven ways in the seven fires, that is, that which is smelt, that which is drunk, that which is seen, that which is touched, that which is heard, that which is thought of, and that which is understood create them in their own wombs. (They who renounce sensuous objects can create them they like. One casting off smell that has earth for its object can create earth when one likes.)

Earth, Wind, Ether, Water, Light, Mind and Understanding are called the wombs (of all things). All the attributes which constitute the sacrificial offerings, enter into the attribute that is born of the fire; and having dwelt within that dwelling, became reborn in their respective wombs. In that which generates all beings, they remain absorbed during the period for which dissolution lasts. From that is produced smell, from that is produced taste, from that is produced colour, from that is produced touch, from that is produced sound, and from that arises doubt, resolution is produced. This is what is known as the sevenfold creation. It is in this very way that all this was comprehended by the ancients. By the three full and final libations, the full becomes full with light.

The Brahmana said:

In this connection is cited the following ancient story. Do you understand of what kind the institution is of the ten Hotris (sacrificing priests)?

The ear, the skin, the two eyes, the tongue, the nose, the two feet, the two hands, the genital organ, the lower duct and the speech, O beautiful one, are the ten sacrificing priests. Sound and touch, colour and taste, scent, speech, action, motion, and the discharge of vital seed, of urine and of excreta are the ten (sacrificial) fires. The ten organs (of knowledge and of action) are the sacrificing priests. The libations, O beautiful one, are ten. The objects of the senses are the fuel that is cast into these ten fires, as also the mind, which is the ladle, and the wealth (that is, the good and bad acts of the sacrificer).

(The ear, etc are the Hotris or sacrificing priests who are to pour libations on the sacrificial fire. The perceptions and functions of those organs constitute the havi or libations that are to be poured. The points, wind, etc are the Agni or sacred fires on which they are to be poured. The objects of the senses are the fuel or libations which are to be burnt off, by being cast into the fires.)

What remains is the pure, highest knowledge. We have heard that this entire universe was well differentiated (from Knowledge). All objects of knowledge are Mind. Knowledge only perceives (that is, discovers the Mind without being attached to it).

The Knower (or the Jiva), encased in subtle form, lives within the gross body, that is produced by the vital seed. The bearer of the body is the garhapatya fire. From that is produced another. Mind is the ahavaniya fire. Into it is poured the oblation. From that was produced the Veda (or Word); (then was born Mind); Mind (desirous of creation) sets itself on the Veda (or the Word). Then arises form (or colour) undistinguished by particular colours. It runs towards the Mind.

(The hridaya is the garhapatya fire. From it is produced another fire, the ahavaniya, the mind. The declaration of the Sruti is, 'the heart was pierced. From the heart arose mind, and from the mind arose Chandramas'. The ahavaniya fire or mind is the mouth. Food or fire, poured into the mouth, develops into speech or word. The word vachaspati implies the Veda or Word. First arises the word, the mind sets itself upon it, desirous of creation. The word was, thus, the first of creation.)

The Brahmana's wife said:

Why did Word first arise and why did Mind arise afterwards, seeing that Word starts into existence after having been thought upon by Mind? Upon that authority can it be said that Mati (Prana) takes refuge in Mind. Why, again, in dreamless slumber, though separated from Mind, does not Prana apprehend (all objects)? What is that which restrains it then? (In dreamless slumber, the mind disappears totally. If it is the mind upon which Prana rests, why does not Prana also disappear? It is seen to separate itself from mind, for it continues to exist while mind does not. If so, that is, if existing, as it must be admitted to do, why does it not apprehend objects? What is it that restrains its powers of apprehension?)

The Brahmana said:

The Apana breath, becoming the lord (bringing the Prana under its control), in consequence of such lordship over it, makes it identical with itself. That restrained motion of the Prana breath (which, for the time, becomes identical with that of the Apana) has been said to be the motion of the mind. Hence the mind is dependent upon Prana, not Prana upon the mind. Therefore, in dreamless slumber, upon the disappearance of mind, Prana does not disappear.

But since you asked me a question about word and mind, I shall, therefore, relate to you a discourse between them. Both Word and Mind, repairing to the Soul of matter, asked him, ‘do you say who amongst us is superior. Do you, O puissant one, dispel our doubt?’ On that occasion, the holy one made this answer, ‘the mind undoubtedly (is superior).’ Unto him Word said, ‘I yield to you the fruition of all your desires!’ (It is, through words, that desirable fruits, visible and invisible, are acquired. Of course, word means both ordinary speech and Vedic Mantras.)

The Brahmana said:

Know that I have two minds, immovable and movable. That which is immovable is, verily, with me; the movable is in your dominion. That mind is verily called movable which, in the form of Mantra, letter, or voice, is referable to your dominion. Hence, you are superior (to the other mind which concerns itself with only the external world).

But since, coming of your own accord, O beautiful one, you enter into the engagement (about the fruition of all wishes), therefore, filling me with breath, I utter you.

The goddess Word used always to dwell between Prana and Apana. But, O blessed one, sinking into Apana, though urged upwards, in consequence of becoming dissociated from Prana, she ran to Prajapati and said, ‘be gratified with me, O holy one!’ The Prana appeared, once more fostering word.

Hence, Word, encountering deep exhalation, never utters anything. Word always flows as endued with utterance, or un-endued with it (that is, as noisy or noiseless). Between those two, Word without utterance is superior to Word with utterance. Like a cow endued with excellent milk, she (Word without utterance) yields diverse kinds of meaning. O you of beautiful smiles! Word is a cow, in consequence of her puissance which is both divine and not divine. Behold the distinction of these two subtle forms of Word that flow.

The Brahmana’s wife said:

What did the goddess of Word then say, in days of old, when, though impelled by the wish to speak, Speech could not come out?

The Brahmana said:

The word that is generated in the body by Prana, then, attains to Apana from Prana. Then transformed into Udana and issuing out of the body, envelops all the quarters, with Vyana. After that, she dwells in Samana. Even in this way did Word formerly speak. Hence Mind, in consequence of being immovable, is distinguished, and the goddess Word, in consequence of being movable, is also distinguished.

The Brahmana continued:

In this connection is cited the ancient story, O blessed one, of what the institution is of the seven sacrificing priests. The nose, the eye, the tongue, the skin, the ear, the mind, and the understanding are the seven sacrificing priests standing distinctly from one another. Dwelling in subtle space, they do not perceive one another. Do you, O beautiful one, know these sacrificing priests by their nature?

The Brahmana's wife said:

How is it that, dwelling in subtle space, these do not perceive one another? What are their (respective) natures, O holy one? Do you tell me this? O lord!

The Brahmana said:

Not knowing the qualities (of any object) is ignorance (of that object); while knowledge of the qualities is (called) knowledge (of the object which possesses those qualities). These seven never succeed in apprehending or knowing the qualities of one another.

The tongue, the eye, the ear, the skin, the mind and the understanding do not succeed in apprehending smells. It is the nose alone that apprehends them. The nose, the tongue, the ear, the skin, the mind and the understanding never succeed in apprehending colours. It is the eye alone that apprehends them.

The nose, the tongue, the eye, the ear, the understanding and the mind never succeed in apprehending sensation of touch. It is the skin alone that apprehends them. The nose, the tongue, the eye, the skin, the mind and the understanding never succeed in apprehending sounds. It is the ear alone that apprehends them.

The nose, the tongue, the eye, the skin, the ear and the understanding never succeed in apprehending doubt. It is the mind that alone apprehends it. The nose, the tongue, the eye, the skin, the ear and the mind never succeed in apprehending determination (certainty in respect of knowledge). It is the understanding alone that apprehends it.

In this connection is cited, O beautiful lady, this ancient narrative of a discourse between the senses and the mind.

The mind said, 'the nose does not smell without me. (Without me), the tongue does not apprehend taste. The eye does not seize colour, the skin does not feel touch, the ear does not apprehend sound, when deprived of me. I am the eternal and foremost one among all the elements. It always happens that destitute of me, the senses never shine, like habitations empty of inmates, or fires without flames. Without me, all creatures fail to apprehend qualities and objects, with even the senses exerting themselves, even as fuel that is wet (fails to ignite a fire).'

Hearing these words, the senses said, ‘even this would be true as you think, in this matter, if, indeed, you could enjoy pleasures without either us or our objects. What you think would be true, if, when we are extinct, there be gratification and support of life, and a continuation of thy enjoyments, or, if, when we are absorbed and objects exist, you can have your enjoyments by your desires alone, as truly as you have them with our aid.

If, again, you deem your power over our objects to be always complete, do you then seize colour by the nose, and taste by the eye? Do you also take smell by the ear and sensations of touch by the tongue? Do you also take sounds by the skin, and likewise touch by the understanding?

They that are powerful do not own the dominion of any rules. Rules exist for those only that are weak. Do you seize enjoyments un-enjoyed before; it behooves you not to enjoy what has been tasted before (by others)?

As a disciple repairs to a preceptor for the sake of (acquiring) the Srutis, and then, having acquired the Srutis, dwells on their import (by obeying their injunctions), even so do you regard as yours those objects which are shown by us, past or future, in sleep or in wakefulness?

Of creatures, again, that are of little intelligence, when their mind becomes distracted and cheerless, life is seen to be upheld upon our objects discharging their functions. It is seen also that a creature, after having formed even innumerable purposes and indulged in dreams, when afflicted by the desire to enjoy, runs to objects of sense alone. One entering upon enjoyments depending on mental purposes alone, and unconnected with actual objects of sense always meets with death upon the exhaustion of the life-breaths, like an enkindled fire upon the exhaustion of fuel.

True it is that we have connections with our respective attributes; true it is that we have no knowledge of one another’s attributes. But without us, you can have no perception. Without us, no happiness can come to you’.

The Brahmana continued:

In this connection, O blessed lady, is cited the ancient story of what kind the institution is of the five sacrificing priests. The learned know this to be a great principle that Prana, Apana, Udana, Samana and Vyana are the five sacrificing priests.

The Brahmana’s wife said:

That naturally there are seven sacrificing priests is what my former conviction was. Let the great principle be declared to me as to how, verily, the number is five of the sacrificing priests.

The Brahmana said:

The wind nursed by Prana afterwards takes birth in Apana. The wind nursed in Apana then becomes developed into Vyana. Nursed by Vyana, the wind is then developed into Udana. Nursed in Udana, the wind is then developed into Samana. Those good beings, in days of yore, asked the first-born Grandsire, ‘do you say who amongst us is the foremost? He (whom you will indicate) will be our chief.’

The Brahmana continued:

He, upon whose extinction all the life-breaths become extinct in the bodies of living creatures, and he upon whose moving they move, is verily the foremost (among you). You go where you like.

Prana said, ‘upon my extinction, all the life-breaths become extinct in the bodies of living creatures. Upon my moving, they, once more, move. I am (therefore) the foremost. Behold! I go into extinction.’

The Brahmana continued:

Prana then became extinct, and once more moved about. Then Samana and Udana also, O blessed one, said these words. ‘You do not dwell here, pervading all this, as we do. You are not the foremost amongst us, O Prana! (Only) Apana is under thy dominion. Prana then moved about, and unto him Apana spoke:

Apana said, ‘when I become extinct, all the life-winds become extinct in the bodies of living creatures. When I move about, they again move about. I am, therefore, the foremost. Behold! I go into extinction.’

The Brahmana continued:

Unto Apana who said so, both Vyana and Udana said, ‘O Apana, you are not the foremost. (Only) Prana is under your dominion. Then Apana began to move about. Vyana once more addressed him saying, ‘I am the foremost of all (the life-winds). Listen, for what reason? When I become extinct, all the life-winds become extinct in the bodies of living creatures. When I move about, they, once more, move about. I am (therefore) the foremost. Behold! I go into extinction.’

The Brahmana continued:

Then Vyana went into extinction and, once more, began to move about. At this, Prana, Apana, Udana and Samana addressed him, saying, ‘you are not the foremost among us, O Vyana! (Only) Samana is under your dominion.’

Vyana then began to move about and Samana said unto him, ‘I am the foremost of you all. Listen, for what reason? When I become extinct, all the life-winds become

extinct in the bodies of living creatures. When I begin to move about, they once more move about. Hence, I am the foremost. Behold! I go into extinction.'

Then Samana began to move about. Unto him Udana said, 'I am the foremost of all the life-winds. Listen, for what reason? When I become extinct, all the life-winds become extinct in the bodies of living creatures. When I move about, they, once more, move about. Hence, I am the foremost. Behold! I go into extinction.'

Then Udana, after having gone into extinction, began once more to move about, Prana, Apana, Samana and Vyana said unto him, 'you are not the foremost one among us, only Vyana is under your dominion.'

The Brahmana continued:

Unto them assembled together, the Lord of creatures, Brahma, said, 'no one of you is superior to others. Ye are all endued with particular attributes. All are foremost in their own spheres, and all possess special attributes. There is one that is unmoving, and one that is moving. In consequence of special attributes, there are five life-winds. My own self is one. That one accumulates into many forms. Becoming friendly unto one another, and gratifying one another, you depart in peace. Blessings to you! Do you uphold one another?'

The Brahmana said:

In this connection is cited the ancient story of the discourse between Narada and the Rishi Devamata.

Devamata said, 'what, verily, comes first into existence, of a creature that takes birth? Is it Prana, Apana, Samana, Vyana or Udana?'

Narada said, 'by whatever the creature is created, that first comes unto him who is other (or separate from him). The life winds are to be known as existing in pairs, that is, those that move transversely, upwards and downwards.'

Devamata said, 'by whom (among the life-winds) is a creature produced? Who (amongst) them comes first? Do you tell me what the pairs are of the life-winds that move transversely, upwards and downwards?'

Narada said, 'from sankalpa (wish) arises pleasure. It also arises from sound, taste, and colour. From the semen, united with blood, first flows Prana. Upon the semen being modified by Prana, flows Apana.'

Pleasure arises from the semen as well. It arises from taste also. This is the form (effect) of Udana. Pleasure is produced from union. Semen is generated by desire. From desire is produced the menstrual flow. In the union of semen and blood, generated by Samana and Vyana, the pair that consists of Prana and Apana, enters,

moving transversely and upwards. Vyana and Samana both form a pair that moves transversely.

Agni (fire) is all the deities. Even this is the teaching of the Veda. The knowledge of Agni arises in a brahmana with intelligence. The smoke of that fire is of the form of (the attribute called) Darkness. The quality of goodness arises from that portion of the fire into which the oblation is poured. (The different portions of the fire are indicated as the different attributes. The smoke is of the form of Darkness (tamas). The ashes are the attributes of Passion. The blazing flame into which the oblation is thrown is the attribute of Goodness.)

They that are conversant with sacrifices know that Samana and Vyana are from the attribute of Goodness. Prana and Apana are portions of the oblation (of clarified butter). Between them is the Fire. That is the excellent form (or seat) of Udana, as the brahmanas know.

Listen, as I say, which is distinct from the pairs. Day and Night constitute a pair. Between them is the Fire. That is the excellent seat of Udana as the brahmanas know. The existent and the non-existent form a pair. Between them is the Fire. That is the excellent seat of Udana as the brahmanas know.

First is Samana, then Vyana. The latter's function is managed through the first (that is, Samana). Then, secondly, Samana, once more, comes into operation. Only Vyana exists for tranquility. Tranquility is the eternal Brahman. This is the excellent seat of Udana as the brahmanas know.'

The Brahmana continued:

In this connection is recited the ancient story of what the institution is of the Chaturhotra (sacrifice). The ordinances are now being duly declared of that, in its entirety. Listen to me, O amiable lady, as I declare this wonderful mystery.

The agent, the instrument, the action and emancipation, these, O beautiful lady, are the four sacrificing priests by whom the universe is enveloped. Hear, in its entirety, the assignment of causes (relating to this topic).

The nose, the tongue, the eye, the skin, the ear, the mind and the understanding (these seven) should be understood as being caused by (the knowledge of) qualities. Smell, taste, colour, sound, touch, the objects of the mind and the objects of the understanding (these seven) are caused by action.

He who smells, he who eats, he who sees, he who speaks, he who hears, he who thinks and he who understands (these seven) should be known as caused by the agent. Possessed of qualities, these enjoy their own qualities, agreeable or disagreeable. (The word 'these' refers to action, agent and instrument. The qualities of which they are possessed are goodness, passion and darkness.)

As regards the soul that is destitute of qualities, these seven are the causes of emancipation. With them that are learned and possessed of sufficient understanding, the qualities, which are in the position (form) of deities, eat the oblations, each in its proper place, and agreeably to what has been ordained.

The person, who is destitute of learning, eating diverse kinds of food, becomes seized through the sense of mine-ness. Digesting food for himself, he becomes ruined through the sense of mine-ness. (What is meant is this: It is the senses that enjoy, and not the soul. This is well known to the learned. On the other hand, those that are not learned, regard this or that to be theirs, when, in reality, they are different from them. They are their selves and not their senses, although they take themselves for the latter, ignorantly identifying themselves with things which they are not.)

The eating of food that should not be eaten and the drinking of wine ruin him. He destroys the food (he takes), and having destroyed that food he becomes destroyed himself.

The man of learning, however, being possessed of puissance, destroys his food for re-producing it; the minutest transgression does not arise in him from the food he takes. Whatever is thought of by the mind, whatever is uttered by speech, whatever is heard by the ear, whatever is seen by the eye, whatever is touched by the (sense of) touch, whatever is smelt by the nose constitute oblations of clarified butter which should all, after restraining the senses with the mind, be poured into that fire of high merits which burns within the body, that is, the soul. (What is stated is this: Restraining the senses and the mind, the objects of those senses and the mind should be poured as libations on the sacred fire of the soul within the body.)

The sacrifice constituted by Yoga is going on as regards me. The spring whence the sacrifice proceeds is that which yields the fire of knowledge. The upward life-wind Prana is the Stotra of that sacrifice. The downward life-wind Apana is its Sastra. The renunciation of everything is the excellent Dakshina of that sacrifice.

Consciousness, Mind and Understanding, these becoming Brahma, are its Hotri, Adhwaryu and Udgatri: The Prasastri, his Sastra, is truth (that is, truth is the sastra of the Prasastri). Cessation of separate existence (or Emancipation) is the Dakshina.

In this connection, people conversant with Narayana recite some Richs. Unto the divine Narayana were animals offered in days of yore. (Narayana means here either the Veda or the Soul. The animals offered up to Narayana in days of old were the senses offered up as sacrifices.) Then are sung some Samanas! On that topic occurs an authority. O timid one! Know that the divine Narayana is the Soul of all.

The Brahmana continued:

There is one Ruler. There is no second, beside Him. He that is the Ruler resides in the heart. I shall speak now of Him. Impelled by Him, I move as directed, like water along an inclined plane.

There is one Preceptor. There is no second, beside Him. He resides in the heart, and of Him I shall now speak. Be instructed by that Preceptor, they, who are always endued with feelings of animosity, are like snakes.

There is one Kinsman. There is no second, beside Him. He resides in the heart. Of Him, I shall now speak. Instructed by Him, kinsmen become possessed of kinsmen; and the seven Rishis, O son of Pritha, shine in the firmament.

There is one Dispeller. There is no second, beside Him. He resides in the heart. Of Him, I shall now speak. Having lived with that Instructor under the proper mode of living, Sakra attained to the sovereignty of all the worlds.

There is one Enemy. There is no second, beside Him. He resides in the heart. Of Him, I shall now speak. Instructed by that Preceptor, all snakes in the world are always endued with feelings of animosity.

In this connection is cited the ancient story of the instruction of the snakes, the deities and the Rishis by the Lord of all creatures. The deities, the Rishis, the snakes and the asuras seated, around the Lord of all creatures, asked him, 'let that, which is highly beneficial for us be declared.'

Unto them that enquired about what is highly beneficial, the holy one uttered only the word Aum, which is the Brahman in one syllable. Hearing this, they ran away in various directions.

Amongst them that thus ran in all directions from desire of self-instruction, the disposition first arose in snakes of biting. Of the asuras, the disposition, born of their nature for ostentations, pride arose. The deities betook themselves to gifts, and the great Rishis to self-restraint.

Having repaired to one teacher, and having been instructed (refined) by one word, the snakes, the deities, the Rishis, and the danavas all betook themselves to diverse dispositions.

It is that one who hears oneself when speaking, and apprehends it duly. Once again is that heard from one when one speaks. There is no second Preceptor. (It is He who is the preceptor and the disciple.) It is in obedience to His counsels that action afterwards flows.

The instructor, the apprehender, the hearer and the enemy are pleased within the heart. By acting sinfully in the world, it is he that becomes a person of sinful deeds. By acting auspiciously in the world, it is he who becomes a person of auspicious deeds. It is he who becomes a person of unrestrained conduct, by becoming addicted to the pleasures of sense, impelled by desire. It is he who becomes a brahmacharin by always devoting himself to the subjugation of his senses. It is he, again, that casts off vows and actions, and takes refuge in the Brahman alone.

By moving in the world, identifying himself all the while with the Brahman, he becomes a brahmacharin. The Brahman is his water; the Brahman is his preceptor; he is ever engrossed in the Brahman. Brahmacharya is even so subtle, as understood by the wise. Having understood it, they betake themselves to it, instructed by the Kshetraja! (One who knows the truth.)

The Brahmana continued:

Having crossed that impassable fastness (the world) which has purposes for its gadflies and mosquitoes, grief and joy for its cold and heat, heedlessness for its blinding darkness, cupidity and diseases for its reptiles, wealth, lust and wrath for its robbers, I have entered the extensive forest of (the Brahman).

The wife of the Brahmana said:

Where is that foremost, O you of great wisdom? What are its trees? What are its rivers? What are its mountains and hills? How far is that forest?

The Brahmana said:

There exists nothing that is separate from it. There is nothing more delightful than it. There is nothing that is un-separated from it. There is nothing more afflicting than it. There is nothing smaller than it. There is nothing vaster than it. There is nothing minuter than it.

There is no happiness that can resemble it. Regenerate persons, entering into it, at once transcend both joy and sorrow. They (then) never stand in fear of any creature, nor does any creature stand in fear of them.

In that forest are seven large trees, seven fruits and seven guests. There are seven hermitages, seven (forms of) yoga concentration, and seven (forms) of initiation. Even this is a description of that forest. (The seven large trees are the five senses, the mind and the understanding. The fruits are the pleasures and pains derived from or through them. The guests are the powers of each sense, for it is they that receive those pleasures and pains. The hermitages are those very trees under which the guests take shelter. The seven forms of yoga are the extinctions of the seven senses. The seven forms of initiation are the repudiation, one after another, of the actions of the seven senses.)

The trees which stand filling that forest produce excellent flowers and fruits of five colours. The trees which stand there filling that forest produce flowers and fruits that are of excellent colours, and, besides, they are of two kinds. The trees which stand there filling that forest produce flowers and fruits that are endowed with fragrance and that are, besides, of two colours. The trees which stand there filling that forest produce flowers and fruits that are possessed of fragrance and that are, besides, of one colour.

The two trees which stand in that forest produce many flowers and fruits that are of un-manifest colours. There is one fire here, possessed of a good mind. That is connected with the brahmana. The five senses are the fuel here. The seven forms of emancipation flowing from them are the seven forms of initiation. The qualities are the fruits, and the guests eat those fruits.

There, in diverse places, the great Rishis accept hospitality. When they, having been worshipped, become annihilated, then another forest shines forth. In that forest, Intelligence is the tree; Emancipation is the fruit; and Tranquility is the shade of which it is possessed. It has knowledge for its resting house, contentment for its water and the Kshetrajna for its sun.

Its end cannot be ascertained upwards, downwards or horizontally. Seven females always dwell there, with faces downwards, possessed of effulgence, and endowed with the cause of generations. They take up all the different tastes from all creatures, even as inconstancy sucks up truth.

In that itself dwell, and from that emerge, the seven Rishis who are crowned with ascetic success, with, those seven, having Vasishtha for their foremost. Glory, effulgence, greatness, enlightenment, victory, perfection and energy (these seven) always follow this, like rays following the sun.

Hills and mountains also exist there, collected together; and rivers and streams exist there, bearing waters in their course, waters that are born of Brahma. And there happens a confluence also of streams in the secluded spot for sacrifice. Thence those that are contented with their own souls proceed to the Grandsire.

Those, whose wishes have been reduced, whose wishes have been directed to excellent vows, and whose sins have been burnt off by penances, merging themselves in their souls, succeed in attaining to the Brahman. Tranquility is praised by those who are conversant with the forest of knowledge. Keeping that forest in view, they take birth so as not to lose courage. Even such is that sacred forest that is understood by brahmanas, and understanding it, they live (in accordance with the ordinance), directed by the Kshetrajna.

The Brahmana continued:

I do not smell scents. I do not perceive tastes. I do not see colours. I do not touch. I do not, likewise, hear the diverse sounds (that arise). Nor do I entertain

purposes of any kind. It is Nature that desires such objects as are liked; it is Nature that hates such objects as are disliked. Desire and aversion spring from Nature, after the manner of the upward and the downward life-winds when souls have entered animate bodies.

Separated from them are others; in them are eternal dispositions; (these, as also) the Soul of all creatures, yogis would behold in the body. Dwelling in that, I am never attached to anything through desire and wrath, and decrepitude and death.

Not having any desire for any object, and not having any aversion for any evil, there is no taint on my nature, as there is no taint on a drop of water on (the leaf of) a lotus. Of this constant (principle) which looks upon diverse natures, they are inconstant possessions.

Though actions are performed, yet the assemblage of enjoyments does not attach to the sky. In this connection is recited an ancient story of a discourse between an Adhwaryu and a Yati. Do you hear it, O glorious lady!

Beholding an animal sprinkled with water at a sacrificial ceremony, a Yati said unto the Adhwaryu seated there, in censure, 'this is destruction of life!' Unto him the Adhwaryu said in reply, 'this goat will not be destroyed. The animal (sacrificed) meets with great good, if the Vedic declaration on this subject be true. That part of this animal which is of earth will go to earth. That part of this one which is born of water will enter into water. Its eyes will enter the sun; its ears will enter the different points of the horizon; its life-winds will enter the sky. I who adhere to the scriptures incur no fault (by assisting at the killing of this animal).'

The Yati said:

If you behold such good to the goat in dissociation with (its) life-winds, then this sacrifice is for the goat. What need have you for it? Let the brother, father, mother and friend (of this goat) give you their approval to this. Taking him (to them), do you consult them?

This goat is especially dependent. It behooves you to see them who can give their consent to this. After hearing their consent; the matter will become fit for consideration. The life-winds of this goat have been made to return to their respective sources. Only the inanimate body remains behind. This is what I think.

Of those who wish to enjoy felicity by means of the inanimate body (of an animal) which is comparable to fuel, the fuel (of sacrifice) is, after all, the animal itself. Abstinence from cruelty is the foremost of all duties. Even this is the teaching of the elders. We know this is the proposition, that is, no slaughter (of living creatures).

If I say anything further, (it will then appear that) diverse kinds of faulty actions are capable of being done by you. Always abstaining from cruelty to all creatures is

what meets with our approbation. We establish this from what is directly perceptible. We do not rely on what is beyond direct perception.

The Adhwaryu said:

You enjoy the properties of smell which belong to the earth. You drink the tastes which appertain to water. You see colours which belong to lighted bodies. You touch the properties which have their origin in wind. You hear the sounds which have their origin in space (ether). You think thoughts with the mind. All these entities, you are of the opinion, have life. You do not then abstain from taking life (belonging to them). Really, you are engaged in slaughter. There can be no movement without slaughter. Or, what else do you think, O regenerate one!

The Yati said:

The Indestructible and the Destructible constitute the double manifestation of the Soul. Of these, the Indestructible is existent. The Destructible is said to be exceedingly non-existent. The life-wind, the tongue, the mind, the quality of goodness, the quality of passion, etc are all existent.

The Atman is above these forms, and hence is without duality and hope (or despair). As regards one that is freed from these existent objects, that transcends all pairs of opposites, that does not cherish any expectation, that is alike to all creatures, that is liberated from the idea of meum, that has subjugated one's self, and that is released from all one's surroundings, for that one, no fear exists from any source.

(What is stated seems to be this: The life-winds indicate the operations of the several organs of action; the tongue, which stands here for all the organs of perception, of the sensual perceptions; the mind, of all the internal perceptions; the quality of goodness, of all pleasures; and the quality of passion, of all kinds of pain. These, therefore, include the whole external and internal worlds. He that is free from these transcends sin, for sin is destroyed by freedom from these, knowledge being the means of attaining to that freedom.)

The Adhwaryu said:

O foremost of intelligent men! One should reside with those that are good. Hearing your opinion, my understanding shines with light. O illustrious one! I come to you, believing you to be a god. And I say I have no fault, O regenerate one, by performing these rites with the aid of mantras. (The sense seems to be that by doing these rites with the aid of mantra, I have done that which has been approved from ages past by those who have always been regarded wise. My eyes, however, have now been opened by you. I should not be held responsible for what I did, while I was ignorant.)

The Brahmana continued:

With this conclusion, the Yati remained silent after this. The Adhwaryu also proceeded with the great sacrifice, freed from delusion. The brahmanas understand Emancipation, which is exceedingly subtle, to be of this kind, and having understood it, they live accordingly, directed by the Kshetrajna, that beholder of all topics.

The Brahmana continued:

In this connection is cited the ancient story, O lady, of the discourse between Karttaviryya and the Ocean. There was a king of the name of Karttaviryya-Arjuna who was endued with a thousand arms. He conquered, with his bow, the earth extending to the shores of the ocean.

It has been heard by us that, once on a time, as he was walking on the shores of the sea, proud of his might, he showered hundreds of shafts on that vast receptacle of waters. The Ocean, bowing down unto him, said, with joined hands, 'do not, O hero, shoot your shafts (at me). Say, what I shall do to you. With these mighty arrows shot by you, those creatures which have taken shelter in me are being killed, O tiger among kings! Do you, O lord, grant them security?'

Arjuna said, 'if any wielder of the bow exists that is equal to me in battle, and that would stand against me in the field, do you name him to me?' The Ocean said, 'if you have heard, O King, of the great Rishi Jamadagni, his son is competent to duly receive you as a guest.'

Then that king proceeded, filled with great wrath. Arriving at the retreat (of the Rishi Jamadagni), he found (Parasu) Rama himself. With his kinsmen, he began to do many acts that were hostile to Rama, and caused much trouble to that high-souled hero.

Then the energy, which was immeasurable of Rama, blazed forth, burning the troops of the foe, O lotus-eyed one! Taking up his battle-axe, Rama suddenly put forth his power, and hacked that thousand-armed hero, like a tree of many branches.

Beholding him slain and prostrated on the earth, all his kinsmen, uniting together, and taking up their darts, rushed at Rama, who was then seated, from all sides. Rama also, taking up his bow and quickly ascending on his car, shot showers of arrows and chastised the army of the King.

Then, some of the kshatriyas, afflicted with the terror of Jamadagni's son, entered mountain-passes, like deer afflicted by the lion. Of them that were unable, through fear of Rama, to discharge the duties ordained for their order, the progeny became vrishalas owing to their inability to find brahmanas. (Kshatriyas always require brahmanas for assisting them in their acts. These particular kshatriyas, through fear of Rama, fled to the forests and mountains. Accordingly they could not find brahmanas

for assisting them. Their children, therefore, fell away from the status of kshatriyas, and became vrishalas or sudras.)

In this way, Dravidas, Abhiras, Pundras and Savaras became Vrishalas though those men had Kshatriya duties assigned to them (in consequence of their birth), but falling away (from those duties).

Then the kshatriyas that were begotten by the brahmanas upon kshatriya women that had lost their heroic children, were repeatedly destroyed by Jamadagni's son. The slaughter proceeded one and twenty times. At its conclusion, a bodiless voice, sweet and proceeding from heaven, and which was heard by all people, spoke to Rama, 'O Rama, O Rama, desist! What merit do you see, O son, in thus destroying repeatedly these inferior Kshatriyas?'

In this way, O blessed dame, his grandsires, headed by Richika, addressed that high-souled one, saying, 'do you desist?' Rama, however, unable to forgive the slaughter of his sire, replied unto the Rishis saying, 'it behooves you not to forbid me'. The Pitris then said, 'O foremost of all victorious men! It behooves you not to slay these inferior Kshatriyas. It is not proper that you, being a brahmana, should slay these kings.'

The Pitris said:

In this connection is cited this old history. Having heard it, you should act according to it, O foremost of all regenerate persons! There was a royal sage of the name Alarka endued with the most austere of penances. He was conversant with all duties, truthful in speech, of high soul, and exceedingly firm in his vows.

Having, with his bow, conquered the whole earth extending to the seas, and thereby achieved an exceedingly difficult feat, he set his mind on that which is subtle. While he was sitting at the root of a tree, his thoughts, O you of great intelligence, abandoning all those great feats, turned towards that which is subtle.

Alarka said:

My mind has become strong. Having conquered the mind, one's conquest becomes permanent. Though surrounded by foes, I shall (henceforth) shoot my arrows at other objects. Since, in consequence of its unsteadiness, it sets all mortals to accomplish acts, I shall shoot very sharp-pointed shafts at the mind.

The mind said, 'these arrows, O Alarka, will never pierce me through. They will pierce only your own vital parts. Your vital parts being pierced, you shall die. Do you look out for other arrows with which to destroy me?'

Hearing these words and reflecting upon them, he said, ‘smelling very many perfumes, the nose hankers after them only. Hence I shall shoot whetted arrows at the nose.’

The nose said, ‘these arrows will never cross through me, O Alarka. They will pierce only your own vital parts, and your vital parts being pierced, you shall die. Do you look for other arrows with which to destroy me?’

Hearing these words and reflecting upon them, he said, ‘this one (that is, tongue), enjoying savoury tastes, hankers after them only. Hence I shall shoot whetted shafts at the tongue.’

The tongue said, ‘these arrows, O Alarka, will not cross through me. They will only pierce your own vital parts, and your vital parts being pierced, you shall die. Do you look for other arrows with which to destroy me?’

Hearing these words and reflecting upon them, he said, ‘the skin, touching diverse objects of touch, hankers after them only. Hence, I shall tear off the skin with diverse arrows equipped with the feathers of the Kanka’.

The skin said, ‘these arrows will not, O Alarka, cross through me. They will pierce your vital parts only. With your vital parts pierced, you shall die. Do you look for other arrows with which to destroy me?’

Hearing these words and reflecting upon them, Alarka said, ‘hearing diverse sounds, (the ear) hankers after them only. Hence I shall shoot whetted shafts at the ear’.

The ear said, ‘these arrows will not, O Alarka, cross through me. They will pierce your vital parts only. With your vital parts pierced, you shall die. Do you look for other arrows with which to destroy me?’

Hearing these words and reflecting upon them, he said, ‘seeing many colours, the eye hankers after them only. Hence, I shall destroy the eye with sharp-pointed arrows.’

The eye said, ‘these arrows will not, O Alarka, cross through me. They will pierce your vital parts only. With your vital parts pierced, you shall die. Do you look for other arrows with which to destroy me?’

Hearing these words and reflecting upon them, Alarka said, ‘this (the understanding) forms many determinations with the aid of ratiocination. Hence, I shall shoot whetted arrows at the understanding.’

The understanding said, ‘these arrows will not, O Alarka, cross through me. They will pierce your vital parts only. With your vital parts pierced, you shall die. Do you look for other arrows with which to destroy me?’

The Brahmana continued:

Then, Alarka, employing himself, even there, on penances difficult to perform and exceedingly austere, failed to obtain, by the high power (of his penances) arrows for casting at these seven. Endued with puissance, he then, with mind well concentrated, began to reflect.

Then, ‘O best of regenerate ones’, Alarka, that foremost of intelligent men, having reflected for a long time, failed to obtain anything better than Yoga. Setting his mind on one object, he remained perfectly still, engaged in Yoga.

(The vocative, ‘O best of regenerate ones’ applies to Jamadagni’s son. The narration is that of the Pitris. The brahmana is only repeating to his wife the speech of the Pitris to Rama. The yoga spoken of here is the Raja-yoga. Previously, Alarka had been bent upon the Hatha-yoga which frequently ends in the destruction of the person practising it).

Endued with energy, Alarka quickly slew all the senses with one arrow, having entered, by yoga, into his soul and thereby attained to the highest success. Filled with wonder, that royal sage then sang this verse:

Alas, it is a pity that we should have accomplished all acts external!
Alas, that we should have, endued with the thirst for enjoyment, courted
(the pleasures of) sovereignty before now!
I have learnt this afterwards. There is no happiness higher than yoga.
Do you know this, O Rama? Cease to slay the Kshatriyas.
Do practise the most austere penances. You will then attain to what is good.

Thus addressed by his grandsires, Jamadagni’s son practised the most austere penances, and having practised them, that highly blessed one attained to that success which is difficult to reach.

The Brahamana continued:

There are three foes in the world. They are said to be nine-fold, agreeably to their qualities. Exultation, satisfaction and joy pertain to goodness. Cupidity, wrath and hatred pertain to passion. Lassitude, procrastination and delusion pertain to darkness.

Cutting these qualities with showers of arrows, the man of intelligence, free from procrastination, possessed of a tranquil soul, with his senses under control, ventures to vanquish others. (What it means is that, having first conquered the internal foes mentioned, the man of intelligence, bent on securing his deliverance, should then seek to vanquish all external foes standing in his way).

In this connection, persons conversant with (the occurrence of) ancient cycles recite some verses which were sung in the days of old, by the King Ambarisha who had acquired a tranquil soul. When diverse kinds of faults were on the rise and when the righteous were afflicted, Ambarisha, of great fame, put forth his strength for assuming sovereignty.

Subduing his own faults and worshipping the righteous, he attained to great success, and sang the following verses:

I have subdued many faults; I have killed all foes;
But there is one, the greatest vice that deserves to be destroyed, but has not been
destroyed by me;
Urged by that fault, this Jiva fails to attain to freedom from desire;
Afflicted by desire, one runs into ditches, without being aware thereof;
Urged by that fault, one indulges in acts forbidden;
Do you cut off, cut off, that cupidity with sharp-edged swords?
From cupidity arise desires; from desire flows anxiety.
The man who yields to desire acquires many qualities that pertain to passion.
When these have been acquired, he gets many qualities that pertain to darkness.
In consequence of those qualities, he repeatedly takes birth, with the bonds of
body united, and is impelled to action.
Upon the expiration of life, with body dismembered and scattered, he meets
with death which is due to birth itself.
Hence, duly understanding this, and subduing cupidity by intelligence, one
should desire for sovereignty in one's soul.
This is (true) sovereignty; there is no other sovereignty here.
The soul, properly understood, is the king.

Even these were the verses sung by the king Ambarisha of great celebrity, on the subject of sovereignty which he always kept before him, that king who had cut off the one foremost fault, namely, cupidity.

The Brahmana continued:

In this connection is cited the old narrative, O lady, of the discourse between a brahmana and the king Janaka.

King Janaka (on a certain occasion), desirous of punishing the Brahmana that had become guilty of some offence, said to him, 'you shall not dwell within my dominion'. The Brahmana replied to the king, 'tell me, O King, the limits of the territories subject to you. I desire, O Lord, to dwell within the dominion of another king. Verily, I wish to obey your command, O lord of earth, agreeably to the scripture.'

Thus addressed by that celebrated Brahmana, the King, hearing repeated and hot sighs, did not say a word in reply. Like the planet Rahu overwhelming the sun, a dimness of understanding suddenly overwhelmed that King of immeasurable energy, as

he sat plunged in thought. When the dimness of understanding passed away and the King became tranquil, he spoke to the Brahmana thus:

Although, a (large) inhabited tract is subject to me within this ancestral kingdom of mine, yet I fail to find my dominion, searching through the whole earth. When I failed to find it on the earth, I then searched Mithila (for it). When I failed to find it in Mithila, I then searched for it among my own children. When I failed to find it even there, a dimness of understanding overcame me. When dimness passed away, intelligence came back to me. Then I realized that I have no dominion, or that everything is my dominion. Even this body is not mine, or the whole earth is mine. At the same time, O the best of regenerate men, I think that that is as much mine as it is of others. Therefore, you dwell (here) as long as you choose, and enjoy as you please.

The Brahmana said:

When there is a large inhabited tract in your ancestral kingdom, tell me, depending upon what understanding, has the idea of meum been got rid of by you. What else is that understanding depending upon which you have come to the conclusion that everything constitutes your dominion? What, indeed, is the notion through which you realized that you have no dominion, or everything is your dominion?

Janaka said:

All conditions here, in all affairs, have been understood by me to be terminable. Hence, I could not find that which should be called mine. (The conditions referred to are affluence and indigence). I could not, therefore, find, by my understanding, what should be (called) mine.

(Considering) whose is this, I thought of the Vedic text about anybody's property. I could not, therefore, find, by my understanding, what should be (called) mine. Depending upon this notion, I got rid of the idea of mine-ness.

(Nilakantha makes this observation: The Vedic text referred to is 'Do not covet anybody's property'. What Janaka says seems to be this: Thinking of this prohibition about coveting other people's property, I thought how it could be ascertained what belongs to others.)

Hear now what that notion is, depending upon which I came to the conclusion that I have dominion everywhere. I do not desire for my own self those smells that are even in my nose. Therefore, the earth, subjugated by me, is always subject to me.

(What Janaka means may be this: The property of smell attaches to earth. I do not desire smell for my own enjoyment. If it is perceived, it is perceived by the organ of smell. The earth, therefore, is subject to me, not I to the earth. I have transcended my sensations and, therefore, the objects to which they inhere. The whole world

represents only the objects of the sensations. The latter being mastered, the whole world has been mastered by me.)

I do not desire for my own self those tastes that exist in contact with even my tongue. Therefore, water, subjugated by me, is always subject to me. I do not desire for my own self the colour or light that pertains to my eye. Therefore, light, subjugated by me, is always subject to me. I do not desire for my own self those sensations of touch which are in contact with even my skin. Therefore, the wind, subjugated by me, is always subject to me. I do not desire for my own self those sounds which are in contact with even my ear. Therefore, sounds, subjugated by me, are always subject to me. I do not desire for my own self the mind that is always in my mind. Therefore, the mind, subjugated by me, is subject to me. All these acts of mine are for the sake of the deities, the Pitris, the Bhutas, together with guests. (I live and act for these and not for my own self).

The Brahmana then, smiling, said to Janaka:

Know that I am Dharma who has come here today for examining you. You are verily the one person for setting this wheel in motion; this wheel that has the quality of Goodness for its circumference, the Brahman for its nave and the Understanding (Knowledge) for its spokes, and which never turns back.

The Brahmana continued:

I do not, O timid one, move in this world in that manner which you, according to your own understanding, censure. I am a brahmana possessed of Vedic knowledge; I am emancipated; I am a forest recluse; I am an observer of the duties of a house-holder; and I observe vows (according to scriptures).

I am not what you see me in good and bad acts. By me is pervaded everything that exists in this universe. Whatever creatures exist in the world, mobile or immobile, know that I am the destroyer of them all, even as the fire is (the destroyer) of all kinds of wood.

Of sovereignty over the whole earth or over heaven (on the one hand), or this knowledge (of my identity with the Brahman on the other), (I prefer) this knowledge (which) is my wealth.

This is the one path for brahmanas by which they, who understand it, proceed to be brahmacharins, house-holders, forests-dwellers or mendicants.

Though the symbols are numerous, the Knowledge to be acquired is only one. There may be diverse ways to acquire it. Those that have attained to tranquility alone acquire it, even as numerous rivers all meet in the ocean. Such Knowledge is to be worshipped.

The path is to be traversed with the aid of the Understanding, and not of this body. Actions have both beginning and end, and the body has actions for its bonds. (Actions are perishable, and can lead to no lasting result. It is by the understanding that that Knowledge, leading to what is permanent, is to be attained.)

Hence, O blessed lady, you need have no apprehension in respect of the world hereafter. With your heart intent upon real entity, it is my soul into which you will come.

The Brahmana's wife said:

This is incapable of being understood by a person of little intelligence, as also by one whose soul has not been cleansed. My intelligence is very little, contracted and confused. Do you tell me the means by which the knowledge (of which you speak) may be acquired? I wish to learn from you the source from which this knowledge flows.

The Brahmana said:

Know that intelligence devoted to the Brahman is the lower Arani; the preceptor is the upper Arani; penances and conversance with the scriptures are to cause the attrition. From this is produced the fire of knowledge.

The Brahmana's wife said:

As regards this symbol of the Brahman, which is designated Kshetrajna, where, indeed, occurs a description of it by which it is capable of being seized?

The Brahmana said:

He is without symbols, and without qualities. Nothing exists that may be regarded as His cause. I shall, however, tell you the means by which He can be seized or not. A good means may be found, such as perception or hearing as flowers are perceived by bees. The 'means' consists of an understanding, cleansed by action.

Those, whose understandings have not been so cleansed, regard that Entity, through their own ignorance, as invested with the properties of knowledge and others. (Good means may be seen, perceived as by bees. Action is cleansed understanding; through folly it is invested with the symbols of knowledge. The ignorance is of those persons whose understandings have not been cleansed by action.)

It is not laid down that this should be done, or that this should not be done, in the path of achieving Emancipation. He in whom knowledge of the soul arises alone sees and hears. (In the matter of achieving Emancipation, no ordinances have been laid down, positive or negative, like those in respect of other things. If one wishes to attain to heaven, one should do this or that, and abstain from others. For achieving

Emancipation, only seeing and hearing are prescribed. Seeing implies contemplation; and hearing implies the receiving of instructions from the preceptor.)

One should comprehend as many parts, un-manifest and manifest, by hundreds and thousands, as one is capable of comprehending here. Indeed, one should comprehend diverse objects of diverse import, and all objects of direct perception. Then will come, from practice (of contemplation and self-restraint, etc) that, above which nothing exists. (What is meant seems to be this: one should first contemplate an object of direct perception such as the earth, etc, and then on such unperceived objects as operations of the mind. Such contemplation will gradually lead to that which is Supreme. The abhyasa or practice is the practice of sama, dama, etc.)

The holy one continued:

Then the mind of that Brahmana's wife, upon the destruction of the Kshetrajna, became that which is beyond Kshetrajna, in consequence of the knowledge of Kshetra. (When her individual soul became merged into the Supreme Soul, she became identified with the Brahman. This was, of course, due to the knowledge of Kshetra as something separate from Kshetrajna.)

Arjuna said:

Where, indeed, is that Brahmana's wife, O Krisna, and where is that foremost of brahmanas, by both of whom was such success attained? Do you tell me about them, O you of unfading glory?

The Blessed and Holy one said:

Know that my mind is the Brahmana, and that my understanding is the Brahmana's wife. He who has been spoken of as Kshetrajna is I myself, O Dhananjaya!

3. Guru-Sishya-Samvada

Arjuna said:

It behooves you to expound the Brahman to me, that which is the highest object of knowledge. Through your favour, my mind is delighted with these subtle disquisitions.

Vasudeva said:

In this connection is recited the old history of the discourse between a preceptor and his disciple on the subject of the Brahman.

Once on a time, O scorcher of foes, an intelligent disciple questioned a certain brahmana of rigid vows who was his preceptor, as he was seated (at his ease), 'what, indeed, is the highest good? Desirous of attaining to that which constitutes the highest good, I throw myself at your feet, O holy one! O learned Brahmana! I solicit you, bending my head, to explain to me what I ask.'

Unto that disciple, O son of Pritha, who said so, the preceptor said, 'O regenerate one! I shall explain to you everything about which you may have any doubts.'

Thus addressed, O foremost one of Kuru's race (clan), by his preceptor, that disciple who was exceedingly devoted to his preceptor, spoke as follows, with joined hands. Do you hear what he said, O you of great intelligence?

The disciple said:

Whence am I? Whence are you? Explain that which the highest truth is. From what source have sprung all creatures, mobile and immobile? By what do creatures live? What is the limit of their life? What is truth? What is penance, O learned Brahmana? What are called attributes by the good? What paths are to be called auspicious? What is happiness? What is sin? O holy one! O you of excellent vows! It behooves you to answer these questions of mine, O learned Rishi, correctly, truly and accurately. Who else is there in this world than you that is capable of answering these questions? Do you answer them, O foremost of all persons conversant with duties?

My curiosity is great. You are celebrated in all the worlds as one well skilled in the duties relating to Emancipation. There is none else than you that is competent to remove all kinds of doubts. Afraid of worldly life, we have become desirous of achieving Emancipation.

Vasudeva said:

Unto that disciple, who had humbly sought instruction and put the questions duly, who was devoted to his preceptor and possessed of tranquility, who always behaved in a manner that was agreeable (to his instructor), who lived so constantly by the side of his instructor as to have almost become his shadow, who was self-restrained, and who led the life of a yati and brahmacharin, O son of Pritha, that preceptor possessed of intelligence, and observant of vows, duly explained (answered) all the questions, O foremost one of Kuru's race, O chastiser of all foes!

The preceptor said:

All this was declared (in days of old) by Brahma himself (the Grandsire of the entire world). Applauded and practised by the foremost of Rishis, and depending on knowledge of the Vedas, it involves a consideration of what constitutes the real Entity.

We regard knowledge to be the highest object, and renunciation as the best penance. He who, with certainty, knows the true object of knowledge which is incapable of being modified by circumferences, that is, the soul abiding in all creatures, succeeds in going where-so-ever he wishes, and comes to be regarded as the highest.

The learned man who beholds the residence of all things in one place and their severance as well, and who sees unity in diversity, succeeds in freeing himself from misery. He, who does not covet anything and does not cherish the idea of mine-ness with regard to anything, comes to be regarded, although residing in this world, as identifiable with the Brahman.

He who is conversant with the truth about the qualities of Pradhana (Nature), acquainted with the creation of all existent objects, divested of the idea of mine-ness, and without pride, succeeds, without doubt, in emancipating himself.

Understanding properly that great tree which has the un-manifest for its seed sprout, the understanding for its trunk, the high consciousness of self for its branches, the senses for the cells whence its twigs issue, the (five) great elements for its flower-buds, and the gross elements for its smaller boughs, which is always endued with leaves, which always puts forth flowers, and upon which all existent objects depend, whose seed is the Brahman which is eternal, and cutting all topics with the sharp sword of knowledge, one attains to immortality and casts off birth and death.

The conclusions with regard to the past, the present and the future, etc, and with regard to religion, pleasure and wealth, which are all well known to conclaves of Siddhas, which appertain to remote cycles, and which are, indeed, eternal, I shall declare to you, O you of great wisdom!

These constitute what is called 'Good'. Men of wisdom, understanding them in this world, attain to success. In days of old, the Rishis Brihaspati, Bharadwaja,

Gautama, Bhargava, Vasishtha, Kasyapa, Viswamitra and Atri assembled together for the purpose of asking one another. They, thus, assembled together, after having travelled over all paths, and after they had got tired with the acts each of them had done.

Those regenerate persons, placing the sage son of Angiras at their head, proceeded to the region of the Grandsire. There they beheld Brahma, perfectly cleansed of all sin. Bowing their heads unto that high-souled one who was seated at his ease, the great Rishis, endued with humility, asked him the grave questions regarding the highest good thus.

‘How should a good man act? How would one be released from sin? What paths are auspicious for us? What is truth and what is sin? By what action are the two paths, northern and southern, obtained? What is destruction? What is Emancipation? What is birth and what is death of all existent objects?’

I shall tell you, O disciple, what the Grandsire, thus addressed, said unto them, conformably to the scriptures. Do you listen?

Brahma said:

It is from Truth that all creatures, mobile and immobile, have been born. They live by penance (of action). Understand this, O you of excellent vows! In consequence of their own actions, they live, transcending their own origin. (Their origin is the Brahman or Truth. They live, dissociated from their origin, in consequence of their act. When their acts cease, they return to and become merged in the Brahman.)

For Truth, when united with qualities, becomes always possessed of five indications. The Brahman is Truth; penance is Truth; Prajapati is Truth. It is from Truth that all creatures have sprung. Truth is the universe of being. It is for this that brahmanas who are always devoted to yoga, who have transcended wrath and sorrow, and who always regard religions as the causeway (along which every one must pass for avoiding the morass below) take refuge in Truth.

I shall now speak of those brahmanas who are restrained by one another and possessed of knowledge, of the orders, and of those who belong to the four modes of life. The wise say that religion or duty is one, (though) having four quarters.

You regenerate ones! I shall speak to you now of that path which is auspicious and productive of good. That path has constantly been trod over by men possessed of wisdom, in order to achieve an identity with the Brahman.

I shall speak now of that path which is the highest and which is exceedingly difficult of being understood. Do you understand, in all its details, you highly blessed ones, what is the highest seat?

The first step has been said to be the mode of life that appertains to brahmacharis. The second step is domesticity. After this is the residence in the woods. After that, it should be known, is the highest step, that is, that relating to Adhyatma (that is, that course of life which has for its object the acquisition of knowledge relating to the soul. This, of course, includes the knowledge that is needed for achieving identification with the Supreme Soul or the Brahman.)

Light, ether (space), sun, wind, Indra and Prajapati are noticed by one as long as one does not attain to Adhyatma. I shall declare the means (by which that Adhyatma may be attained). Do you first understand them?

The forest mode of life that is followed by ascetics residing in the woods, and subsisting upon fruits, roots and air is laid down for the three regenerate classes. The domestic mode of life is ordained for all the orders.

They that are possessed of wisdom say that religion or duty has Faith for its (chief) indication. Thus have I declared to you the paths leading to the deities. They are adopted by those that are good and wise by their acts. Those paths are the causeways of piety.

That person of rigid vows, who adopts any one of these modes separately, always succeeds in time to understand the production and destruction of all creatures.

I shall now declare, accurately and with reasons, the elements which reside in parts in all objects. The Great Soul, the Un-manifest, egoism (consciousness of identity), the ten and one organs (of knowledge and action, including mind), the five great elements, the specific characteristics of the five elements (tanmatras) constitute the eternal creation.

The number of elements (categories according to Sankhya Philosophy) has been said to be four and twenty, and one (more). (The additional one refers to Purusa.) That person of wisdom who understands the production and destruction of all these elements, that man among all creatures, never meets with delusion. He who understands the elements accurately, all the qualities, all the deities, succeeds in cleansing himself of all sin. Freed from all bonds, such a man succeeds in enjoying all regions of spotless purity.

Brahma said:

That, which is un-manifest, and which is indistinct, all-pervading, everlasting and immutable should be known to become the city (or mansion) of nine portals, possessed of three qualities and consisting of five ingredients. Encompassed by eleven including mind which distinguishes (objects) and having understanding for the ruler, this is an aggregate of eleven.

The three ducts that are in it support it constantly. These are the three nadis. They run continually, and have the three qualities for their essence, darkness, passion and goodness. These are called the (three) qualities. These are coupled with one another. They exist, depending on one another. They take refuge in one another and follow one another. They are also joined with one another.

The five (principal) elements are characterized by (these) three qualities. Goodness is the match of darkness. Of goodness the match is passion. Goodness is also the match of passion, and of goodness, the match is darkness.

There where darkness is restrained, passion is seen to flow. There where passion is restrained, goodness is seen to flow. Darkness should be known to have the night (or obscurity) for its essence. It has three characteristics, and is (otherwise) called Delusion. It has unrighteousness (or sin) also for its indication, and it is always present in all sinful acts. This is the nature of darkness and it appears also as confined with others.

Passion is said to have activity for its essence. It is the cause of successive acts. When it prevails, its indication, among all beings, is production. Splendour, lightness and faith are the form (that is, light) of goodness among all creatures, as regarded by all good men.

I now declare the true nature of their characteristics, with reasons. These will be stated in aggregation and separation. Do you understand them?

Complete delusion, ignorance, illiberality, indecision in respect of action, sleep, haughtiness, fear, cupidity, grief, censure of good acts, loss of memory, un-ripeness of judgment, absence of faith, violation of all rules of conduct, want of discrimination, blindness, vileness of behaviour, boastful assertions of performance in its absence, presumption of knowledge while being ignorant, un-friendliness (hostility), evilness of disposition, absence of faith, stupid reasoning, crookedness, incapacity for association, sinful action, senselessness, stolidity, lassitude, absence of self control, degradation are all known to be belonging to darkness.

Whatever other states of mind, connected with delusion, exist in the world, all appertain to darkness. Frequent ill-speaking of other people, censuring the deities and the brahmanas, illiberality, vanity, delusion, wrath, un-forgiveness, hostility towards all creatures are regarded as the characteristics of darkness. Indulgence in calumny, un-forgiveness, animosity, vanity and absence of faith are also said to be characteristics of darkness.

Whatever undertakings exist that are un-meritorious (in consequence of their being vain or useless), whatever gifts there are that are un-meritorious (in consequence of the un-worthiness of the donees or the impropriety of the objects, etc.), vain-eating, etc appertain to darkness.

Whatever men there are in this world characterized by these and other faults of a similar kind, and who break through the restraints (provided by the scriptures), are all regarded as belonging to the quality of darkness.

I shall now declare the wombs where these men, who are always of sinful deeds, have to take their birth. Ordained to go to hell, they sink in the order of beings. Indeed, they sink into the hell of (birth in) the brute creation. They become immobile entities, animals or beasts of burden; or carnivorous creatures, snakes, worms, insects or birds; or creatures of the oviparous order, quadrupeds of diverse species; or lunatics, deaf or dumb human beings or human beings afflicted by dreadful maladies.

These people of evil conduct, always exhibiting the indications of their acts, sink in darkness. Their course (of migration from life to life) is always downward. Appertaining to the quality of darkness, they sink in Darkness.

I shall now declare what the means are of their improvement and their ascent; indeed, I shall narrate the means by which they succeed in attaining to the regions that exist for men of pious deeds.

Those beings who take birth in orders other than homo-sapiens, by growing up, viewing the religious ceremonies of brahmanas devoted to the duties of their own order, and desirous of doing good to all creatures, succeed, through the aid of such purificatory rites, in ascending upwards. Indeed, struggling (to improve themselves), they, at last, attain to the same regions of these pious brahmanas. Verily, they go to heaven. Even this is the Vedic audition.

Born in orders other than humanity and growing old (meritorious) in their respective acts, even thus they become human beings that are, of course, ordained to return. Coming to sinful births and becoming chandalas (untouchables) or human beings that are deaf or that lisp indistinctly, they attain to higher and higher castes, one after another in proper turn, transcending the sudra order, and other (consequences of) qualities that appertain to darkness and that abide in it, in course of migrations in this world.

Attachment to objects of desire is regarded as great delusion. Here Rishis and Munis and deities become deluded, desirous of pleasure. Darkness, delusion, the great delusion, the great obscurity called wrath, and death (that blinding obscurity, are the five great afflictions).

As regards wrath, that is the great obscurity (and not aversion or hatred as is sometimes included in the list). With respect, then, to its colour (nature), its characteristics and its source, I have, you learned brahmanas, declared to you, accurately and in due order, everything about (the quality of) darkness.

Who is there that truly understands it? Who is there that truly sees it? That, indeed, is the characteristic of darkness, that is, the beholding of reality in what is not

real. The qualities of darkness have been declared to you in various ways. Duly has darkness, in its higher and lower forms, been described to you. That man, who always bears in mind the qualities mentioned here, will surely succeed in becoming freed from all characteristics that appertain to darkness.

Brahma continued:

O best of beings! I shall now declare to you accurately what (the quality of) passion is. You highly blessed ones! Do you understand what those qualities are that appertain to passion?

Injuring (others), beauty, toil, pleasure and pain, cold and heat, lordship (or power), war, peace, arguments, dissatisfaction, endurance, might, valour, pride, wrath, exertion, quarrel (or collision), jealousy, desire, malice, battle, the sense of meum or mine-ness, protection (of others), slaughter, bonds, affliction, buying and selling, lopping off, cutting, piercing and cutting off the coat of mail that another has worn (this may refer to the exposure of other people's weaknesses by tearing open their veils or covers), fierceness, cruelty, vilifying, pointing out the faults of others, thoughts entirely devoted to worldly affairs, anxiety, animosity, reviling of others, false speech, false or vain gifts, hesitancy and doubt, boastfulness of speech, dispraise and praise, laudation, prowess, defiance, attendance (as on the sick and weak), obedience (to the commands of preceptors and parents), service or ministrations, harbouring of thirst or desire, cleverness or dexterity of conduct, policy heedlessness, contumely, possessions and diverse decorations that prevail in the world among men, women, animals, inanimate things and houses, grief, incredulousness, vows and regulations, actions with expectation (of good result), diverse acts of public charity, the rites in respect of swaha salutations, rites of swaha and vashat, officiating at the sacrifices of others, imparting of instruction, performance of sacrifices, study, making of gifts, acceptance of gifts, rites of expiation, auspicious acts, the wish to have this and that, affection generated by the merits of the object for which or whom it is felt, treachery, deception, disrespect and respect, theft, killing, desire of concealment, vexation, wakefulness, ostentation, haughtiness, attachment, devotion, contentment, exultation, gambling, indulgence in scandal, all relations arising out of women, and attachment to dancing, instrumental music and songs, are all the qualities, O learned brahmanas, have been said to belong to passion.

Those men on earth who meditate on the past, the present and the future, who are devoted to the aggregate of the three, namely, religion, wealth and pleasure, and who, acting from the impulse of desires, exult on attaining to affluence in respect of every desire are said to be enveloped by passion.

These men have downward courses. Repeatedly born in this world, they give themselves up to pleasure. They covet what belongs to this world, as also those fruits that belong to the world hereafter. They make gifts, accept gifts, offer oblations to the Pitris and pour libations on the sacrificial fire.

The qualities of passion have (thus) been declared to you in their variety. The course of conduct to which it leads has also been properly described to you. The man who always understands these qualities succeeds in freeing himself from all of them which appertain to passion.

Brahma continued:

I shall, after this, discourse to you on that excellent quality which is the third (in the order of enumeration). It is beneficial to all creatures in the world, un-blamable, and constitutes the conduct of those that are good.

Joy, satisfaction, nobility, enlightenment, happiness, liberality, absence of fear, contentment, disposition of faith, forgiveness, courage, abstention from injury to any creature, equability, truth, straight-forwardness, absence of wrath and malice, purity, cleverness and prowess appertain to the quality of goodness.

He, who is devoted to the duty of yoga, regarding knowledge, conduct, service and mode of life to be vain, attains to what is the highest in the world hereafter.

Freedom from the idea of meum, freedom from egoism, desire and expectations, and looking on all alike constitute the eternal religion of the good.

Confidence, modesty, forgiveness, renunciation, purity, absence of laziness, cruelty and delusion, compassion to all creatures, absence of the disposition to calumniate, exultation, satisfaction, rapture, humility, good behaviour, purity in all acts having, for their object, the attainment of tranquility, righteous understanding, emancipation (from attachments), indifference, brahmacharya, complete renunciation, freedom from the idea of meum and expectations, un-broken observance of righteousness, belief (conviction) that gifts, sacrifices, study, vows, acceptance of gifts, observance of duties, penances, etc are all vain, are virtues. Those brahmanas in this world whose conduct is marked by these virtues, who adhere to righteousness and who abide in the Veda are said to be wise and possessed of correctness of vision.

Casting off all sins and freed from grief, those men possessed of wisdom attain to heaven, and create diverse bodies (for themselves).

Attaining the power of governing everything, self-restraint and minuteness, these high-souled ones live, by operations of their own mind, like the gods themselves dwelling in heaven. Such men are said to have their courses directed upwards. They are veritable gods capable of modifying all things. Attaining to heaven, they modify all things by their very nature. They get whatever objects they desire and enjoy them.

Thus I have, O foremost of regenerate ones, described to you what that conduct is, which pertains to the quality of goodness. Understanding these duly, one acquires whatever objects one desires. The qualities that appertain to goodness have been declared particularly. The conduct which those qualities constitute has also been

properly set forth. That man, who understands these qualities, succeeds in enjoying the qualities without being attached to them.

Brahma continued:

The qualities are incapable of being declared as completely separate from one another. Passion, goodness and darkness are seen existing in a state of union. They are attached to one another. They depend on one another. They have one another for their refuge. Likewise, they follow one another.

As long as goodness exists, so long does passion exist. There is no doubt about it. As long as darkness and goodness exist, so long does passion exist. They make their journey together, in union, and moving collectively. They, verily, move in body, when they act with or without cause.

Of all these which act with one another, however much they may differ in their development, the manner in which their increase and diminution take place will now be declared.

In the lower creatures (for example), where darkness exists in a copious measure, passion exists in a smaller measure, and goodness is still less. Where passion exists, as in creatures of middle course, darkness exists in a small measure, and goodness is still less. Where goodness exists in a copious measure, as in creatures of upward courses, darkness exists in a small measure, and passion is still less.

Goodness is the spring that causes the modifications of the senses. It is the great enlightener. No duty has been laid down higher than goodness. Those who abide in goodness proceed upwards. Those who abide in passion remain in the middle. Those who abide in darkness sink downwards.

Darkness occurs in the sudra; passion in the kshatriya; and goodness, which is the highest, in the brahmana. These three qualities exist even thus in the three orders.

Even from a distance, the three qualities of darkness, goodness and passion are seen to exist in a state of union, and collectively. They are never seen, (even upon a cursory view), in a state of separation.

Beholding the sun rising, men of evil deeds become inspired with fear. Travellers, on their way, become afflicted with heat, and suffer distress. The sun is goodness developed; men of evil deeds represent darkness; and the heat experienced represents passion.

The sun representing light is goodness; the heat is passion; and the eclipse or the setting of the sun is darkness. Even thus, the three qualities exist in all luminous bodies. They act, by turns, in diverse places, in diverse ways.

Among immobile objects, all the three qualities exist. The quality of darkness predominates in them. As regards passion, it dwells in such properties of theirs as pungency, sourness, sweetness, etc which change with time, or in consequence of cooking or admixture. Their only properties are said to pertain to goodness.

The day should be understood as three-fold. The night has been ordained to be three-fold. So are fortnight, months, years, seasons and conjunctions. (The conjunctions are the periods joining the seasons, that is, the close of one season and the beginning of another).

The gifts that are made are three-fold. The sacrifice that flows is three-fold. The worlds are three-fold; the deities are three-fold; the knowledge is three-fold; and the end is three-fold.

The past, the present and the future, religion, wealth and pleasure, prana, apana and udana, etc are all fraught with the three qualities. The three qualities act, by turns, in all things and in all circumstances. Verily, the three qualities always act in an un-manifest form.

The creation of these three qualities, namely, goodness, passion, and darkness, is eternal. The Un-manifest, consisting of the three qualities, is said to be Darkness, un-perceived, holy, constant, un-born, womb, eternal, nature, change or modification, destruction, Pradhana, production, absorption, undeveloped, vast, un-shaking, immovable, fixed, existent and non-existent.

All these names (characteristics) should be known to those who meditate on matters connected with the soul. That person who accurately knows all the names of the Un-manifest, the qualities, as also the pure operations (of the qualities), is well conversant with the truth about all distinctions, and freed from the body, becomes liberated from all the qualities, and enjoys absolute happiness.

Brahma continued:

From the Un-manifest, first sprang Mahat (Reason) endued with great intelligence, the source of all the qualities. That is said to be the first creation. Mahat is signified by such words as the Great Soul, Intelligence, Visnu, Jisnu, Sambhu (of great valour), the Understanding, the Means of acquiring knowledge, the Means of perception, as also Fame, Courage and Memory. Knowing this, a learned brahmana has never to encounter delusion.

Mahat or the Great Soul has hands and feet on every side, and has ears on every side. It stands pervading everything in the universe. Of great power, that Being is stationed in the hearts of all. Minuteness, likeness and affluence are His. He is the lord of all, identical with effulgence, and knows no decay. In Him are all those that comprehend the nature of the Understanding, those devoted to goodness of disposition, those that practise meditation, those devoted to yoga, those firm in truth, those that have

subdued their senses, those possessed of knowledge, those freed from cupidity, those that have conquered wrath, those of cheerful hearts, those endued with wisdom, those liberated from ideas of meum (and teum) and those devoid of egoism. All these, freed from every kind of attachment, attain to the status of Greatness.

That person who understands that holy and high goal, namely, the Great Soul, becomes freed from delusion. The self-born Visnu becomes the Lord in the primary creations. He who thus knows the Lord lying in the cave, the Supreme and the Ancient Being, of universal form, the golden one, the highest goal of all persons endued with understanding, lives transcending the understanding.

Brahma continued:

That Mahat which was first produced is called egoism. When it sprang up as I, it came to be called as the second creation. That egoism is said to be the source of all creatures, for these have sprung from its modifications. It is pure effulgence, and is the supporter of consciousness.

It is Prajapati. It is a deity, the creator of deities, and of mind. It is that which creates the three worlds. It is said to be that which feels I am all this. That is the eternal world existing for those sages who are contented with knowledge relating to the soul, who have meditated on the soul, and who have won success by Vedic study and sacrifices. By consciousness of soul, one enjoys the qualities. That source of all creatures, that creator of all creatures, creates (all creatures) even in this way. It is that which causes all changes. It is that which causes all beings to move. By its own light, it illumines the universe likewise.

Brahma continued:

From egoism were, verily, born the five great elements. They are earth, air, ether, water and light. In these five gross elements, in the matters of sound, touch, colour, taste and smell, all creatures become deluded.

When, at the close of the destruction of the great elements, the dissolution of the universe approaches, O you that are possessed of wisdom, a great fear comes upon all living creatures. Every existent object is dissolved into that form which has produced it. The dissolution takes place in an order that is the reverse of that in which creation takes place.

Indeed, as regards birth, they are born from one another. Then, when all existent objects, mobile and immobile, become dissolved, wise men, endued with powerful memory, never dissolve. Sound, touch, colour, taste and smell are effects. They are, however, inconstant, and called by the name of delusion.

Caused by the production of cupidity, not different from one another, without reality, connected with flesh and blood, and depending upon one another, existing outside the soul, these are all helpless and powerless.

Prana, Apana, Udana, Samana and Vyana (these five winds) are always closely attached to the soul. Together with speech, mind and understanding, they constitute the universe of eight ingredients.

He whose skin, nose, ear, eyes, tongue and speech are restrained, whose mind is pure, and whose understanding deviates not (from the right path), and whose mind is never burnt by those eight fires, succeeds in attaining to that auspicious Brahman to which nothing superior exists.

I shall now, O regenerate ones, mention particularly of those which have been called the eleven organs, and which have sprung from egoism. They are the ear, the skin, the two eyes, the tongue, the nose, the two feet, the lower duct, the organ of generation, the two hands and speech. These constitute the group of organs, with mind numbering as the eleventh.

One should first subdue this group. Then will the Brahman shine forth (in him). Five amongst these are called organs of knowledge, and five, organs of action. The five beginning with the ear are truly said to be connected with knowledge. The rest, however, that are connected with action are without distinction. The mind should be regarded as belonging to both. The understanding is the twelfth in the top. Thus have been enumerated the eleven organs in due order.

Learned men, having understood these, think they have accomplished everything. I shall, after this, enumerate all the various organs. Space (ether) is the first entity. As connected with the soul, it is called the ear. As connected with objects, it is sound. The presiding deity (of this) is the quarters.

Wind is the second entity. As connected with the soul, it is known as the skin. As connected with objects, it is known as objects of touch; and the presiding deity is touch.

Light is the third entity. As connected with the soul, it is known as the eye. As connected with objects, it is colour; and the sun is its deity.

Water is the fourth entity. As connected with the soul, it is said to be the tongue. As connected with objects, it is taste; and the presiding deity is Soma.

Earth is the fifth entity. As connected with the soul, it is said to be the nose. As connected with objects, it is scent; and the presiding deity is the wind.

Thus has the manner been declared of how the five entities are divided into sets of three. After this, I shall declare everything about the diverse (other) organs.

Brahmanas, conversant with the truth, say that the two feet are mentioned as connected with the soul. As connected with objects, it is motion; and Visnu is the presiding deity.

The Apana wind, whose motion is downward, as connected with the soul, is called the lower duct. As connected with objects, it is the excreta that is ejected; and the presiding deity is Mitra.

As connected with the soul, the organ of generation is mentioned as the producer of all beings. As connected with objects, it is the vital seed; and the presiding deity is Prajapati.

The two hands are mentioned as connected with the soul, by persons conversant with the relations of the soul. As connected with objects, it is action; and the presiding deity is Indra.

Next, connected with the soul is speech which relates to all the gods. As connected with objects, it is what is spoken. The presiding deity is Agni.

As connected with the soul, the mind is mentioned, which moves within the soul of the five elements. (This probably implies that the mind, through the aid of the senses, enters into all things or succeeds in knowing them.) As connected with objects, it is the mental operation; and the presiding deity is Chandramas (moon).

As connected with the soul is egoism, which is the cause of the whole course of worldly life. As connected with objects, it is consciousness of self; and the presiding deity is Rudra.

As connected with the soul is the understanding, which impels the six senses. As connected with objects, it is that which is to be understood, and the presiding deity is Brahma.

Three are the seats of all existent objects. A fourth is not possible. These (the three) are land, water and ether.

The mode of birth is four-fold. Some are born of eggs; some are born of germs springing from the earth. Some are born of filth (sweat); and some are born of wombs. Thus is the mode of birth seen of all living creatures.

Now, there are other inferior beings on the earth, and likewise those that range the sky. These should be known to be born of eggs and also those which crawl on their breasts. Insects are said to be born of filth, as also other creatures of a like description. This is said to be the second mode of birth, and is inferior.

Those living creatures that take birth after the lapse of some time, bursting through the earth, are said to be germ-born beings, O foremost of regenerate men! Creatures of two feet, or many feet, and those which move crookedly, are the beings born of wombs. Among them are some that are deformed, O best of men!

The eternal womb of Brahma should be known to be of two kinds, namely, penance and meritorious acts. Such is the doctrine of the learned. (It means that through these, one succeeds in taking birth as a brahmana).

Action should be understood of various kinds such as sacrifice, gifts made at sacrifices and the meritorious duty of study of everyone that is born. Such is the teaching of the ancients.

He who duly understands this, comes to be regarded as possessed of Yoga, O chief of regenerate persons! Know also that such a man becomes freed, too, from all his sins.

I have thus declared to you duly the doctrine of Adhyatma. O Rishis conversant with all duties! Knowledge of this is acquired by jnanis (those who are regarded as persons of knowledge). Uniting all these together, that is, the senses, the objects of the senses, and the five great entities, one should hold them in the mind. (This implies that one should regard these as really un-distinguished from the mind. Indeed, created by the mind itself, these should always be taken as having no real existence beyond the mind.)

When everything is attenuated (by absorption) in the mind, one no longer esteems the pleasures of life. Learned men, whose understandings are furnished with knowledge, regard that as true happiness. (The word, 'that' refers to the attenuation of all things by absorption into the mind.)

I shall after this tell you of renunciation with respect to all entities by means, gentle and hard, which produce attachment to subtle topics, and which is fraught with auspiciousness. The conduct which consists in treating the qualities as not qualities, which is free from attachment, which is living alone, which does not recognize distinctions, and which is full of the Brahman, is the source of all happiness.

The learned man, who absorbs all desires into himself from all sides like the tortoise withdrawing all its limbs, who is devoid of passion and who is released from everything, is always happy.

Restraining all desires within the soul, destroying his thirst, concentrated in meditation, and becoming the friend of good heart towards all creatures, he succeeds in becoming fit for assimilation with the Brahman. Through transcendence of all the senses which always hanker after their objects, and abandonment of inhabited places, the Adhyatma fire blazes forth in the man of contemplation.

As a fire, fed with fuel, becomes bright in consequence of the blazing flames it puts forth, even so, in consequence of the transcendence of the senses, the Great Soul puts forth Its effulgence.

When one, with a tranquil soul, beholds all entities in one's own heart, then, lighted by one's own effulgence, one attains to that which is subtler than the subtlest, and which is un-rivalled in excellence.

It is settled that the body has fire for colour, water for blood and other liquids, wind for sense of touch, earth for flesh, bones, etc, space for sound; that it is subject to disease and sorrow; that it is overwhelmed by five currents; that it is made up of the five elements; that it has nine doors and two deities (the deities being the Jiva and Iswara); that it is full of passion; that it is unfit to be seen (being of unholy character); that it is made up of the three qualities (being sattva, rajas and tamas); that it has three constituent elements (namely, wind, bile and phlegm); that it is delighted with attachments of every kind; and that it is full of delusion. The body is difficult of being moved in this mortal world, and it rests on 'the understanding' as its support.

The body is, in this world, the wheel of Time that continuously revolves (This is to say that the body revolves ceaselessly, from life to life, for, Emancipation is difficult to achieve.) The (body) is, indeed, a terrible and unfathomable ocean and is called delusion.

It is this body which stretches forth, contracts and awakens the (whole) universe with the (very) immortals. (What is said seems to be this: The body is, as it were, the wheel of Time; the body is the ocean of delusion; and the body is the creator, destroyer and re-awakener of the universe. Through the body, creatures act. Hence, creation, destruction and re-creation are due to the body.)

By restraining the senses, one casts off lust, wrath, fear, cupidity, enmity and falsehood which are eternal and, therefore, exceedingly difficult to cast off. He, who has subjugated the three qualities and the five constituent elements of the body in this world, has the highest for his seat in the heaven. He attains the Infinite.

Crossing the river that has the five senses for its steep banks, the mental inclinations for its mighty waters and delusion for the water-spread, one should subjugate both lust and wrath. Such a man freed from all faults, then beholds the highest, concentrating the mind within the mind and seeing the Self in self.

Understanding all things, he sees his self in all creatures, sometimes as one and sometimes as diverse, changing form from time to time. Without doubt, he can perceive numerous bodies like a hundred lights from one light.

Verily, he is Visnu, Mitra, Varuna, Agni and Prajapati. He is the Creator and the Ordainer: he is the Lord possessed of puissance, with faces turned in all directions. In him, the heart of all creatures, the Great Soul, becomes resplendent. Him all

conclaves of learned brahmanas, deities, asuras, yakshas and pisachas, the Pitris, birds, bands of rakshasas and ghostly beings, and all the great Rishis praise.

Brahma said:

Among men, the royal kshatriya is (endued with) the middle quality; among vehicles (of animals), the elephant (is so); among denizens of the forest, the lion; among all (sacrificial) animals, the sheep; among all those that live in holes, the snake; among cattle, the bovine bull; and among females, the mule. The quality of passion predominates in all these species.

There is, no doubt, that, in this world, the Nyagrodha (*Ficus Bengalensis*, Linn), the Jamvu (*Eugenia Jambolana*, Lamk) the Pippala (*Ficus Religiosa*, Linn), the Salmali (*Bombax Malabaricum*), the Sinsapa (*Balbergia Sissoo*, Roxb), the Meshasringa (*Asclepia Geminata*, Roxb) and the Kichaka or Nimba (*Melia Azadirachta*, Linn) are among the foremost ones among trees.

Himavat, Paripatra, Sahya, Vindhya, Trikutat, Sweta, Nila, Bhasa, Koshthavat, Gurusandha, Mahendra and Malayavat are the foremost of mountains.

Likewise, the Maruts are the foremost of the Ganas. Surya is the lord of the planets; Chandramas, of all the constellations; Yama, of the Pitris; Ocean, of the rivers; and Varuna, of the waters.

Indra is the king of all Maruts. Arka is the king of all hot bodies; and Indra is the king of all luminous bodies.

Agni is the eternal lord of the elements, and Brihaspati, of the brahmanas. Soma is the lord of (deciduous) herbs. Visnu is the foremost of all that are endued with might. Tashtri is the king of Rudras, and Siva of all creatures.

Sacrifice is the foremost of all initiatory rites and Maghavat, of the deities. The North is the lord of all the points of the compass. Soma of great energy is the lord of all learned brahmanas. Kubera is the lord of all precious gems, and Purandara, of all the deities. Such is the highest creation among all entities.

Prajapati is the lord of all creatures. Of all entities whatsoever, I, who am full of the Brahman, am the foremost. There is no entity higher than me or Visnu. The great Visnu, full of the Brahman, is the King of kings all over. Know him to be the ruler, the creator and the un-created Hari. He is the ruler of men, kinneras, yakshas, gandharvas, snakes, rakshasas, nagas, deities and danavas.

Among those that are followed by persons full of desire is the great goddess Maheswari of beautiful eyes. She is also called Parvati. Know that the goddess Uma is the foremost and the most auspicious of women. Among women that are a source of pleasure, the foremost are the apsaras who are possessed of great splendour.

Kings are desirous of acquiring piety, and the brahmanas are causeways of piety. Therefore, the king should always strive to protect the brahmanas. Those kings in whose dominions good men languish are regarded as bereft of the virtues of their order. Hereafter they have to go into wrong paths.

Those kings, in whose dominions good men are protected, rejoice in this world and enjoy happiness hereafter. Verily, those high-souled ones attain to the highest seat. O foremost of regenerate ones! Understand this.

I shall now state the everlasting indications of duties. Abstention from injury is the highest duty. Causing injury is an indication of unrighteousness. Splendour is the indication of the deities.

Men have acts for their indications. Ether (space) has sound for its characteristic. Wind has touch for its characteristic. The characteristic of lighted bodies is colour, and water has taste for its characteristic. Earth, which holds all entities, has smell for its characteristic. Speech has words for its characteristic. Thought has, again, been said to be the characteristic of the understanding.

The things thought of by the mind are ascertained with accuracy by the understanding. There is no doubt that the understanding, by perseverance, perceives all things. The characteristic of mind is meditation. The characteristic of the good man is to live unperceived.

Devotion has acts for its characteristic. Knowledge is the characteristic of renunciation. Therefore, keeping knowledge, before his view, the man of understanding should practise renunciation. The man, who has betaken himself to renunciation, who is possessed of knowledge, and who transcends all pairs of opposites, as also darkness, death and decrepitude, attains to the highest goal.

I have thus declared to you duly what the indications are of duty. I shall, after this, tell you of the seizure (comprehension) of qualities. Smell, which appertains to earth, is seized by the nose. The wind, that dwells in the nose, is likewise appointed (as an agent) in the perception of smell. Taste is the essence of water. That is seized by the tongue. Soma, who resides in the tongue, is appointed likewise in the perception of taste. The quality of a lighted body is colour. That is seized by the eye. Aditya who always resides in the eye has been appointed in the perception of colour.

Touch always appertains to the wind (as its quality). That is perceived by the skin. The wind that always resides in the skin has been appointed in apprehending touch.

The quality of space (ether) is sound. That is seized by the ear. All the quarters, which reside in the ear, have been appointed in apprehending sound.

The quality of the mind is thought. That is seized by understanding. The upholder of consciousness, residing in the heart, has been appointed in apprehending the mind. The understanding is apprehended in the form of determination or certitude, and Mahat in the form of knowledge. The un-perceived Prakrti has been, it is evident, appointed for seizure of all things after certitude. There is no doubt in this.

(What it means seems to be this: The knowledge of one's own identity and of things, as discriminated from one another, is presided over by Prakrti. If it is asked whence is the knowledge such as, 'I am so and so', 'That is so and so', the answer is that it comes from Prakrti or Nature.)

The Kshetrajna, which is eternal and is destitute of qualities as to Its essence, is incapable of being seized by symbols. Hence, the characteristic of the Kshetrajna, which is without symbols, is purely knowledge.

The Un-manifest resides in the symbol called Kshetra, and is that in which the qualities are produced and absorbed. I always see, know and hear it, (though) it is hidden. Purusa knows it; therefore, HE is called the Kshetrajna.

The Kshetrajna perceives also the operations of the qualities, and absence of their operations. The qualities, which are created repeatedly, do not know themselves, being un-intelligent, as entities to be created and endowed with a beginning, middle and end. No one but the Kshetrajna attains to that which is the highest, and which transcends the qualities, and those entities born of the qualities.

Hence, one who understands duties, casting off qualities and the understanding, with his sins destroyed, and transcending the qualities, enters the Kshetrajna.

One that is free from all pairs of opposites, that never bends one's head to any other, that is divested of swaha, and that is immovable and homeless is the Kshetrajna. He is the Supreme Lord.

Brahma continued:

I shall now tell you truly about all that which has a beginning, middle and end, and which is endowed with name and characteristics, together with the means of apprehension.

It has been said that the Day was the first. Then arose Night. The Months are said to have the lighted fortnights first. The Constellations are said to have Sravana for their first; and the Seasons are said to have dew (winter) for their first.

Earth is the source of all smells, and water of all tastes. The solar light is the source of all colours, the wind of all sensations of touch. Likewise, the space is the source of sound. These are the qualities of elements.

I shall, after this, declare that which is the first and the highest of all entities. The sun is the first of all lighted bodies. Fire is the first of all the elements. Savitri is the first of all branches of learning. Prajapati is the first of all the deities. The syllable Aum is the first of all the Vedas; and the life-wind prana is the first of all winds. All that is prescribed in the world is Savitri. (The word 'Savitri' implies all forms of worship observed by brahmanas and the out-castes as well. This turning back to explain a word used before is said to be an instance of 'looking back like the lion'.)

The Gayatri is the first of all metres; the goat is the first of all (sacrificial) animals; the kine are the first of all quadrupeds; the hawk is the first of all birds; and the brahmanas are the first of all human beings.

Of all sacrifices, the first is the pouring of clarified butter on the fire. Of all the reptiles, the first is the snake. Of all the yugas, the first is the Krita; there is no doubt in this.

Gold is the first of all precious things. Barley is the first of all plants. Food is the first of all things to be eaten or swallowed. Water is the foremost of all liquid substances to be drunk.

Of all immobile entities without distinction, Plaksha is said to be the first, that ever holy field of the Brahman. Of all the Prajapatis, I am the first. There is no doubt in this.

Of inconceivable souls, the self-existent Visnu is said to be my superior. Of all the mountains, the great Meru is said to be the first-born. Of all the cardinal and subsidiary points of the horizon, the eastern is said to be the foremost and the first-born. Ganga of three courses is said to be first-born of all rivers. Likewise, of all wells and reservoirs of waters, the ocean is said to be the first-born.

Iswara is the supreme lord of all the deities and danavas, ghosts and pisachas, snakes and makshasas, kinneras and yakshas, and human beings. The great Visnu, who is full of the Brahman, than whom there is no higher being in the three worlds, is the first of all the universe.

Of all the modes of life, that of the house-holder is the first. Of this there is no doubt. The Un-manifest is the source of the entire universe as, indeed, that is the end of everything. Day ends with the setting of the sun, and the night with the rising of the sun.

The end of pleasure is always sorrow; and the end of sorrow is always pleasure. All accumulations have exhaustion for their end; and all ascents have falls for their end.

All associations have dissociations for their end, as life has death for its end. All action ends in destruction, and all that is born is certain to meet with death. Every mobile and immobile thing in this world is transient.

Sacrifice, gift, penance, study, vows, observances, etc all have destruction for their end. Only of Knowledge, there is no end. Hence, one that is possessed of a tranquil soul that has subjugated one's senses, that is freed from the sense of meum and that is devoid of egoism is released from all sins by pure Knowledge alone.

Brahma continued:

The wheel of life moves on. It has the understanding for its strength; the mind for the pole (on which it rests); the group of senses for its bonds; the (five) great elements for its nave; and home for its circumference. (Home is called the circumference, because, as the circumference limits the wheel, even so home (wife and children) limits the affections and acts of life.)

The wheel of life is overwhelmed by decrepitude and grief; and it has diseases and calamities for its progeny. That wheel relates in time and space. It has toil and exercise, for its noise. Day and night are the rotations of the wheel. It is encircled by heat and cold. Pleasure and pain are its joints; and hunger and thirst are the nails fixed in to it. Sun-shine and shade are the ruts (it causes). It is capable of being agitated during even such a short space of time as is taken up by the opening and the closing of the eyelid. It is enveloped in the terrible waters of delusion.

It is ever revolving, and void of consciousness. It is measured by fortnights and months. It is not uniform (being ever-changing), and moves through all the worlds. Penance and vows are its mud. Passion's force is its mover. It is illumined by the great egoism, and is sustained by the qualities.

Vexations (in consequence of non-acquisition of what is desired) are the fastenings that bind it around. It revolves in the midst of grief and destruction. It is endued with actions, and the instruments of actions. It is large, and is extended by attachments. It is rendered unsteady by cupidity and desire.

It is produced by variegated Ignorance. It is attended upon by fear and delusion, and is the cause of delusion of all beings. It moves towards joy and pleasure, and has desire and wrath for its possession.

It is made up of entities beginning with Mahat, and ending with the Gross Elements. It is characterized by creation and destruction, going on without end. Its speed is like that of the mind, and it has the mind for its boundary.

That man who understands accurately the motion and stoppage of this wheel of life is never seen to be deluded, among all creatures. Freed from all impressions, divested of all pairs of opposites and released from all sins, he attains to the highest goal.

All the four modes of life, namely, the house-holder, the brahmacharin, the forest dweller and the mendicant are all said to have the house-holder's mode for their foundation.

Whatever systems of rules are prescribed in this world, their observance is always beneficial. Such observance has always been highly spoken of. He, who has been first cleansed by ceremonies, who has duly observed vows, who belongs in respect of birth to a race possessed of high qualifications and who understands the Vedas should return (from his preceptor's home, to the mode of the house-holder).

Always devoted to his wedded spouse, conducting himself after the manner of the good, with his senses under subjugation, and full of faith, one should, in this world, perform the five sacrifices. He who eats what remains after feeding deities and guests, who is devoted to the observance of the Vedic rites, who duly performs, according to his means, sacrifices and gifts, who is not unduly active with his hands and feet, and his eye, and who is devoted to penance and not unduly active with his speech, comes under the category of *sishta* (the good).

One should always bear the sacred thread, wear white (clean) clothes, observe pure vows and always be associated with good men, making gifts and practising self-restraint. One should subjugate one's lust and stomach, practise universal compassion and be characterized by behaviour that fits the good.

One should bear a bamboo-stick, and a water-pot filled with water. Having studied, one should teach; likewise one should make sacrifices oneself and officiate at the sacrifices of others. One should also make gifts made to oneself.

Verily, one's conduct should be characterized by six acts. Know that three of these acts, namely, teaching (pupils), officiating at the sacrifices of others and the acceptance of gifts from a person that is pure should constitute the livelihood of brahmanas. As for the other duties, namely, making of gifts, study and sacrifice are accompanied by merit. (While the latter three duties are productive of merit and should, therefore, be performed, the first three duties are only sources of livelihood.)

Observant of penances, self-restrained, practising universal compassion and forgiveness, and looking upon all creatures alike, the man conversant with duties should never be heedless with respect to those three acts that produce merit. The learned brahmana of pure heart who observes the domestic mode of life and practising rigid vows, thus devoted and thus discharging all duties to the best of his power, succeeds in conquering heaven.

Brahma continued:

Duly studying thus to the best of his powers, in the way described above, and likewise living like a brahmacharin, one that is devoted to the duties of one's own order, possessed of learning, observant of penances, with the senses restrained, devoted

to what is agreeable and beneficial to the preceptor, steady in practising the duty of truth and always pure, should, with the permission of the preceptor, eat one's food without decrying it.

He should eat havishya made from what is obtained in alms and should stand, sit and take exercise (as directed). (Havishya is food cooked in a particular way for offer to the deities. It must be free from meat. There may be milk or ghee in it, but the cooking is to be done in a single pot or vessel continuously, with no change of vessel in the process.)

He should pour libations on the fire twice a day, himself being pure, and with concentrated mind. He should always bear a staff made of vilwa (aegle marmelos) or palasa (butea frondosa). The robes he wears should be of linen, cotton, deer-skin or a cloth that is entirely brown-red. He should also wear a girdle made of munja-grass.

He should bear matted-locks, and perform his ablutions everyday. He should bear the sacred thread, study the scriptures, divest himself of cupidity and be steady in the observance of vows. He should also gratify the deities with oblations of pure water, with his mind restrained all the while.

Such a brahmacharin is worthy of praise. With vital seed drawn up and mind concentrated, one that is thus devoted succeeds in conquering heaven. Having attained to the highest seed, one has not to return to birth.

Cleansed by all purifactory rites and having lived as a brahmacharin, one should next go out of one's village and live as an ascetic in the woods with all attachments renounced. Clad in animal skins or barks of trees, he should perform his ablutions in the morning and evening.

Always living in the forest, he should never return to an inhabited place. Honouring guests when they come, he should give them shelter. He should subsist upon fruits, leaves and common roots. He should, without being slothful, subsist on such water, air and forest products as he gets. He should live upon these, in due order, according to the regulations of his initiation. (There are different kinds of forest-dwellers; the course of life for each kind is settled at the time of initiation.)

He should honour the guests that come to him with alms of fruits and roots. He should then, without sloth, always give whatever other food he may have. Restraining speech all the while, he should eat after gratifying deities and guests. His mind should be free from envy. He should eat very little, and always depend on the deities.

Self-restrained, practising universal compassion and possessed of forgiveness, he should wear both beard and hair (without getting them cut). Performing sacrifices and devoting himself to the study of the scriptures, he should be steady in the observance of truth.

With body always in a state of purity, endued with cleverness, ever dwelling in the forest, with mind concentrated and senses subjugated, a forest-dweller will conquer heaven.

A house-holder, a brahmacharin or a forest-dweller who wishes to achieve Emancipation should have recourse to that which has been called the best course of conduct. Having granted to all creatures the pledge of total abstention from harm, he should thoroughly renounce all actions. He should contribute to the happiness of all creatures, practise universal friendliness, subjugate all his senses and be an ascetic.

Subsisting on food obtained unasked, without trouble and spontaneously, he should make a fire. He should go about for mendicancy in a place where smoke has ceased to curl up, and where the residents have already eaten. (What is stated means this: A mendicant should not ask for alms. If ever he is to seek for alms, he should seek them in a village or a house where cooking has already been done, and where everyone has already eaten. This limitation is provided as otherwise the mendicant may be fed full by the house-holder, even without keeping for the family.)

The person conversant with the conduct that leads to Emancipation should seek for alms after the vessels (used in cooking) have been cleaned. He should never rejoice when he obtains anything; and he should never be depressed if he obtains nothing. Seeking just what is needed for supporting life, he should, with mind concentrated, go about his round of mendicancy, at the appropriate time.

He should not wish for earnings in common with others, nor eat when honoured. Leading the life of a mendicant, one should conceal oneself for avoiding gifts with honour. While eating, one should not eat such food as forms the remains of another's dish, nor such as is bitter or pungent. One should also not eat such types of food that taste sweet. One should eat only as much as is needed to keep one alive.

The person conversant with Emancipation should obtain his subsistence without obstructing any creature. In his rounds of mendicancy, he should never follow another (bent on the same purpose). He should never parade his piety; he should move about in a secluded place, free of passion.

He should have recourse to shelter in an empty house, a forest, the foot of some tree, the bank of a river or a mountain-cave. While in rainy season, he may live in one place, but in other seasons he shall not spend the second night at the same place in a habitation. He should move about the world like a worm, his path shown by the sun. From compassion for creatures, he should walk on the earth with his eyes directed to it.

He should never make any accumulation of wealth or goods, and should avoid staying with friends. The man conversant with Emancipation should do all his acts everyday with pure water. Such a man should always perform his ablutions with water that has been fetched (from a river or a tank). (It means that he should not plunge into a stream, river, tank or lake for bathing.)

Abstention from harm, brahmacharya, truth, simplicity, freedom from wrath, not decrying others, self-restraint and the habitual freedom from back-biting are the eight vows a mendicant should steadily pursue, with his senses fully restrained. He should always practise a sinless mode of conduct that is not deceptive and not crooked.

Free from attachment, he should always make the guest eat (at least) a morsel of food. He should eat just enough for living. He should eat only such food as has been obtained by righteous means. He should not pursue the dictates of desire, nor accept anything other than food and clothing. Also he should accept only as much as he can eat, and no more.

He should not be induced to accept gifts from others, nor should he make gifts to others. Owing to the helplessness of creatures, the man of wisdom should always share with others. He should not appropriate what belongs to others, nor should he take anything without being asked.

He should not, having enjoyed anything, become so attached to it as to desire to have it once again. He should take only soil, water, pebbles, leaves, flowers, fruits, etc that are not owned by anybody, as they come, when he desires to do any act.

One should not live by the occupation of an artisan, nor should one covet gold. One should not hate, nor teach (another that does not seek to be taught); nor should one have any belongings.

One should eat only what is consecrated by faith. One should abstain from controversies. One should follow that course of conduct considered to be nectarine. One should never be attached to anything, nor enter into relations of intimacy with any creature. One should not perform, nor cause to perform any such action, as involves expectation of fruit, or destruction of life, or the hoarding of wealth or goods.

Rejecting all objects, content with very little, one should wander about (homeless), pursuing an equitable behaviour towards all creatures, mobile and immobile. One should never annoy another being; nor should one be annoyed by another.

He who is trusted by all creatures is regarded as the foremost of those persons that understand Emancipation. One should not think of the past, nor feel anxious of the future. One should disregard the present, biding time, with mind concentrated.

One should never defile anything by eye, mind or speech. Nor should one do anything wrong, openly or in secret. Withdrawing one's senses, like a tortoise withdrawing its limbs into itself, one should attenuate one's senses and mind, cultivate a thoroughly peaceful understanding and seek to master every subject.

Freed from all pairs of opposites, never bending one's head in reverence, abstaining from the rites requiring the utterance of swaha, one should be free from

‘mine-ness’ and egoism. With cleansed soul, one should never seek to acquire what one has not, and protect what one has. Free from expectations, divested of qualities and wedded to tranquility, one should be free from all attachments, and should depend on none.

Attached to one’s own self and comprehending all topics (subjects), one becomes emancipated, without doubt. Those who perceive the self, which is without hands, feet and back, which is without head and stomach, which is freed from the operation of all qualities, which is absolute, untainted and stable, which is without smell, taste, touch, colour or sound, which is to be comprehended (by close study), which is unattached, which is without flesh, which is free from anxiety, unfading and divine, and which, though dwelling in a body, resides in all creatures, succeed in escaping death.

There the understanding reaches not, nor the senses, nor the deities, nor the Vedas, nor sacrifices, nor the regions (of superior bliss), nor penance, nor vows. The attainment to it by those who are possessed of knowledge is said to be without comprehension of symbols. Hence, the man who knows the properties of that which is destitute of symbols should practise the truths of piety.

(What it means seems to be this: The self or soul is without qualities. He who knows the self, or rather he who pursues the self with the desire of knowing it, should practise the truths of piety laid down. They constitute the path leading to the self.)

The learned man, betaking himself to a life of house-holder, should adopt the conduct conformable to true knowledge. Though un-deluded, he should practise piety after the manner of one that is deluded, without finding fault with it.

Without finding fault with the practices of the good, he should himself adopt such conduct for practising piety as may induce others always to disrespect him. That man endued with such conduct is said to be the foremost of ascetics. One, after comprehending the senses, the objects of the senses, the (five) gross elements, mind, understanding, egoism, the Un-manifest and Purusa, with the aid of correct inferences, attains to heaven, released from all bonds.

One conversant with the Truth, understanding all these at the time of termination of his life, should meditate exclusively on Emancipation. Then, depending on none, one attains to Emancipation. Freed from all attachments, like the wind in space, with the accumulations exhausted, without distress of any kind, he attains to his highest goal.

Brahma continued:

The ancients who were expounding certain truths say that renunciation is penance. Brahmanas, dwelling in the Brahman, understand Knowledge to be the

Brahman. The Brahman is very difficult to attain, but Its attainment depends on the knowledge of the Vedas.

The Brahman is free from all pairs of opposites; IT is divested of all qualities; IT is eternal; IT is endowed with unknowable attributes; and IT is Supreme. It is by knowledge and penance that those endowed with wisdom behold that which is the highest.

Verily, they that are of untainted minds, that are cleansed of every sin and that they have transcended all passions and darkness, (succeed in beholding IT). They, who are always devoted to renunciation, and who are conversant with the Vedas, succeed in attaining to the Supreme Lord who is identical with the path of happiness and peace, by the aid of penance.

Penance is said to be light. Conduct leads to piety. Knowledge is said to be the highest. Renunciation is the best penance. He who understands the Self through accurate determination of concepts, which is unperturbed and identical with Knowledge and which resides in all entities, succeeds in going everywhere.

The learned man who beholds association in dissociation and unity in diversity is released from misery. He, who never desires for anything, and who despises nothing becomes eligible, even when dwelling in this world, for assimilation with the Brahman.

He who is conversant with the truths about qualities of Pradhana, and understands the Pradhana as existing in all entities, and who is free from mine-ness and egoism becomes emancipated, without doubt.

He, who is freed from all pairs of opposites, who does not bend his head to anybody, who has transcended the rites of swadha, succeeds, by the aid of tranquility alone, in attaining to that which is free from pairs of opposites, which is eternal and which is divested of qualities. Abandoning all action, good or bad, developed from qualities and casting off both truth and falsehood, a creature, without doubt, becomes emancipated.

Having the Un-manifest for the seed of its origin, with the understanding for its trunk, with egoism for its assemblage of boughs, with the senses for the cavities of its little sprouts, with the (five) gross elements for its large branches, the objects of the senses for its smaller branches, with leaves that are ever present, with flowers that always adorn it, and with fruits, both agreeable and disagreeable, always produced, is the eternal tree of the Brahman which is the support of all creatures.

Cutting and piercing that tree with knowledge of truth as the sword, the man of wisdom, abandoning the bonds made of attachment that cause birth, decrepitude and death, and freeing himself from 'mine-ness' and egoism, becomes emancipated without any doubt.

These are the two birds, which are immutable and friends, but unintelligent. That other which is different from these two is considered the Intelligent. When the inner self, which is destitute of the knowledge of nature, which is (as it were) unintelligent, becomes conversant with that which is above nature, then, understanding the Kshetra, and endued with an intelligence that transcends all qualities and apprehends everything, one becomes released from all sins.

Brahma continued:

Some regard the Brahman as a tree. Some regard the Brahman as a great forest. Some regard the Brahman as Un-manifest. Some regard IT as transcendent, and freed from every distress. They think that all this is produced from, and absorbed into the Un-manifest.

He, who, even for the short space of time taken by a single breath, when his end comes, becomes equable, attaining to the self, fits himself for immortality. Restraining the self in the Self, even for a wink of the eyelid, one goes, through the tranquility of the self, to that which constitutes the inexhaustible acquisition of those that are endued with knowledge.

Restraining the life-breaths again and again by controlling them according to pranayama, by the ten or the twelve, he attains to that which is beyond the four and twenty. Thus having first acquired a tranquil soul, one attains to the fruition of all one's wishes.

(Neelakantha explains that the 'ten' mean the eight characteristics of yoga, namely, yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana, samadhi, and also tarka and vairagya. The twelve would imply the first eight, and the four being maitri, karuna, mudita and upeksha. If ten plus twelve or two and twenty be taken, then that number would be made up by the five modes of yama, the five of niyama, the remaining six of yoga characteristics, the four beginning with maitri and the two, tarka and vairagya.)

When the quality of goodness predominates in that arising from the Un-manifest, it becomes fir for immortality. Those conversant with goodness applaud it highly, saying that there is nothing higher than goodness. By inference, we know that Purusa is dependent on goodness (Purusa is goodness itself).

O best of regenerate ones! It is impossible to attain to Purusa by any other means. Forgiveness, courage, abstention from harm, equability, truth, sincerity, knowledge, gift and renunciation are said to be characteristics of that course of conduct arising out of goodness. It is by this inference that the wise believe in the identity of Purusa with goodness. There is no doubt in this.

Some learned men, devoted to knowledge, assert the unity of Kshetrajna and Nature. This, however, is not true. It is said that Nature is different from Purusa. Even

this implies wanting in consideration. Truly, distinction and association should be known (as applying to Purusa and Nature). Unity and diversity are likewise laid down. (The relation of Purusa and Nature is both unity and diversity.) That is the doctrine of the learned.

In the Gnat and Udumbara, both unity and diversity are seen. The relation of Nature and Purusa is like 'fish in water' and water. Verily, their relation is like that of 'water drop on the leaf of a lotus', and the leaf of the lotus.

The preceptor continued:

Thus addressed, those learned brahmanas, who were the foremost of men, felt some doubts and (therefore) they once again questioned the Grandsire (of all creatures).

The Rishis said:

Which, among the duties, is said to be the most worthy of being performed? The diverse modes of duty, we see, are contradictory. Some say that (it remains) after the body (is destroyed). Others say that it does not exist. Some say that everything is doubtful. Others have no doubts. (The doubts appertain to duties, that is, whether they should be done or not, and whether they have any effects here and hereafter.)

Some say the eternal (principle) is not eternal. Some say that it exists, some others that it does not. Some say it is of one form, or two-fold; some others, that it is mixed.

Some brahmanas, who are conversant with the Brahman and always speak the truth regard IT to be One. Others regard IT distinct; some others consider IT manifold. Some say that both time and space exist; others say that they do not.

Some bear matted-locks on their heads, and are clad in deer-skins. Others have shaven crowns, and go entirely naked. Some are for entire abstention from bathing, and some for bathing. Such differences of views may be seen among deities and brahmanas conversant with the Brahman, and endued with perceptions of truth.

Some are for taking food; while some are devoted to fasts. Some applaud actions; others applaud perfect tranquility. Some applaud Emancipation; some applaud various kinds of enjoyment. Some desire diverse kinds of wealth; others prefer poverty.

Some say that means are important; others say not. Some are devoted to a life of abstention from harm; others are addicted to destruction. Some are for merit and glory; some others are not. Some are devoted to goodness; others are established in doubt. Some are for pleasure; some others are for causing pain to others. Some people call it meditation; some brahmanas say it is sacrifice; and some others call it gift. Some

applaud penances; others applaud study of the scriptures. Some say that knowledge and renunciation be followed; others extol worldly things; and some others extol nothing.

O foremost one of the deities! Duty being thus confused, and full of contradiction of various kinds, we are deluded and unable to come to any conclusion. He that is attached to a particular duty applauds that duty as the best. For this reason, our understanding breaks down and our mind is distracted.

We, therefore, wish, O best of all beings, to know what is good. It behooves you to declare to us, after this, what is so mysterious, and what is the cause of the connection between the Kshetrajna and Nature.

Thus addressed by those learned brahmanas, the illustrious creator of the worlds, endued with great intelligence and possessed of a righteous soul, declared to them accurately what they asked.

Brahma said:

Well then, I shall declare to you what you ask. Learn what was told by a preceptor to a disciple that came to him. Hearing it all, do you settle properly (what it should be)!

Abstention from harming any creature is regarded as the foremost of all duties. That is the highest seat, free from anxiety and constituting holiness. The ancients who beheld the truth have said that knowledge is the highest happiness. One becomes released of all sin, by pure knowledge.

They that are engaged in destruction and harm, and they that are infidels in conduct have to go to hell in consequence of their being endued with cupidity and delusion. Those who, without procrastination, perform acts, impelled thereto by expectations, become repeatedly born in this world, and sport in joy. Those who, endued with learning and wisdom, perform acts with faith, free from expectations, with mind concentrated, are said to perceive clearly.

I shall, after this, declare how the association and the dissociation of Kshetrajna and Nature take place. O best of men! Listen.

The relation here is said to be that between the object and the subject. (The thinking or enjoying agent is subject, while what is thought or enjoyed is object.) Purusa is always the subject; Nature is the object. Purusa and Nature exist after the manner of the Gnat and the Udumbara.

An object of enjoyment, Nature is unintelligent and knows nothing Kshetrajna is the enjoyer; Nature is enjoyed. The wise have said that Nature is always made up of pairs of opposites (and consists of qualities). Kshetrajna is, on the other hand, devoid

of pairs of opposites and parts, and is eternal, immutable and indivisible. In Its essence, It is free of qualities. It resides in everything alike, and walks with Knowledge.

Kshetrajna always enjoys Nature as the leaf of a lotus enjoys water. Possessed of knowledge, It is never tainted even if brought into contact with the qualities of Nature. Without doubt, Purusa is unattached like the unsteady drop of water on the leaf of a lotus. This is the certain conclusion (of the scriptures) that Nature is the property of Purusa.

The relation between these two is like that exists between matter and its maker. As one goes into a dark place with a light, even so those who look to the Supreme Being proceed in the light of Nature. (The light of Nature is knowledge, knowledge of truth, acquired by the self through Nature.)

As long as matter and quality (which are like oil and wick) exist, so long the light shines. The flame, however, becomes extinguished when matter and quality (or, oil and wick) are exhausted. Thus Nature is manifest; while Purusa is said to be unmanifest.

Understand this, O learned brahmanas! Well, I shall now tell you something more. With even a thousand (explanations), one that has a bad understanding succeeds not in acquiring knowledge. One, however, that is endued with intelligence succeeds in attaining happiness, through only a fourth share (of explanations). Thus should the accomplishment of duty be understood as dependent on means.

For, the man of intelligence, having knowledge of means, succeeds in attaining to supreme felicity. As some man travelling along a road, without provisions for his journey, proceeds with great discomfort, and may even meet with destruction before he reaches the end of his journey, even so should it be known that, in acts, there may not be fruits.

(It may mean thus: One who proceeds on a journey must provide oneself with the necessary means; otherwise one is sure to feel discomfort or meet with destruction. So, in the journey of life, one must provide oneself with knowledge as the means. One may then avoid all discomfort and danger. Action does not constitute the proper means. It may or may not produce fruits.)

The examination of what is agreeable and what is disagreeable in one's own self is productive of benefit. (One should not care for the external.) The progress in life of a man that is devoid of the perception of truth is like that of a man who rashly journeys on a long road unseen before. The progress, however, of those that are endued with intelligence is like that of men who journey along the same road, riding on a car unto which are yoked (a fleet of) steeds, and which moves with swiftness.

One, having ascended to the top of a mountain, should not cast one's eyes on the surface of the earth. (One need not do acts enjoined by the scriptures after one has attained to knowledge which is the highest seat.)

Seeing a man, even though travelling on a car, afflicted and rendered insensible by pain, the man of intelligence journeys on a car as long as there is a car path. The man of learning, when he sees the car path end, abandons his car for going on.

(It may mean this: Riding on a car may not always be comfortable. As long as there is a car path, one should travel on one's car. If, however, the path be such as not to be fit for a car to proceed along it, one should avoid a car in going over it, for, the car, instead of conducing to comfort, would, on such a path, be productive of only discomfort.)

Even thus proceeds the man of intelligence who is conversant with the ordinances respecting Truth and Yoga (or Knowledge and Devotion). Conversant with the qualities, such a man proceeds, comprehending what is next and next. (What is indicated is that there is first action with desire, then action without desire and then knowledge.)

One that plunges, without a boat, into the terrible ocean, with only one's two arms, through delusion, undoubtedly wishes for destruction. On the other hand, the man of wisdom, conversant with distinctions, goes into the water, with a boat equipped with oars. Soon he crosses the water-spread without fatigue, and, having crossed it, attains to the other shore, and casts off the boat, freed from the thought of meum.

One, who has been overwhelmed by delusion in consequence of attachment, adheres to it like a fisherman to his boat. Overcome by the idea of meum, one wanders within its narrow range. After embarking on a boat, it is not possible to moving about on land. Similarly, it is not possible to moving about in water after one has mounted on a car. There are, thus, various actions with regard to various objects.

As action is performed in this world, so does it result to those that perform it. That which is void of smell, taste, touch and sound, that which is meditated upon by the sages in their consciousness is said to be Pradhana. But Pradhana is un-manifest.

A development of the Un-manifest is Mahat. A development of Pradhana when it has become Mahat is Egoism. From Egoism are produced the five Gross Elements. Of the Gross Elements are produced the objects of senses.

The Un-manifest is of the nature of seed, and that is a product. Egoism is of the nature of seed, and that is also a product. The five Gross Elements are of the nature of seed and are, therefore, products. The objects of the five Gross Elements are endued with the nature of seed and, therefore, yield products. These have citta for their property.

Among them, space has one quality; wind has two; light has three; water has four; and earth has, consisting of mobile and immobile objects, five qualities.

The earth is a goddess that is the source of all entities, both agreeable and disagreeable. Similarly, sound, touch, colour, taste and smell are the five qualities of the earth.

Smell always belongs to the earth and it is of various kinds. I shall state at length the numerous qualities of smell. Smell is agreeable or disagreeable, sweet, sour, pungent, diffusive and compact, oily and dry, and clear. Thus smell which belongs to the earth should be known as of ten kinds.

Sound, touch, colour and taste are likewise said to be the qualities of water. I shall now speak of the qualities of taste. Taste is of different kinds such as sweet, sour, pungent, bitter, astringent and saline. Taste is thus of six varieties.

Sound, touch and colour are the three qualities of light. Colour is of various kinds such as white, dark, red, blue, yellow and grey. Its qualities are being short, long, minute, gross, square and circular. The brahmanas, conversant with duties and truthful in speech, understand these qualities of colour.

Sound and touch are the two qualities of wind. Touch is of various kinds such as being rough, cold, hot, tender, clear, hard, oily, smooth, slippery, painful and soft.

Space has only one quality, and that is sound. Sound has several qualities such as shadaja, rishabha, gandhara, madhyama, panchama, nishada, dhaivata, etc. (These are the notes of the Hindu Gamut.) Besides these, there are agreeable and disagreeable sounds, compact and of many ingredients.

Sound which is born of space should thus be known to be of ten kinds. Space is the highest of the (five) elements. Egoism is above it. Above egoism is understanding. Above understanding is the soul. Above the soul is the Un-manifest. Above the Un-manifest is Purusa. One, who knows which is superior and inferior among existent creatures, who is conversant with the ordinances in respect of all acts, and who constitutes himself the soul of all creatures, attains to the Unfading Soul.

Brahma continued:

Since the mind is the ruler of these five elements, in the matter of controlling and bringing them forth, the mind, therefore, is the soul of the elements. The mind always presides over the great elements.

The understanding proclaims power, and is called the Kshetragna. The mind yokes the senses, as a charioteer yokes good steeds. The senses, the mind, and the understanding are always joined to the Kshetragna.

The individual soul, mounting the chariot to which big steeds are yoked and which has the understanding for the reins, drives about on all sides. With all the senses attached to it (for steeds), with the mind for the charioteer, and the understanding for the eternal reins, exists the great Brahman-car.

Verily, that man endued with learning and wisdom who always understands the Brahman-car in this way, is never overwhelmed by delusion in the midst of all entities.

This forest of the Brahman begins with the Un-manifest and ends with gross objects. It includes mobile and immobile entities, and receives light from the radiance of the sun and the moon, and is adorned with planets and constellations. It is decked, again, on all sides with nets of rivers and mountains. It is always embellished likewise by diverse kinds of waters. It is the means of subsistence for all creatures. It is, again, the goal of all living creatures.

In that forest, the Kshetrajna always moves about. Whatever entities that exist in this world, mobile and immobile, are the very first, (at the time of dissolution,) to be dissolved away. After this (are dissolved) those qualities which compose all entities. After the qualities (are dissolved), are dissolved the five elements. Such is the gradation of entities.

Gods, men, gandharvas, pisachas, asuras and rakshasas have all sprung from Nature, and not from actions, nor from a cause. The brahmanas, who are creators of the universe, are born here again and again. All that springs from them dissolves, when the time comes, in those very five great elements like billows in the ocean.

All the great elements are beyond those elements that compose the universe. He that is released from those five elements goes to the highest goal. The puissant Prajapati created all this by the mind only. After the same manner, Rishis attained to the status of deities by the aid of penance.

After the same manner, those who have achieved perfection, with mind concentrated in yoga, and who subsist on fruits and roots, perceive the triple world by penance. Medicines and herbs and all the diverse sciences are acquired by means of penance alone, for all acquisition has penance for its root.

Whatever is difficult of acquisition, difficult to learn, difficult to vanquish, difficult to pass through, are all achievable by penance, for penance is irresistible. One that drinks alcoholic liquors, one that slays a brhamana, one that steals, one that destroys a fetus, one that violates one's preceptor's bed, becomes cleansed of such sin by penance well performed.

Human beings, the Pitris, deities, (sacrificial) animals, beasts and birds, and all other creatures mobile and immobile, by always devoting themselves to penances, become crowned with success by penance alone. In like manner, the deities, endued with great powers of illusion, have attained to heaven.

Those who, without idleness, perform acts with expectations, being full of egoism, approach the presence of Prajapati. Those high-souled ones, however, who are devoid of mine-ness and freed from egoism through the pure contemplation of yoga, attain to the great and highest regions.

Those who best understand the self, having attained to yoga contemplation, and having their minds always cheerful, enter into the un-manifest accumulation of happiness. Those persons who are freed from the idea of mine-ness as also from egoism, and who are reborn after having attained to the fullness of yoga contemplation, enter (when they depart from such life) into the highest region reserved for the great, that is, the Un-manifest.

Born from that same un-manifest (principle) and attaining to the same once more, freed from the qualities of darkness and passion, and adhering only to the quality of goodness, one becomes released from every sin, and creates all things. Such a one should be known to be Kshetrajna in perfection.

He that knows the Kshetrajna knows the Veda. Attaining to pure knowledge from (restraining) the mind, the ascetic should sit self-restrained. One necessarily becomes that on which one's mind is set. This is an eternal mystery.

That, which has the un-manifest for its beginning and gross qualities for its end, has been said to have nescience for its indication. But do you understand that, whose nature is destitute of qualities?

Of two syllables is Mrityu (death); and of three syllables is the eternal Brahman. Mine-ness is death, and the reverse of mine-ness is eternal. Some men who are led by bad understanding applaud action. Those, however, that are numbered among the high-souled ancients, never applaud action. By action is a creature born with body which is made up of the sixteen. (The sixteen include five great elements, five organs of knowledge, five organs of action and mind.)

(True) knowledge swallows up Purusa (self, with consciousness of body). Even this is what is highly acceptable to eaters of amrita.

(The word Purusa, here, is used in the sense of individual self with consciousness of body. True knowledge destroys this body consciousness, for the man of knowledge identifies himself with the universe and thereby assimilates himself to the Brahman. By 'eaters of amrita' are meant they who never take any food without offering portions thereof to the deities, the Pitris and guests. Yogis of piety are implied by it.)

Therefore, those whose vision extends to the other end (of the ocean of life) have no attachment for actions. This Purusa, however, is full of knowledge and not full of action. (Purusa here implies the Jiva divested of the consciousness of the body.) He

dies not, who understands Him that is immortal, immutable, incomprehensible, eternal and indestructible that is the restrained Soul and that transcends all attachments.

He, who thus understands the Soul to which there is nothing prior, which is uncreated, immutable, unconquered and incomprehensible even to those that are eaters of nectar, certainly becomes himself incomprehensible and immortal through these means. Expelling all impressions and restraining the Soul in the Soul, he understands that auspicious Brahman, nothing greater than which exists.

Upon the understanding becoming clear, he succeeds in attaining to tranquility. The indication of tranquility is like what takes place in a dream. (In a dream, what is seen is all unreal. So, when tranquility has been attained, all the surroundings become unreal. It also means that when tranquility has been attained, the soul lives without attachment to the body and all external objects. Indeed, the soul then lives completely in itself even as it works in the course of a dream.)

This is the goal of these emancipated ones who are intent on knowledge. They behold all those movements which are born of successive developments. (They behold all worldly objects, past, present and future, which are, of course, due to development of previous causes.) This is the goal of those who are unattached to the world. This is the eternal usage. This is the acquisition of men of knowledge. This is the uncensored mode of conduct. This goal is capable of being attained by one that is alike to all creatures, that is, without attachment and expectations, and that looks equally on all things.

I have now declared everything to you, O foremost of regenerate Rishis! Do you act in this way forthwith, you will acquire success.

The preceptor continued:

Thus addressed by the preceptor Brahma, those high-souled sages acted accordingly, and then attained to many regions (of great felicity).

O blessed one! You also duly act according to the words of Brahma, as declared by me. You will then attain to success.

Vasudeva said:

Thus instructed in the principles of high religion by the preceptor, the pupil, O son of Kunti, did everything accordingly, and then attained to Emancipation. Having done all that he should have done, the pupil, O perpetuator of Kuru's race, attained to that seat repairing whither one does not have to grieve.

Arjuna said:

Who indeed was that Brahmana, O Krisna, and who, the pupil, O Janardana? Truly, if it is fit to be heard by me, you tell me, O Lord!

Vasudeva said:

I am the preceptor, O mighty-armed one, and know that the mind is my pupil. Through my affection for you, O Dhananjaya, I have related this mystery to you. If you have any love for me, O perpetuator of Kuru's race, you do, then, after having heard these instructions relating to the Soul, always act duly (according to them), O you of excellent vows!

Then, when this religion has been duly practised, O mower of foes, you will become freed from all your sins and attain to absolute Emancipation. Formerly, when the hour of the battle came, this very religion, O you of mighty-arms, was declared by me (to you). You, therefore, set your mind on it. And now, O chief of Bharata's race, it is long since I saw the lord, my sire. I wish to see him again, with your permission, O Phalguna!

Vaisampayana continued:

To Krisna who had said so, Dhananjaya said in reply:

We shall go today from this town to the city named after the elephant (Hastinapura). Meeting King Yudhishtira of virtuous soul there, and informing him (of your intention), you will then return to your own city.

Uddhava -Gita

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Introduction

The Uddhava-Gita is contained in chapters 6 to 29 of Skandha XI of Srimad Bhagavata which belongs to the class of Hindu religious literature known as the Puranas. The word 'Purana' in Sanskrit means 'a narrative of ancient times'.

The Puranic literature was initially a branch of Vedic learning and not a separate and diversified religious literature, though in later days it came to be identified, in some cases, with sectarian religious literature. While the Vedic revelation is considered fixed and unalterable, the Puranic literature is sought to embody, explain and popularize the philosophy of the Veda cast in a form and against a background that is its own. The Puranic literature is stated to have come into being from the 6th century B.C. to the 12th century A.D. embodying the devotional teachings of numerous cults and sages, and also information on a variety of scientific, occult, social and historical themes.

The Puranas are distinguished as Maha-puranas and Upa-puranas, both being eighteen in number. Srimad Bhagavata is considered one of the Maha-puranas. The topics that form the subject matter of a Maha-purana are primary creation, secondary creation, means of sustenance, protection including Incarnations, epoch of Manus, genealogy of royal and priestly lines from Bhahma down, dynastic history of distinguished emperors, dissolution, purpose of all creative activity and ultimate support or the substratum. Of the ten subjects, the last one, the Supreme Being Who is the final stay of all, and to Which man's devotion is to be unconditional and total, forms the one theme with which the Bhagavata is primarily concerned. All other subjects are subordinated to it. The object is to bring man into an adequate conception of His excellences and to generate in him unconditioned devotion to the Lord.

The Pauranikas say that their accounts are traditions based on the intuition, inspiration and revelation that have come to wise and realized sages. The immortal works of literature and art that have survived several centuries are always considered the works of intuition, inspiration and revelation. On the other hand, rationalists contend that the contents of the Puranas are either imaginary or absurd and do not have historical validity.

In this regard, it may be said that history, as such, has no spiritual value as events are only at the moment and are not in the next. Events become history to the extent they are remembered and become a tradition. Historical facts become spiritual reality to the extent they stimulate a myth and become a psychic verity. For example, the historicity of Christ as such gives no spiritual significance to Christianity, but its Christ Myth does. The events of the historical life of Christ as such have had no significance to posterity. But when it is accepted that he was the expression of the Second Person of the Trinity, that he was immaculately conceived, that he was the Redeemer of men, that his suffering on the Cross was in atonement for man's sins, that he rose from the dead, and that all who take refuge in him will be saved by his blood – then Christ transcends history and becomes a Myth and a Psychic Verity of universal

significance. The above cited statements are not open to historical proof; but they have been accepted by the psychic being of the community. As such they have a value far transcending the events of the so called history. The same is the case with the Incarnations in the Hindu tradition. Their validity lies in the fusion their traditions have achieved with the supra-historical foundations of life.

It is not always necessary that the stimulations resulting in a Myth should occur in the dimensions of space and time. They can be purely ideal, too. An ideal manifestation in the psychic life of man can be based on the Cosmic Mind from whom events of significance can take place in the external world. It is sheer ignorance if it is considered that what is external and tangible to the senses alone is real, and what is mental or ideal is always illusory or imaginary. A sensual impact is of a much inferior order to an ideal impact of an enduring and powerful nature. So Myths that become spiritual verities need not necessarily have any historical content. They may or may not have such content. Even if they have, of what use are they that have led to these stimulations, as they are dead and gone? Only ideas as powerful psychic verities remain. In fact, even a historical personality, as a series of events, must cease to be as such, and take shape as a Myth before he becomes a spiritual verity. Also, ideal stimulations of the Cosmic Mind without any reference to history can become psychic verities of even greater potency. Such are the deities worshipped by the Hindus like Vishnu, Siva, Sakti, etc. They never had location in earthly space and time except as images used in worship. They are the manifestations of the Supreme Being as Spiritual Verities before which what we call material objects are mere shadows.

The Puranas are not at all to be read as history and geography, nor are they to be regarded as fiction. They belong to an order different from both history and fiction. They are the up-throw of a people's mind struggling to express their quest for a meaning for life and their findings in this respect. They represent the more enduring and enriched reactions of the psyche of a race to the fleeting events of space and time. It is in their cumulative spiritual effect and not in the validity of their individual statements that we should seek the values they embody. They attempt to integrate philosophy, history and traditions in a way to stimulating in man a keen sense of an omniscient, omnipotent and all-loving spiritual Reality that can be communed with, prayed to and visualized in various forms of spiritual glory. God in various forms and divine personages has become concrete to the Hindu psyche. In so far as they are facts of memory in the minds of men, they fulfill the role of history. In so far as the stimulations they generate are of spiritual dimensions, they are linked with Eternal Verities that transcend history.

The Brihadaranyaka Upanisad states that the Brahman has two aspects – murta (with form) and amurta (formless). The Puranas accept both the aspects, but concentrated particularly on the murta aspect as it is more significant for a devotee. The amurta aspect is the Non-dual Absolute and the murta aspect is the Sakti or the manifesting power of the amurta aspect in the absence of which the amurta aspect is indistinguishable from sunya. In the same way, if the murta aspect alone is accepted without the amurta aspect with the Infinite and the Absolute Being as its complement,

the murta aspect will only become a limited aspect indistinguishable from an exalted man. So the Puranas in general and Bhagavata in particular accept the Supreme Being as both Murta and Amurta with a greater stress on the murta aspect and call Him the Bhagawan. The Bhagawan here is Param-purusa, the Supreme Person, but not an individual. He has an Archetytal Form which is a potential multi-form that can take any form in which He is invoked. An anthropomorphic garb is put on Him, as man could think of Him only in terms of the highest that he could conceive of and that He is, in himself, in an idealized state of existence. So the Puranas depict the divine majesty of the Bhagawan through symbolic and supra-human descriptions that account for many unearthly and unusual features. When the details of these descriptions are analyzed in isolation, they look queer. But when taken together as a whole, with a receptivity born of devotion, they make a tremendous impact of divine consciousness on the mind of man. No literature in the world has succeeded in making God a reality to man by such vivid and realistic descriptions as the Puranas have done.

The questions of three-dimensional factuality, dates and location stated in the Puranas are irrelevant matters. The true question is whether the thought-forms they generate have sufficiently soaked into the psychic substratum of the worshippers and remain potent enough to stimulate their whole being.

Srimad Bhagavata is also known as Vishnu Bhagavata. Its excellences are of such a transcending nature that it has practically eliminated all the other Puranas from the minds of men. It is the one book that is widely studied by all devotees and commented upon by scholars of all schools of thought. Though it is a Vaishnava-related Purana, and therefore sectarian in a way, its sectarianism is not one of narrowness and exclusion, but only its way of eliciting the undivided attention and devotion of men to the Deity in focus. In the sublimity, fervour and comprehensiveness of the pattern of devotion it inculcates, in the dignity, elevation and terseness of its Sanskrit diction, in the lyrical beauty and wealth of its imagery, Srimad Bhagavata is unparalleled among the Puranas.

The purpose of the Bhagavata Purana is to produce a whole-hearted acceptance of the Vishnu concept and evoke devotional responses of the highest order from the mind of man. The synthesizing principle for the Bhagavata is bhakti or devotion of the highest order considered the fifth value of life. Bhakti is not merely the purifying agency, a means for a higher end; but it is the highest end itself, transcending liberation.

According to Prof. Hazra, the present text of the Bhagavata must have taken shape in the early half of the 6th century A.D.

The Uddhava-Gita is in the nature of a dialogue between Bhagawan Sri Krishna and His ardent devotee Uddhava, and is incorporated in the Bhagavata for presentation of the philosophy of the Vedanta in a simple and easily understandable way. The Gita depicts the majesty and greatness of Bhagawan. Bhagawan is the term specifically used to indicate that God is the Supreme Person but not an individual, that He is the

Absolute Being but is yet responsive of worship and prayers, that He can be communed with as one's master, father, mother, spouse, friend or any other relation one prefers.

Bhagawan is described as one having bhaga or majesty. The bhaga or majesty is described as six-fold – omnipotence, virtue, glory, beauty, omniscience and non-affectedness. The full manifestation of all these six excellences is called bhaga. He who is distinguished by these excellences is the Bhagawan. For the Vaishnava Puranas – and the Bhagavata is one such – Mahavishnu, including all His emanations and incarnations, is the Bhagawan. Though He is the Absolute, He has an Archetypal Form, the source of all forms. The Bhagavata presents the form of the Lord which a devotee is to mediate upon. The Bhagavata also presents the all-inclusive, Absolute Being of the Lord as He presents Himself to the realized sages.

Thus the Lord manifests Himself for worship and meditation as the four Emanations (Vyuhās) – Vasudeva, Sankarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, and corresponding in consciousness to turiya (samadhi), prajna (deep-sleep), taijasa (dream-state) and visva (waking-state). Mahavishnu in His four-fold aspect with His physical features (anga), accessories (upanga), decorations (akalpa) and weapons (ayudha) presents Himself to be worshipped and meditated upon. To the realized sages, it is the same Mahavishnu that manifests Himself as the world of Becoming, sustains and withdraws it into Himself by virtue of His Divine Power – Maya, Himself remaining unchanged and unaffected in the process – the basic tenet of Monism.

The Gitas that find place in Bhagavata such as the Uddhava-Gita, the Rudra-Gita, the Bhikshu-Gita, the Sruti-Gita, the Hamsa-Gita propound Monism as the essence of their philosophy.

1. Krishna on the Eve of His Ascension

Brahma, accompanied by his offspring like Sanaka, and the Prajapatis and celestials, came to Dwaraka one day. Bhava – Sri Parmeshwara, who is aware of the past and the future, also came to Dwaraka with his following of demi-gods.

Prompted by their keen desire to behold Krishna of the world-enchanting form, whose holiness had reverberated the worlds over, there came to Dwaraka a host of other celestials, too, including the Maruts, Indra with the other sons of Aditi, the eight Vasus, Aswini-Devas, Ribhus, Angirasas, Rudras, Viswe-Devas, Saadhyas, Gandharvas, Apsaras, Nagas, Siddhas, Charanas, Guhyakas, Rishis, Pitris, Vidyadharas and Kinnaras.

In the city of Dwaraka, resplendent with riches and prosperity, they saw the wondrous form of Krishna and looked at him for long with un-winking eyes, un-satiated.

After almost covering the noblest one of Yadu's lineage with heaps of garlands made of celestial flowers, they began to extol Krishna, the Lord of all worlds, in praise.

'Oh Lord! The devotees seeking liberation from the bondage of karma can only meditate with devotion on Thy lotus feet in their hearts. But we have, in reality, been allowed to adore them with our senses, vital forces, mind, intellect and words.

Oh unconquerable Lord! Remaining as the inner-controller of Thy Maya with its three gunas, Thou art creating, preserving and dissolving in Thyself this universe of unimaginable vastness and mystery. Still Thou art not in the least bound by these works, because Thou art ever established in Thy inherent bliss, uncorrupted by passions.

Oh praise-worthy one and the Lord of all! Men of impure mind striving through meditation, learning, charity, austerity and rituals fail to attain the purity of mind attained by yogis who ever listen to Thy sportive deeds and excellences.

Thy feet are meditated upon in ecstatic love by contemplatives for attainment of salvation; Thy feet are worshipped by devotees as those of one or the other of the four Spirits (vyuhas) as Vasudeva, Sankarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha for attainment of equality with Thee in divine glory; Thy feet are adored by the seekers after Truth at the three sandhyas. May those very feet become the fiery force for annihilation of all our sins?

Thy feet are contemplated upon by sages while performing Vedic rites; Thy feet are meditated upon by yogis seeking psychic powers such as asta-siddhis; Thy feet are worshipped by devotees in pure love, seeking no worldly gains. May those very feet become the fiery force for annihilation of all our sins?

Just as a wife gets annoyed with another wife of her husband occupying her place, Sri Devi is much concerned to see that her seat, Thy chest, is occupied by the garland of wild flowers offered by Thy devotees, illumining Thy whole form. But unconcerned by Thy consort's attitude, Thou continue to retain the floral garlands of Thy devotees and receive more of them joyfully. May Thy feet decorated with the floral wreaths become the fiery force for annihilation of all our sins?

Oh worshipful Lord of unlimited powers! May our sins be effaced and ourselves purified by Thy feet which covered all the worlds in three strides – the feet that signify victory of good over evil.

May our welfare be looked after by the adorable feet of Thine, the Supreme Being whose potencies control the destinies of all the mutually conflicting embodied beings from Brahma downward, even as cattle breeders control cattle by their nose-string?

Thou art the material cause for all the worlds to rise, remain in manifestation and then dissolve. The Veda speaks of Thee as the instrumental cause for creation of the perceived universe. Thou art the wheel of Time that moves with incredible speed driving all to their annihilation. Thou art verily the Supreme Being, the eternal, all-pervasive and infinite consciousness.

The Purusa – the Cosmic Being deriving His power from Thee bears, in association with Yogamaya, the Mahatattva, which is the universe in embryo. With continuing association with Maya, the Purusa projects the universe, the cosmic shell (egg), brilliant and covered with a shelter of sheaths.

Oh Hrishikesa! Lord of all senses! All the experiences, joyful and otherwise, that the play of Maya pours on Thee through sense contacts fail to involve and bind Thee. Even when Thou art in the enjoyment of these objects, they do not affect Thee in the least, whereas others, even while keeping themselves aloof from them, live in constant dread of their influence. Thou art, therefore, the master of the whole universe, moving and unmoving.

No wonder, then, that all Thy sixteen thousand and more wives could not produce even the least excitement in Thy mind by their charming glances and ravishing smiles, conveying their mystic love for you.

The two streams flowing from Thee – the hymns and songs eulogizing Thy divine sportive deeds and the river Ganges carrying the water that has washed Thy feet – have the power to destroy the sins of the whole world. The sages following the commandments of the Veda are immersed in these streams by way of contemplating the Vedic hymns, and bathing in the holy waters of the Ganges.

Sri Suka said:

Brahma, having thus extolled Govinda, stationing himself in the sky after making due prostrations, along with Parameshwara and the celestials, addressed the Lord as follows.

Brahma said:

Oh Lord! In times gone by, we came to Thee praying that the Earth-deity be relieved of her burden of evil men. Oh Soul of the worlds! Thou hast truly accomplished this.

Thou hast established dharma in the minds of men who venerate Truth. Thou hast spread Thy sanctifying fame all the worlds over. Born in the lineage of Yadu, with a form of un-paralled beauty, Thou hast engaged in various sportive actions for the good of the world.

Oh Lord! By hearing and singing about Thy divine and sportive actions, men, in the age of Kali, would get purified and easily overcome the darkness of ignorance.

Oh Lord! Thou Supreme Being! It is now one hundred and twenty five years since Thou incarnated in the clan of the Yadus.

Oh Thou, the support of the universe! Thou hast now accomplished all that has been sought by Devas, and there is nothing more for Thee to accomplish. By the curse of the holy men, even the clan of the Yadus is on the verge of extinction.

So, if Thou thinkest it fit, may Thou be pleased to come back to Thy transcendental abode? Protect us, Thy servants, appointed as guardians of the world.

Sri Bhagawan said:

Bhagawan is described as one having bhaga or majesty. The bhaga or majesty is described as six-fold – omnipotence, virtue, glory, beauty, omniscience and non-affectedness. The full manifestation of all these six excellences is called bhaga. He who is distinguished by these excellences is the Bhagawan. For the Vaishnava Puranas – and the Bhagavata is one such – Mahavishnu, including all His emanations and incarnations, is the Bhagawan.

Oh Brahma! Leader of the celestials! I have already decided upon the course you have suggested. I have fulfilled all your wants, and I have lightened the burden of the earth.

The Yadava clan is now proud and domineering because of its plentiful wealth supported by strength and courage. The Yadus would have overrun the whole world, had I not been holding them within bounds, as the shore halts the advance of the sea.

If I go away leaving behind this powerful and over-bearing clan of Yadavas, they will ruin the society by their unrestrained excesses.

Their destruction has already commenced with the curse pronounced on them by the sages. After their annihilation, I shall go to your abode of Satyaloka on my way to Vaikuntha – my own abode.

Sri Suka said:

Thus told by Krishna, the Lord of the universe, Brahma and the celestials prostrated before Him and departed to their respective abodes.

Afterwards, portents foreboding evil began to appear in Dwaraka and, to the elders of the Yadava clan who went to him to report about this, the Lord said thus.

Sri Bhagawan said:

Alas! These evil portents are appearing everywhere here. And we have the curse of the sages hanging over us, threateningly.

Oh respected sirs! If we love our lives, we shall not stay here any longer. We shall immediately go to the holy place of Prabhasa.

It was by bathing there that the moon, cursed by Daksha Prajapati to be affected by phthisis, got over the effects of the curse, and had all the digits restored.

We shall bathe in those waters, offer libations (tarpana) to the manes and the divinities, feed brahmanas sumptuously and give gifts liberally to worthy men. With these offerings as our life boat, we shall cross the ocean of this misfortune.

Sri Suka said:

Oh King! Directed by the Lord in this way, the Yadavas decided to leave for Prabhasa, and got ready their chariots harnessing horses to them.

Witnessing all the terrifying portents and listening to the word of the Lord, Uddhava, his constant attendant and follower, approached Krishna in solitude and spoke to him with joined hands, after making due prostrations.

Uddhava said:

Oh Thou Lord of all divinities! Thou master of yoga whose holy name is a blessing to those who hear it! Thou art getting ready to quit this world after bringing about the annihilation of this clan of the Yadavas. Though capable of warding off the curse of the holy men, Thou didst nothing to neutralize it.

Oh Kesava! My Lord! To remain even a moment without Thee is impossible for me. Therefore, deign to take me also to Thy realm with Thee.

Oh Krishna! Hearing about Thy holy and auspicious deeds – veritable ambrosia for the ear, even common people have begun to feel everything else as insipid.

How can then we, Thy devotees, bear separation from Thee whom we have been serving our whole life – while sitting and lying, while walking and standing, while eating and playing?

We, Thy servants, are sure to get over Thy Maya through Thy service, putting on ourselves the remnants of what Thou hast used of sandal-paste, flower-garlands, clothes, decorations, and eating the remnants of the food of which Thou hast partaken.

There are other ascetics who have nothing more than the clothes they wear, ever engaged in spiritual disciplines and practising unbroken continence. These pure, serene and all-renouncing sages attain to Thy realm - the un-decaying Brahman.

Oh Thou, the greatest of yogis! As far as we, wandering on the path of karma (work), are concerned, we shall cross the impenetrable darkness of ignorance by absorption in conversations with fellow devotees on Thy deeds and excellences.

We shall easily get over the impenetrable darkness of ignorance remembering and extolling Thy ways in human embodiment – Thy deeds, teachings, Thy world-enchanting gait, etc.

Sri Suka said:

Oh King! Being appealed to, this way, the worshipful Lord, the son of Devaki, spoke as follows to his dear servant and whole-hearted devotee Uddhava.

2. Krishna's Instruction

Avadhuta's Sermon on His Teachers – I

Sri Bhagawan said:

What you have said about my intention to depart from this world to my abode is, indeed, true. Brahma, Parameswara and other divinities, too, are desirous of this.

I have accomplished all the purposes of Devas for which, at the request of Brahma, I incarnated in part (with Balarama as the other part).

This clan of the Yadavas, doomed by the curse of the holy men, will perish through mutual strife among its members. And this city of Dwaraka will be inundated by the sea on the seventh day from now.

On My ascension to My abode, this world, denuded of its good fortune, will be subject to the sway of Kali, the spirit of the evil age.

After I have left it, do not stay in this land. For, in the age of Kali that is to follow, men will all be unrighteous in their outlook.

Abandoning all attachment to your own people and relatives, take refuge in Me and wander about the world seeing My Presence in everything.

Know this world, grasped by the mind, speech, sight, sound and other senses to be unsubstantial and transitory, like a mental projection in a magic show.

For the man of uncontrolled mind, there is the erroneous perception of multiplicity; a person with such perception is subject to the notion of good and evil. And for one with that notion arises the distinction among ordinary action, inaction and prohibited action.

Therefore, with the mind and the senses controlled, you must see the world in the Atman and the all-pervading Atman in Me, the Supreme Lord.

One who is endowed with the knowledge of the scriptures and enlightened, who sees the Atman in everything and is full of the joy of the Spirit, meets with no obstruction from any source.

Even when one has transcended the distinction between the harmful and the favourable, one avoids the harmful not because of the compulsion of scriptural injunction; nor does one promote the favourable because it is advantageous. One's reactions are spontaneous and un-motivated, like those of an infant.

Illumined, peaceful and established in universal benevolence, one sees the Lord as the essence of the world, or recognizes the whole of the manifested existence as the Divine Soul, and becomes free from the travails of samsara.

Samsara is a Sanskrit word meaning ‘to wander or pass through a series of states or conditions’. It is the beginning-less cycle of birth, death and rebirth, a process impelled by karma. Taken together, samsara and karma provide a causal explanation of human differences and an ethical theory of moral retribution.

The word samsara is also applied to phenomenal existence in general to indicate its transient and cyclical nature. Samsara is thus the conditioned and ever-changing universe as contrasted to an unconditioned, eternal and transcendent state of the Supreme Self.

Samsara is generally characterized by suffering and sorrow as well as impermanence. The cause of perpetual rebirth is found usually in desire based on ego-sense for individual existence, and in ignorance of the true nature of the Reality.

As such, the supreme goal of human endeavour is considered as liberation from samsara, that is, as release from bondage to the cycle of birth, death and rebirth, nullifying the impressions (samskaras) of karma accumulated thus far.

Sri Suka said:

Being thus addressed by the worshipful Lord, Uddhava, the great devotee and aspirant of the knowledge of Truth, said to Achyuta, with due prostrations.

Uddhava said:

Oh Thou bestower of the fruits of yoga! Oh Thou the wealth of yogis! Oh Thou who revealeth Thyself through yoga! Oh Thou the originator of yoga! Thou hast, for my spiritual advancement, instructed me to abandon all attachments through renunciation (sanyasa).

Oh all-powerful One! The abandonment of all objects of desire is very difficult for those who are in the midst of enjoyment. I think it is well-nigh impossible for those who have no devotion to Thee, the soul of all.

The ignorant fool that I am, Maya has bound me with the feeling that I am the body, and all those connected with it are mine. Oh worshipful Lord! Instruct me, Thy servant, how I can achieve that abandonment of all attachments commended by Thee.

There are none except Thee even among the divinities who are capable of instructing me about that Atman which is the self-effulgent and self-conscious Truth. For, as far as this subject is concerned, all embodied beings including Brahma are

confounded owing to Thy Maya which makes them feel that what is external alone is true.

Therefore, buffeted by the difficulties of worldly life and thereby filled with disgust for the same, I seek refuge in Thee, Narayana, the friend of the Jiva – Thou who art pure, infinite, all-knowing and the Lord of all, and art established in the eternal Vaikuntha.

Sri Bhagawan said:

Generally speaking, persons endowed with the capacity to investigate the truth of things, lift themselves from the evils of instinctive life by their own discriminative power. They need no teacher to guide them in this regard.

While even all lower creatures are to some extent capable of looking after their own welfare, man, who is endowed with intelligence and discriminative power, can surely be his own teacher. For, by observation and inference, he is able to understand what contributes to his ultimate good.

When a Jiva obtains a human birth, and treads on the path of knowledge and devotion, it clearly understands Me, the Supreme Spirit endowed with all powers.

Many are the types of bodies created – some with one, two, three or four legs, some with many more legs, and some with no leg at all. Of all these, the human body is the dearest to Me.

Unable to find Me, the Pure Spirit, by sense perception, earnest spiritual aspirants seek Me in this body through presumption and inference. The presumption is that the intellect (buddhi) and the other instruments functioning in the creation of knowledge are in themselves lifeless. The existence of consciousness in them can be explained only by accepting a consciousness behind them. The inference is that the intellect (buddhi) and the senses are in the nature of instruments. They must be functioning for the purpose of an intelligent agent.

In illustration of this, great men cite an ancient anecdote in the form of a conversation between Dattatreya, the Avadhuta of blazing spiritual power and King Yadu.

King Yadu, a knower of dharma, once met this Avadhuta wandering everywhere fearlessly as he chose. He was young, and bore the signs of the highest enlightenment.

Kind Yadu said:

Oh holy one! Though possessed of great wisdom, you are found merely roaming about the world like a young boy. How then could you, who do not do any work, cultivate the outlook which requires great training?

Men are found to engage themselves in the observance of duties, and in pursuit of wealth, pleasures and moral values. In all this activity, they are motivated by their desire for longevity, fame and prosperity.

You are strong, learned, capable, handsome and eloquent. But you show no desire for anything, nor do you care to do any work. You merely wander about sometimes like a senseless man, sometimes as one inebriated, and sometimes like one possessed.

While all men are being burnt in the fire of sexual craving and greed, you remain unaffected like an elephant that has plunged into the waters of the Ganges.

Oh holy one! Kindly tell me what it is that fills your heart always with joy, though you are without any object of sense enjoyment and are without any companion, and alone.

Sri Bhagawan said:

Being thus questioned, after due prostrations and in all humility, by King Yadu who was highly intelligent and devoted to holy men, the Avadhuta told him as follows.

The Avadhuta said:

Oh King! I have several gurus whom I have mentally accepted as such. Learning many lessons from them, I have become free from desires and bondage, and am roaming about the earth at large. Listen about those gurus.

There are twenty four gurus who I have had access to. From their ways and characteristics, I have learnt the lessons. These twenty four are: the earth, air, sky, water, fire, sun, moon, Kapota (dove), python, ocean, river, moth, honey-bee, elephant, honey-gatherer, deer-fish, Pingala the courtesan, Kurara (osprey), maiden, arrow-smith, snake, spider and wasp.

Oh grandson of Nahusha! Listen now which guru taught me what and how.

A man of self-control should not move away from his chosen path even when attacked by beings under the sway of their primordial tendencies, knowing it to be due to their own destiny (prarabdha). This lesson I learnt from the earth.

Further, a spiritual aspirant should learn from the mountains on the earth and the trees on them to strive selflessly for the good of others, and find the meaning of his existence in such striving. Becoming a disciple of trees, he should live for others.

The sage should be satisfied with as much of food as is required to keep him alive, his knowledge bright, and the faculties of his mind and senses intact. He should not crave for tasty food.

Even if a yogi happens to be in contact with sense-objects of various descriptions, he should remain like air, untouched by the good and the bad effects of such contacts.

A yogi, who is established in the Atman (Consciousness), even if he is embodied in a material body and performs various functions appropriate to such body, is never affected by the sense-objects, as air is not affected by the odour it carries.

Identifying himself with the Brahman, the sage should realize that, like the sky, the Self (the Atman) is un-circumscribed and unaffected by the body, because the Self indwells all beings moving and unmoving, and because IT is an invariable presence everywhere in all beings.

Just as the clouds wafted by the wind do not affect the sky, so the Atman is not tainted by abidance in the body which is a combination of the various elements like fire, water and earth into which the gunas of Prakrti evolve when stirred into activity by Time.

Pure, holy, naturally loving and sweet, the sage exercises a sanctifying influence on men in which respect he resembles the holy waters of the Ganges which purify men by sight, contact and praise.

Impressive and replenished by the fire of penance (tapas), inviolable in his greatness, having no possessions – not even a bowl but only his stomach as a receptacle for food – eating anything and everything offered, the sage, who is ever in communion with the Brahman, remains unpolluted like the all-consuming fire.

Sometimes hiding his identity, sometimes revealing it as worthy of worship by those desiring their own welfare, the sage consumes the food offered by house-holders in order to burn their past and future sins, as fire does with all objects put into it.

This world, which is of the nature of cause and effect, has been created by the all-powerful Lord by His power Maya. He has entered into it, and is manifesting Himself in different forms through the adjuncts of the body-mind, just as fire does residing in the fuel.

The changes that Time, the inscrutable, brings on an individual from the time of conception to the events at the cremation ground, affect only the body and not the

atman, just as the waxing and the waning of the moon are only of its digits and not of the moon itself.

The extraordinary speed of Time is, every moment, affecting the birth and death of the bodies that the Atman assumes, while the changes involved are not noticed, just like the emergence and subsidence of tongues of flame in a raging fire.

Just as the sun absorbs water with its rays and releases it in proper time as rain, so a yogi accepts objects of the senses with the senses, not for his own enjoyment, but to release them to the needy at proper time.

When the Atman abides in Itself, no difference is experienced; when IT abides in adjuncts, gross-minded people think IT as many. It is just like the one sun reflected in different adjuncts like pots of water, looked upon as many and diverse.

One should not have intense love for or attachment to anyone. Otherwise one will be subjected to excruciating suffering like the afflicted bird kapota of the story.

On the branch of a tree in a forest, a kapota had built its nest and had been staying in it with its consort for sometime.

Following the ways of householders, the kapota couple was bound together by intense love, their eyes and limbs, and thought closely united.

Ever inseparable in lying, sitting, moving about, standing, playing and eating, they merrily spent their time in sporting amidst the trees, without the least suspicion of any danger overtaking them.

Catering to the pleasures of and loved by its consort, the female bird had all its needs fulfilled, even under difficult circumstances, by the male kapota who, for want of self-control, was a slave to the female kapota.

When the time came for that faithful female bird to lay eggs for the first time, it did so in its nest in the presence of its consort.

In due time, thanks to the working of the mysterious power of Sri Hari, lovely fledglings with charming limbs and feathers came out of those eggs.

The fond parent birds brought them up with proper care, lost in love on hearing their chirpings and in distinct twitterings.

Those parent birds derived the highest delight to see their fluttering soft wings, their sweet sound, their immature movements, and their eager advance to meet them when they returned to the nest.

. Infatuated by the Lord's Maya, and bound together by strong bonds of love, they anxiously nourished their offspring.

One day they had gone out into the forest to collect food for their fledglings, and were away for a long time from their nest.

A fowler who was moving about in the forest happened to see these infant birds fluttering about their nest. He thereupon cast his net and caught them in it.

Thereafter, the kapota couple, ever enthusiastic about nourishing the offspring, returned to their nest with food for feeding the infant birds.

Seeing its young offspring crying, entangled in the fowler's net, the female bird rushed to them, screeching in great distress.

Bound by cords of love by the Lord's Yogamaya, the sight of her endangered offspring made the female bird doubly desperate with sorrow. Forgetful of the danger posed by the net and in spite of seeing its offspring's condition, it rushed in only to be entangled in the net.

Seeing the perilous condition of its consort whom the male bird loved as much as itself, and of its offspring who were dearer to it than life, the male bird began to bemoan its fate.

It said: 'Alas! Look at the great danger that my luckless, unfortunate self is in. I am not yet satisfied with the pleasures of life, nor have I gained the means for spiritual enlightenment in life henceforth. And now my home which is the means to attain virtue, wealth and pleasure is threatened with total destruction.

When my consort, so well-matched, obedient and faithful, has chosen to leave me alone in an empty home in order to go to heaven with its dear offspring, why should I live, alone and grief-stricken, in the empty nest devoid of my consort and offspring?'

Seeing them all entangled in the meshes of the nest and struggling in the throes of death, that male bird, senseless and grief-stricken, threw itself also into the net.

Having thus got all the birds, the kapota couple and the fledglings, the cruel fowler went home with them, fully satisfied.

Thus, a householder, whose senses are uncontrolled and mind restless, who is always engaged in the concerns of the family, runs the risk of perishing with the whole family like the kapota couple and its fledglings.

A person who, having attained human birth in which the doors of the mansion of salvation (mukti) lie open to him, still continues to be wholly attached to his home

and worldly concerns like the birds mentioned above, is looked upon by great men as one who falls down into a bottomless abyss, after attaining to a great height.

3. Krishna's Instruction

Avadhuta's Sermon on His Teachers - II

The Avadhuta said:

Just as the heaven affords sensuous pleasures to creatures, so does the hell with suffering predominating. So a wise man should not hanker after sense enjoyment.

Whatever food comes to one by chance, whether it is tasty or not, adequate or inadequate, one should partake of it like a python without making any effort to obtain it.

If the seeker fails to get any food sometimes, he should not make an effort for it. Considering it as his prarabdha (destiny), he should lie quietly like a python making no search for it.

Though endowed with all powers of the senses, mind and body, the seeker should not engage in action, but lie quiet in his place, with his mind awake and vigilant in respect of his ultimate goal in life.

The muni (sage) should be like the ocean, still, calm but deep and profound, unfathomable, inviolable, boundless and unperturbed.

The sage whose mind is absorbed in the contemplation of Narayana is neither exhilarated by the plentiful supply of the objects of enjoyment, nor dejected in their absence, just like the ocean that keeps in its bounds, neither overflowing nor shrinking, irrespective of whether water flows in or evaporates.

At the sight of woman, the Lord's instrument of delusion, the man of uncontrolled senses, attracted by her charms, falls into the blinding darkness of ignorance, just as the moth attracted by the glow of fire falls into it and perishes.

Woman, gold, ornaments, clothes, etc, the creations of Maya offer attraction to man as objects of enjoyment. Their infatuation deprives him of his discriminative vision and generates in him intense attachment to them. He thus becomes a victim to the sense objects as moths to fire, and perishes.

Following the way of the honey-gathering bee, the sage may collect small quantities of food from house to house, just enough for the upkeep of his body, without being a burden on the house-holders.

An intelligent man seeks the essential teachings of all scriptural texts of varying importance, just as a honey-bee sucks the essence only of flowers.

An ascetic should not store food secured as holy alms for the evening or for the next day. His palm should be his receiving plate and his stomach the preserving vessel. He should not accumulate food like the bee.

A mendicant should not store anything for the morrow. For, if he accumulates, he is likely to perish like the bee with the accumulated belonging.

An ascetic should not allow even his feet to be touched by a young woman. He should not allow even a wooden image of a woman to touch his feet. By such contact, he will get bound, as a male-elephant is entrapped through physical contact with a female-elephant.

A wise man should not go for intimacy with a woman as she may turn out to be the cause of his death at the hands of a more powerful rival, just as in the case of an elephant competing with another for a female.

The wealth accumulated by a miser without himself enjoying it or making charitable gifts of it is knocked away by someone who knows about it, just as the honey gathered by bees is taken away by the honey-collector.

The first portion of what a house-holder cooks with things procured with great difficulty for his household purposes is to be consumed by ascetics, just as the honey gathered by bees is first consumed by the honey-gatherer. For it is the duty of the house-holder to give the best portion of what he cooks as offering (bhiksha) to ascetics. An ascetic need not, therefore, worry about his food.

A forest-dwelling ascetic or a sannyasin should not listen to vulgar music, lest he should thereby get entangled. This he should learn from the example of the deer which is captured through the hunter's imitative cry of the doe.

The Rishi Rishyasringa, the son of Mrigi, was enslaved by women and became a mere toy in their hands, because of witnessing their sensuous dances and listening to their songs and instrumental music.

Just as fish perish by trying to swallow the angler's baited hook, so do men perish through the attraction of the palate which causes intense excitement to the mind.

By abstinence, wise men conquer all the senses except the palate whose craving becomes only intensified by such abstinence.

Even if a person has gained mastery over all the other senses, he cannot be considered a conqueror of the senses until he has subdued the palate. If the palate is conquered, all the other senses are as good as conquered.

Oh Prince! Once there lived a well-known courtesan named Pingala in the city of Videha. I learnt a great lesson from her. Listen.

Once dressed in all her finery, this libertine of a woman stationed herself outside the door, ready to receive any customer who wanted her service in privacy.

. Viewing the passers-by, this greedy woman thought that some among them, beautiful and capable of paying handsomely, would come seeking her.

Potential clients came and went away, as that woman, whose livelihood came from purveying sex, always expected the arrival of some man still more wealthy and capable of making her a still more handsome payment. Motivated by greed, she used to wait outside, go in, and come out, again and again, thus foregoing sleep till midnight.

To her, thus despondent and downcast with unfulfilled greed, a great feeling of revulsion against worldliness came suddenly, making her thoughtful, and full of peace.

Hear from me the song that Pingala sang at the dawn of her renunciation, showing how dispassion proves to be a sword that cuts the bonds of desire in man.

Oh King! Just as one without illumination will not abandon the feelings of ‘I’ and ‘mine’, so also a man without dispassion will not give up, nay even desire to give up, the feeling that he is the body and nothing but the body.

Pingala said:

‘Alas! See the enormity of ignorance of a woman of uncontrolled mind like myself! Under its promptings, I, the stupid woman that I am, have been seeking satisfaction of my passions through unworthy creatures looked upon as lovers.

Lo! Giving up the delighting and bounteous Lover seated closest to me in the heart, I, an ignorant woman, have been running after petty creatures that cannot fulfill my wants, but only purvey sorrow, fear, worry and delusion.

Alas! Vain and vile has been my struggle in life to gain a livelihood through prostitution – the most detestable way of life in which, by selling my body to lustful, miserly and despicable males, I hoped to gain wealth and pleasure.

Who else but a fool like me would approach as a lover, this hutment of a male body, having a bony ridgepole of a spine, rafters of ribs and pillars of limbs; roofed with a mantle of skin, hair and nails, rent with nine perpetually leaking bodily orifices, and filled with excreta, urine and other dirty things!

In this holy city of the Videhas, I, an impure woman, am the only fool who has been after objects of love other than the Supreme Lord Achyuta who gives Himself over to those who are devoted to Him.

The Supreme Being Achyuta is the friend, the inner-most essence, and the dearest of the dear of all beings. I shall dedicate my body, mind and soul to Him, and just like His consort Rama, seek delight in Him.

The delights of sex-life, as well as the men and Devas through whom these satisfactions are derived, are subject to origin and decay, and are at the mercy of hustling Time. What pleasures or protection have such beings conferred on women who satisfy their lust?

By virtue of some good and pious work done in the past, the Lord Vishnu has now been gracious to me. Otherwise how can I, who have been greedy and vicious, now attain this spirit of non-attachment and renunciation which has conferred on me great joy!

If I were really an unfortunate woman devoid of the Lord's grace, this misfortune of not getting handsome remuneration would not have befallen me, generating renunciation. It is through renunciation that man breaks the bonds of home, wealth, relatives, etc and attains to supreme peace.

Accepting the great blessing He has conferred on me, I give up here and now all my hankering after sense-pleasures and take refuge in Him, the Lord of all.

Satisfied with whatever I have and having unfailing faith in the Lord, I shall delight in the company of this Lover who is none other than the Atman.

Who else, except the Supreme Lord Mahavishnu, can lift up and save the Jiva that has fallen into the deep pit of transmigratory existence with its vision of discrimination blinded by sense-objects, and caught in the jaws of the serpent of Time?

One should realize that this whole universe is in the jaws of the serpent of Time. When, with this awareness, one becomes alert of one's real situation in life, one develops renunciation. Then one's own higher-self, the Paramatman becomes one's saviour.

The Avadhuta said:

Resolving like this, Pingala gave up her perverse desire to attract customer-lovers, and went to sleep with a peaceful mind.

Desire is the source of the most poignant of sorrows, and desireless-ness of the most intense delight. Here is the example of Pingala as to how, on giving up her desire for customer-lovers, she could sleep happily.

4. Krishna's Instruction

Avadhuta's Sermon on His Teachers – III

The Avadhuta continued:

The more a sense-object is considered desirable and sought after by men, the more is it a source of sorrow and suffering for them. A man who is aware of this and owns nothing including his body and his sense of identification with it attains to infinite joy.

An osprey (kurara) that was in possession of a piece of meat was attacked by other powerful birds which had no meat. When it gave up that piece of meat, it was at peace, being free from such attacks.

I care not for honour or insult, nor have I the worry of family, possessing house and children. Like a boy I roam about having my sport and joy in the Self only.

The child without any thought and purpose of action, and the sage that has transcended the three gunas of Prakrti are alone free from worry and anxiety, and immersed in joy.

In a certain place, some people arrived at a house with a proposal for marriage for a girl of that house. As all the elders of the house-hold had gone out elsewhere, the girl herself received the visitors.

Oh King! For extending proper hospitality to them, the girl began to de-husk paddy in a solitary place. While doing so, the conch bangles on her arms made a loud sound by mutual impact.

The intelligent girl felt ashamed that the sound of the conch bangles – a poor girl's ornaments, would betray the poverty of the house-hold. So she broke those bangles one after the other, except a pair on each arm.

Even these pairs of bangles on the arms produced noise while she continued de-husking. So she broke one more bangle on each arm. Then there was no sound, there being only one bangle on each arm.

Wandering as I do to learn truths directly from life in the world, I learnt the following lesson from that girl.

If too many people live together, quarrel will ensue. Even if there are only two, they spend time in conversation, and not in contemplation of the Atman. So I should travel alone, like the single bangle on the girl's arm, conversing with none.

After gaining mastery over a sitting posture and the vital energy, one should try to fix the mind on a single object of meditation. Through dispassion, one should check all the outgoing tendencies of the mind, and through practice, its tendency to lapse into sleepy absorption. The mind should thus be held to the object of concentration with great vigilance.

The mind should be concentrated on that Being, by getting absorbed in which all tendencies of activity get gradually eliminated. Further, such meditation enhances sattva leading to the elimination of rajas and tamas which cause agitation and inertia in the mind. When this is accomplished, the mind subsides like the fire that has exhausted its fuel.

This state of mind is comparable to that of a smith making an arrow-head. His mind being fully concentrated on the arrow-head he is forging, he is unaware even of a King with his retinue passing by. Similarly, the sage whose mind is absorbed in the Atman is without any experience within and without, and of objects pertaining to such experience.

Like a serpent, the sage should be a lone wanderer, homeless, always vigilant, residing in caves difficult to recognize by externals, solitary and reserved in his utterances.

The life-span being very uncertain, it is a folly to undertake the painful task of building a house. Look at the serpent. It makes no home, but goes into the holes made by other creatures, and rests there happily. So a yogi should have no home of his own, but rest in the homes of others temporarily.

At the end of each cycle of creation (kalpa), Narayana, the sole Reality, dissolves, by means of His power of Time, the whole universe which His own Maya has created. The dissolution of the universe into the Supreme Being is the bringing of sattva, rajas and tamas – the three gunas of Prakrti into equilibrium. Narayana alone exists as the sole Reality, being Himself His own support, the substratum of all, and the Master of both Prakrti and Purusa. Transcending all relative existence, high and low, He exists as boundless Freedom and the ocean of Pure Consciousness-Bliss.

When the cycle of creation begins, Time, which is but His will, agitates His own Maya constituted of sattva, rajas and tamas, and manifests the Sutratman, the all-pervading Spirit known otherwise as Mahatattva.

He, the Sutratman formed of the three gunas, is looked upon by wise men as the Creator of this multi-faceted universe. This whole universe is threaded on Him, and the Jiva trans-migrates because of Him.

Just as a spider brings out its web from within itself, sports in it for a while and then withdraws it into itself, so does the Supreme Being bring out, manifest and withdraw the universe within.

On whatever object a person concentrates his mind, whether it be from love, animosity or fear, that person attains the state of that object.

The worm, placed in a hole by the wasp and continually frightened by its buzzing sound, turns into the shape of the wasp even without giving up its old body.

These are the lessons I have learnt from teachers. Now listen what I have learnt from my own body.

This body has been the teacher from whom I learnt the lessons of dispassion and discrimination. Through repeated birth and death, with incessant misery as its fruit, it has taught me dispassion. It is with the help of the body that I am able to reflect on truth and then practise discrimination. But I go about unattached to it as I am aware that this body belongs to others such as dogs and jackals that might feast on it after its death, if it is left to itself without cremation or burial.

Man supports his wife, children, cattle, servants, dependants and relatives with hard earned money, only to nurture this physical body. In the end, this body, nurtured with such great difficulty, perishes, leaving behind, like a tree, the seeds of future bodies in the shape of the effects of karma.

As a house-holder is harassed by the divergent pulls of each of his wives, man is attracted by each of his senses to its respective objects such as taste to taste-buds in the tongue, thirst to water, skin to pleasant touch, stomach to edible food, ear to pleasant sound, smell to fragrance, sight to objects of beauty, etc.

In the early stages of the cycle of creation, the Lord brought into existence by His power different types of beings such as trees, serpents, animals, birds, insects, fish, etc. Not satisfied with any of these forms, He felt pleased when He brought into existence the homo-sapiens endowed with intelligence suited for intuiting the Brahman – the Supreme Being.

This human body, which is attainable only after countless births in various species, is a very rare blessing that one could get. In spite of its impermanence, it is very precious as the knowledge of the Supreme Truth and other values can be had only through it. A wise man should, therefore, strive, as long as the body lasts, for the attainment of the ultimate good – liberation from the trans-migratory cycle. To act otherwise is a great loss, as sense enjoyments are possible in other bodies, too.

Learning many lessons in this way from several gurus, dispassion has dawned on me, and I have obtained the light of discriminative intelligence. So I am wandering in this world, established in the Atman, devoid of any attachments, and without any ego-sense or feeling of possession.

With one guru alone, knowledge may not be firmly and completely established. For, the subject is so profound that this very non-dual Brahman has been presented very differently by various rishis in the scriptures as cosmic and as the cause of all causes.

Sri Bhagawan said:

So saying and much pleased, the sage Dattatreya, of deep understanding, took leave of the King Yadu after receiving the latter's obeisance. As he came by chance, so he went away, with no particular destination in mind.

Instructed by the sage in this way, Yadu, the ancestor of my clan, became completely free from all attachments and established in equanimity.

5. Limitations of Vedic Ritualism

Sri Bhagawan said:

Ever careful in the observance of the Bhagavata-dharma revealed by Me, and depending on Me, one should follow the traditions and practices of ones varna, ashrama and kula (clan or family) without personal motives.

Bhagavata-dharma means the dharma of a devotee for realization of the Divine God-head.

A man of purified understanding should always reflect on how the actions of sense-bound people with an eye on the fruits of their action and an assumption of their ultimacy bring only contrary results in the end. Happiness which they seek always eludes, while suffering which they want to avoid always results.

The experiences of the man in the state of sleep and of the day-dreamer are without any substance, because of their unstable variety. The same is true with regard to the diversity of the objects experienced by the senses in the waking state.

One devoted to Me should perform works conducive to renunciation which consists in the daily and periodical rites of an obligatory nature, and works that form one's duty and those that serve charitable purposes. One should avoid rites, rituals and works for the fulfillment of selfish ends. One who has firmly set one's foot on the path of enquiry for realization need not care for the Vedic commandments on works.

The moral disciplines called Yama (sense-control) should be practised, and the rules of external conduct called Niyama should be practised to the extent possible under varying circumstances. One should seek a guru who has realized Me and serve him as if one were serving Me.

A person while serving such a guru should be humble enough to render all services, devoid of personal possessions and attachments, having cordial and loving relationship with the guru, calm and tranquil, keen in his quest for Truth, free from jealousy, and controlled in speech.

The Atman being the same in all, it is meaningless to think of any particular person or object as one's own. Realizing this, a person should become detached towards his wife, children, house, lands, relatives, wealth, etc.

Just as fire, because it has burning and lighting properties, is different from the fuel it burns and illumines, so also the Atman, the self-luminous seer, is different from all objects seen, including the gross and the subtle bodies forming its instruments of perception.

Just as the fire with which the fuel is joined assumes all the conditions and properties of the fuel like origination, dissolution, smallness, brightness, manifoldness, etc., in the same way the Spirit within the body, though different from the latter, assumes, through identification with it, all the changes the body undergoes.

The Jiva's involvement in samsara, consisting in recurring birth and death, arises from its identification with the subtle and gross bodies generated by the gunas of Prakrti. So the knowledge of the real nature of the Atman will put an end to Jiva's entanglement in samsara.

Therefore, through enquiry, one should understand that the Spirit within is distinct and aloof from the body. Understanding this, one should deny the identification with the gross body, subtle body, etc, one after another.

The guru is the lower fire-stick, and the disciple the upper one. The churning stick introduced between them for producing fire is the instruction, and the fire produced, when churned, is the blissful illumination of knowledge arising from the instruction.

The pure fire of spiritual illumination thus imparted to the disciple effaces all the bondage caused by the gunas of Prakrti, as well as the gunas themselves, before it subsides, like the fire that has exhausted the fuel.

There is a view that there is plurality of the Jiva doing karma and enjoying the beneficent and baneful fruits, according to the nature of the karma performed. The world, Time, the Veda and the Jiva are all eternal. The objects of enjoyment are also eternal through their unending recurrence as a stream. Just like all other entities, consciousness too is ridden by plurality, as each apprehension comes into being, changes and perishes with each of the objects of perception.

If this view (of the Purvamimamsakas) is accepted, all Jiva will have to be subject to repeated birth and death, as they have to get repeatedly embodied from time to time in order to have continuous consciousness.

According to this doctrine, the Jiva that performs karma and reaps the fruits yielding enjoyment and / or suffering is without any freedom. What joy can there be for a slave?

Even wise men are not found being happy sometimes, nor are ignorant persons found always unhappy. Thus it is in the nature of things to have both happiness and misery in the embodied state. Vain, therefore, is the boast of the Vedic ritualists that by their rituals they can have pure happiness in an embodied state.

Even if their claim that they can secure joyous experiences and avoid painful ones is accepted, there still remains the fact that they, too, do not know how to ward off death.

How can wealth or pleasures make one happy, when one knows that death is near at hand? How can a condemned criminal, who is being led to the hangman's scaffold, feel joy in pleasurable things?

The heavenly states we hear about as attainable hereafter are vitiated by the same evils as of this world – mutual antagonism, jealousy, surpassability and finality. Besides, like agriculture, its fruits are uncertain because of many obstacles, and even when obtained, they are not worthwhile, as they are time-bound.

Now listen how Vedic rituals, even if done without any obstruction or breach of procedure, yield only perishable results.

Performing a yagna by way of worship of a deity in this world, a Vedic ritualist attains to heaven, and like a celestial, he enjoys there the heavenly felicities for which he has made himself eligible by the performance of the Vedic rituals.

By virtue of the merits he has acquired, he finds himself in a brilliant mansion full of delightful objects of enjoyment, sports there amidst a bevy of handsomely dressed celestial damsels and enjoys the music of gandharva singers.

Sitting in the aerial vehicle having innumerable mini-bells and capable of carrying one wherever one wants, and steeped in and excited by the joy of amorous indulgence with celestial women, the Jiva lives oblivious of the imminent downfall that is in store for it.

It can enjoy the felicities of heaven only till the exhaustion of the effects of the meritorious actions making it eligible for the same. Immediately after the merits are exhausted, it will be forced to move to inferior regions, even against its will, by the power of Time.

There are other Jiva who give themselves up to unrighteous living due to the influence of evil company. They become enslaved to the senses, filled with desires, and dominated by greed and sexuality. They turn into persecutors of living beings. They make sacrifice of animals against scriptural commandments to elementals and ghosts. Such Jiva helplessly go to the purgatory where they undergo punishment, and are then reduced to the state of trees and vegetation covered with the darkness of tamas.

Performing with one's body actions that bear evil fruits, one gets new bodies, in succession, generated by those evil actions for undergoing the suffering due to them. What happiness can there be in this way of life leading to birth and death repeated?

All the worlds and their protecting deities with the life-span of a kalpa live in fear of Me as Time. Even Brahma with a life lasting two parardhas lives in such fear.

The senses which are the products of the gunas of Prakrti perform actions; and it is the gunas that prompt the senses to action, not the Atman. The embodied being, the

Jiva, enjoys the fruits of action by identification with the products of the gunas like the body and the mind.

Only as long as the evolutes of gunas like the ego-sense, the body, etc exist, there is the experience of plurality for the atman, and it is only so long as there is this plurality that the atman experiences bondage.

So long as there is absence of freedom resulting from the perception of multiplicity, Iswara, perceived as Time, the consumer of all is a terror to the Jiva. So the followers of the philosophy of ritualistic action, who emphasize the plurality of the Jiva, are bound to be obsessed with sorrow and fear arising from death.

When the creative cycle starts with the unsettling of the perfect equilibrium of the gunas, I am known in several aspects under different names such as Time (Kala), Atman, Scriptures (Agama), the World (Loka), Nature (Swabhava), Dharma, etc.

Uddhava said:

Oh Lord! The Atman may be without any adjuncts or coverings. But how can it be maintained that it is not bound when it is actually engaged in action in identification with adjuncts like the body and the senses? If it is naturally without this bondage to adjuncts like the body, how and when did it come to be so bound?

How can I recognize a being that is not bound and attached? How does he live? How does he behave? How can he be distinguished? How does he eat, evacuate, lie, sit and walk?

Oh Achyuta! Thou art the most competent to answer questions on such profound subjects! How can the same Atman be eternally bound and eternally free as seems to be taught? I am confused and confounded by such thoughts.

6. Bondage and Freedom

Sri Bhagawan said:

The talk of bondage and liberation is in respect of the body-mind which is a product of the gunas, and not of the Atman itself. The gunas and their products are the result of My Maya. As the work of Maya does not affect Me, there is no bondage or liberation for the Atman in as much as it is a part of Me or one with Me. This is My teaching, the final authority on the subject.

Grief, infatuation, pleasure, pain, birth, and other experiences of the individual life are the projections of My Maya, just like the illusory projections of the Jiva in the dream state. They are not ultimately factual in respect of the Atman.

Oh Uddhava! Vidya (knowledge) and avidya (ignorance), causing liberation and bondage respectively to the Jiva from the beginning of creation are aspects of My Maya. They are My attributes.

Oh wise one! It is to the Jiva which is one with Me and also a part of Me, that beginning-less avidya causes bondage, and vidya liberation.

Jiva is not a particle emerging from or a piece cut out of the Brahman to be ultimately united with IT, as the Brahman is all-pervading like Akasa with no form or parts. As the chaitanya of the so-called Jiva is nothing but the Brahman, it is declared that Jivo Brahmaiva naparah (Jiva is the Brahman only, not different from IT) – the essence of the philosophy of Advaita (Non-dualism).

I shall first tell you about the difference between the Jiva and Iswara, the former bound and the latter free, occupying the same habitat, the body, but having conflicting attributes like sorrow and bliss.

Two birds, namely, Iswara and the Jiva, both friends through eternity, reside by chance as it were in the same nest on the same tree of the body. Of these, one bird, the Jiva, eats the fruits of that tree, while the other, Iswara, though not eating the fruits, thrives splendidly on the same tree.

Iswara, who entertains no desire to eat the fruits of action, knows His own nature, and that of the other, the world of objects as sat-chit-ananda. But the Jiva, who claims and enjoys the fruits of actions, knows nothing. Being engulfed in beginning-less avidya (ignorance), it is ever bound while Iswara, who is of the nature of vidya (knowledge), is ever liberated.

Just as a man who has awakened from sleep will have no identification with the dream body, so the illumined man, though still tenanted his body, will have no identification with it. So, though he is in the body, he is not of it. But the ignorant man,

though, in truth, he has no connection with the body, considers himself as one with it, just as the dreaming man does in regard to the dream body.

When his senses which are the products of Prakrti grasp their objects, which too are products of Prakrti, the illumined man does not feel identified with those contacts, as he understands that the gunas of Prakrti as senses are only contacting the very gunas as objects. He remains unperturbed.

But the ignorant man residing in the body which is a product of one's past action gets bound, thinking that what his senses are doing is being done by him.

But the man of dispassion is not bound or affected like the ignorant man, even while lying, sitting, waking, bathing, seeing, touching, smelling, eating and hearing. Though his senses are functioning, he remains a mere witness. Though he is seen in a body which is the product of Prakrti, he is unaffected by the body contacts just like the sky, the sun and the air. The sky, though all-pervading, is not affected by the objects it pervades. The sun, though reflecting in water, is not affected by the ripples of water. The wind, though moving everywhere, remains intact and unaffected.

With the powerful sword of insight sharpened by intense dispassion, the sage slashes away all doubts, and rejects all concern as to manifoldness, as an awakened man does with dream experiences.

He, whose vital power, senses, mind and intellect assume modes devoid of purposive motivation, is free. Though having a body, he is free from the domination of bodily qualities and urges.

A man of knowledge is impassive even when his body is persecuted by wicked men or, by chance, adored by others.

The sage will not lavish praise on persons who favour him by word or deed; nor will he be offended with others who do the contrary to him. A liberated sage is one who does not view experiences as favourable or un-favourable to himself, but remains even-sighted always.

Doing nothing, speaking little and devoid of reflection on worldly topics, good or bad, he goes about absorbed in the bliss of the Atman, but looking like a mad man to worldly-minded people.

A person may be learned in the scriptures; but if his mind is not absorbed in the Supreme Brahman through spiritual disciplines, his efforts are futile like those of a person who maintains a sterile cow.

Being steeped in sorrow is the fate of a man who keeps a cow that has ceased calving, maintains a wife who is unfaithful, keeps up a body that is enslaved to another, has a son who is useless and unworthy, accumulates wealth that is not purified by

liberal gifts, and is endowed with learning and arts which are never used in the service of the Lord.

Oh friend! A wise man should never concern with barren literary gifts that are devoid of reference to, or not descriptive of, My glory expressed through creation, preservation and dissolution, and through My various sportive incarnations.

On the other hand, after eradicating the wrong perception of manifoldness in the Atman through proper investigation, an aspirant should withdraw himself from all other concerns and dissolve his purified mind in Me, the all-pervading Self.

If you are not able to make your mind absorbed in the Brahman in the manner described, then perform all your actions in dedication to Me, without any selfish motive.

Oh Uddhava! Listen with full faith to the glorious accounts of My deeds and sing about them in devotional hymns. Again and again remember and ruminate in your mind over My deeds and Me as the Divine Incarnate, and imitate them in high emotional identification. Depending completely on Me, convert all your worldly efforts – your pursuit of dharma, artha and kama – to serving Me as their goal. Following this way, you will gain firm and unwavering devotion to Me, the eternal Being.

Those who adore Me with devotion, generated by association with holy men, will easily attain to that spiritual goal revealed by wise men.

Uddhava said:

Oh Lord of holy fame! What kind of holy man (sadhu) dost Thou approve of, for association? And what kind of devotion has the approval of saints, and is pleasing to Thee?

Oh Thou master of all divinities! Oh Thou Lord of all spheres! Oh Thou Lord of the universe! Deign to explain these matters to me, Thy prostrating and deeply devout refugee.

Thou art the Supreme Brahman! Like ether, Thou art unaffected by anything; Thou art the Purusa transcending Prakrti; Thou art now incarnate in a body, divine and auspicious, out of Thy own choice without any extraneous compulsion.

Sri Bhagawan said:

. A holy man is one who is kind, who does no one wrong, forbearing, fortified in truth, free from impurities of the mind, unperturbed in happiness and suffering, and ever-helpful to all to the best of his ability.

He is free from passions; he has mastery of the senses; he is pure, without possessions, non-attached, calm, firm, free from self-centred action, sparingly eating, dutiful and ever resigned to Me.

A holy man is ever awake, vigilant and self-possessed. He is courageous in all situations. He has conquered all the six weaknesses of the body. He expects no respect from others, but shows respect to all. He has inherent strength. He is friendly and kind to all. He is the truly learned.

The six weaknesses of the body are the emotions, namely, lust, anger, avarice, delusion, pride and envy.

He who, knowing fully well the merit of performing and the demerit of neglecting one's swadharma (duties) ordained by Me in the Vedas, still abandons them for the practice of whole-hearted devotion to Me is the best of holy men.

Irrespective of whether one has knowledge of My infinity, My majesty and My attributes or not, if one worships Me whole-heartedly with the feeling that I am one's 'own' and that one has no other support except Me, one is the greatest of My devotees.

The ways of devotion and worship are seeing, touching and worshipping My images and My devotees; praising, honouring and extolling My deeds and qualities; steadfastness in listening to accounts of My deeds; meditating on Me always; offering to Me everything one gets; dedicating to Me, oneself, one's kith and kin, and all one's possessions in the attitude of a servant of Mine; extolling Me and My deeds as the Incarnate; observing days holy to Me; holding celebrations in My temples to the accompaniment of songs, dance, instrumental music, and devotional gatherings; organizing processions and making great offerings on the occasion of the annual temple celebrations; being initiated in My worship according to the Veda and the Tantra; observing the disciplines connected with days holy to Me like Ekadasi; evincing zeal in consecrating temples, and in installing My images and providing them with proper flower gardens, groves of trees, recreation grounds, sheds, shelters, etc jointly with others or alone; sweeping, cleaning, plastering and decorating My temples in an attitude of humility and sincerity as a servant; and abjuring pride, hypocrisy and the tendency to advertise one's own pious acts. The entire mentioned above are aids to the development of devotion. The objects once offered should not be offered again to Me, be it even the incense used in the 'light-waving ritual'.

Whatever is considered precious and desirable by men in general and whatever are the dearest and the most precious to oneself alone should be offered to Me. By such offering, one will derive infinite good.

There are eleven centres in which My worship can be done. These are the sun, fire, holy man, cow, devotee, sky, air, water, earth, one's own atman, and the collectivity of all living beings.

In the sun, I am worshipped through the chanting of Vedic mantras; in the fire, with sacrificial offerings; in a holy man, through hospitality; in a cow, by feeding it.

In a devotee, I am worshipped by honouring him as one's dearest friend; in the sky of the heart, by meditation; in the air, by meditating on it as the life-breath; and in water, through libation with prescribed materials and water.

In the earth, I am to be adored by nyasa (ceremonial chanting of mantras); in one's own body, by legitimate enjoyment as offering to Me residing in oneself; and in all beings, by seeing Me as the Spirit residing in them all.

In all these centres, one should meditate on My Form radiating peace, and having four arms sporting conch, discus, mace and lotus; and should worship with a controlled mind.

Whoever worships Me in these centres with a concentrated mind through ritual and whole-heartedly will get firm devotion to Me. The association with and service of holy men is, however, the most potent cause of intense devotion resulting in constant remembrance.

There is no easier way to eternal bliss than the practice of devotion generated by association with holy men. For, I am the sole support of the holy ones.

This is a highly profound and esoteric subject. Listen to this attentively. I shall expound it, as you are my dear and faithful servant and beloved friend.

7. Holy Association

Sri Bhagawan said:

There are various types of spiritual disciplines like practice of the eight-limbed yoga, philosophical reflection, virtuous conduct, enquiry, Vedic study, practice of austerities, performance of work without desire for its fruits, performance of Vedic rites, philanthropic work, gifts, observance of vows and fasts, performance of yajnas, visiting pilgrim centres, chanting of esoteric mantras, and control of the mind (yama) and of the body (niyama). None of these helps the devotee so much as to win My favour, and bind Me to him as association with holy men, an association which eradicates all worldly attachments from the mind of man.

In different ages, many beings with rajas and tamas predominating in them – asuras, rakshasas, beasts, birds, gandharvas, apsaras, serpents, siddhas, charanas, guhyakas, vidyadharas, and among human beings unqualified persons like women, vaisyas, sudras and outcastes – all have attained to My Being by the power of holy association alone.

Examples of these are Vitrasura, Prahlada, Vrishaparva, Mahabali, Banasura, Maya, Vibhishana, Sugriva, Hanuman, Jambavan, Gajendra, Jatayu, Dharmavyadha, Kubja, the Gopikas and the wives of the brahmana ritualists. None of these had studied the Vedas, or attended on Vedic teachers as students under them. They had not observed any spiritual discipline or austerity. By the power of holy association alone they attained to the Supreme Self.

By devotion alone, generated through holy contact, many an ignorant being – the Gopikas, cows, trees, animals, serpents and the like attained to Me with ease.

Me, whom aspirants do not reach even by putting forth great effort by way of practising yoga, philosophical enquiry, charity, vows, austerity, sacrifices, Vedic study and formal renunciation, did they attain through holy contact.

After Akrura took Me and Balarama from Vraja to Mathura, these Gopikas, who entertained intense love and attachment to Me, were painfully distressed by separation from Me, and found nothing else in this world to give them solace.

Oh friend! Nights which they had passed like moments with Me, their most beloved one, when I had sported with them in Vrindavan, were later spent by them with the feeling that they were aeons.

The sages lose name and form while in samadhi, as do the rivers while merging in the ocean. Similarly, the intensely loving Gopikas lost in Me their separate existence, as also the awareness of their kith and kin whom one looks upon as one's own, lost even the consciousness of the very body with which one identifies oneself.

Those women who did not know My real nature as the Lord of all were actuated by passionate love, and looked upon Me as their lover. But still in their hundreds they attained to Me, the Parabrahman, by the sheer power of their holy association with Me.

Oh Uddhava! Therefore, abandoning reliance on the scriptural injunctions and prohibitions, the ways of work and of renunciation, what you have learnt and what you yet hope to learn, surrender your entire being, body, mind and soul to Me the All-comprehending One, the Essence within all embodied beings. By that shall you be free from all fear, through My grace.

Uddhava said:

Oh Supreme Yogi! Hearing Thy words, the doubts in my mind are not getting cleared. On the other hand, I am getting more confounded.

Sri Bhagawan said:

The Supreme Spirit manifests Itself through the psychic centres of the spinal column. In association with prana as sound vibration (Nada-brahman), It enters the muladhara as para, and then assuming the vibrations of thought known as pasyanti and madhyama in the centres (chakras) known as Manipura and Visuddha, It finally manifests as audible sound with matra (syllabic time), swara (accent) and varna (audible sound) when It is known as Vaikhari.

Tantra preaches a kind of yoga, called Kundalini (serpent power), leading to spiritual perception and mystic visions. It is awakening the spiritual energy latent in human beings.

Through proper friction and the aid of wind, the heat latent in the space within the fire-stick comes out as sparks, and afterwards when the sacrificial offerings are poured into it, it becomes a flaming fire. In the same way the whole realm of sound forms an expression of Me.

Just like the generation of sound, the actions of the hands, feet, anus and sex organ, as also the modes assumed by the sense organs, mind, the three gunas and Prakrti are all My expressions.

Iswara, the Soul of all, was in the beginning un-manifest and without a second. He, the support of the three gunas of Prakrti and the source of the world-lotus, manifests as the many by the diversification of His power-aspect under the influence of Time, just as a seed becomes a plant or a tree with many branches when put in the soil suited for its germination.

Just as a cloth subsists in its spread-out threads, so the world, permeated by Him like the warp and woof of a cloth, subsists in Him only and has no being apart from

Him. Existing through eternity, this world-tree of the nature of works has been yielding the flowers of worldly enjoyment and the fruits of liberation.

This world-tree has two seeds in the form of merits and demerits. It has numberless roots in the countless tendencies. It has three stems in the three gunas of Prakrti. It has five boughs in the five elements. It has five saps in the five kinds of sense perceptions. It has eleven branches in the ten senses of perception and action, and the mind. It has two birds nesting in it, Iswara and Jiva. It has three layers of bark in the three humours of vata, pitta and kapha. It extends up to the solar sphere.

The vultures of the countryside eat one kind of its fruits causing sorrow and suffering. These are the worldly-minded, prompted by greed and lured by sensuous enjoyment. There are the swans in the habitat of forest which eat another kind of its fruits that brings happiness. These are men of renunciation and discrimination who seek liberation. He who understands, through the instruction and blessings of his guru, that the one Paramatman has by virtue of His Yogamaya manifested Himself as the many in various aspects understands the true purport of the Veda.

Thus, through the one-pointed devotion developed by service to guru, the axe of knowledge is sharpened. Cut open with it the ego-sense, the prison house of the Jiva, without wavering, and attain to the Supreme Purusa. After that you can discard even that weapon – even the practice of these disciplines, the mental mode of knowledge with which ignorance is overcome.

8. The Song of the Swan

Sri Bhagawan said:

The three gunas of sattva, rajas and tamas do not belong to the Atman. They are the stuff of which the intellect (buddhi) is formed. By making the sattva into a powerful mode of mind, the modes of rajas and tamas can be overcome, and afterwards sattva as a mode should be reduced to its pristine state which is peace.

When sattva becomes powerful in one, it manifests that disposition which generates loving devotion to Me, the Atman. By association with everything that is of the nature of sattva, the disposition of sattva is augmented, and from that, supreme devotion manifests.

The dominance of the mode of sattva which is the summit of human evolution will absorb the modes of rajas and tamas, and when these are so absorbed, the sinfulness that they generate (hampering the growth of bhakti) will also disappear.

Scripture, water, man, place, time, action, initiation, meditation, mantra, purificatory rites and practices are the ten factors that regulate the growth of the gunas of sattva, rajas and tamas in man.

Whatever wise men commend as spiritually beneficial should be understood as sattva in nature. Whatever they condemn should be understood as tamas, and whatever they ignore as rajas.

For the development of sattva, man should associate himself with the ten sattva developing entities and substances. From that arise devotion and knowledge, and bondage gets effaced.

The sattva developing entities and substances are considered to be the following – scriptures dealing with renunciation, holy water, men endowed with renunciation, solitude, early morning, the rites ordained by the scriptures, initiation into the knowledge of the Brahman, meditation on the Lord, pranava and other mantras for spiritual enlightenment, and samskaras for purification of the mind.

The fire generated by the friction of bamboos in a forest consumes the whole forest and then subsides. Likewise, the fire of knowledge kindled by the disciplines practised by the Jiva's embodiment, which is a product of the gunas of Prakrti, ultimately destroys that very embodiment, and then subsides.

Uddhava said:

Oh Krishna! Men generally understand that the pursuit of sense objects leads to dangers and unhappiness. Still, how is it that they follow them like dogs, donkeys and goats, forgetting the suffering involved and the dangers ahead?

Sri Bhagawan said:

For the man of confused understanding, there arises the sense of absolute identification with the body. Where there is this identification, the mind, in spite of its origin in sattva, happens to be overcome by powerful rajas.

When the mind is seized with rajas, it makes plans for ends to be achieved and difficulties to be overcome. Such brooding over material objects and their attractiveness generates intense and irresistible desires in the mind of the perverse man.

A man of uncontrolled senses, dominated by desires, and infatuated by the fast flow of rajas, performs actions whose final end is well known to him, to be nothing but misery.

Suppose a man becomes subject to the agitation of the mind by rajas and tamas. Even then if he, without getting disappointed and dispirited, strives to perceive the evil of such sense-slavery and makes an effort to control the senses, he will succeed with the help of added strength generated through reflection.

Without carelessness and indolence, he should master posture and breath and, with patience, direct his mind to Me and make it centred in Me.

I instructed My disciple Sanaka and his group of sages that the highest form of yoga consists in drawing away the mind from all objects and concentrating it wholly in Me.

Uddhava said:

Oh Kesava! When and in what form did you give instruction to Sanaka and others? I wish to know all about it.

Sri Bhagawan said:

Sanaka and his group of sages, who were spiritual off-spring of Brahma, once asked their father about the very subtle aspects of yoga in its highest reaches.

Sanaka said:

“The mind drawn by desire naturally engages itself with sense objects. And sense-objects, by the force of tendencies, enter into the mind as impressions. Oh Lord!

How then can a spiritual aspirant, striving to overcome the senses, hope to wean the mind away from the senses?"

Generally, it is said that the mind experiences pains and pleasures. In fact, it is the individual 'I' consciousness that experiences the pains and pleasures, the colours 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 pleasures and pains are objects, to the 'I' consciousness.

Though Brahma is the Lord of all divinities, the self-born and the creator of all beings, he could not grasp the real issue involved in the question, as his mind was too much involved in his creative activities.

Brahma thereupon thought of Me to know the answer for the question, and I appeared to him in the form of a swan.

Seeing Me there, Sanaka and the other sages came near Me and saluted at My feet. Brahma, standing before us, questioned Me who I was.

Now listen what I said, on being questioned by those sages who were enquirers after the Truth.

I said: 'Oh holy men! How is the question 'Who am I?' relevant, when the Atman in reality is not many? On what basis can I, therefore, answer your question?

Even if the question is with reference to the body, it is meaningless. The bodies of all beings, including those of the Devas, are made of the five gross elements. These elements are not separate from their ultimate cause, the Brahman. So all bodies are basically the same and cannot be distinguished from one another.

The five gross elements are earth, water, fire, air and space. Every object in the world is considered to contain all the five elements, but in different proportions. This doctrine of every object containing five elements is called Quintuplication.

The gross elements are symbolic of solid matter, liquid matter, energy matter, and gaseous matter in relation to the first four elements, space remaining as such. They are the transformations of the subtle elements. Otherwise, the correlativity like that between hearing and sound cannot be explained. Reversely the correlativity points to their unitary origin in the ego and finally in the 'I' consciousness.

Whatever is grasped by the mind, words, eyes, and other sense organs, all that is Me. Know that there is nothing different from Me.

Oh children! The mind enters the sense objects, and the sense objects enter the mind as impressions. Both the mind and the body, with which the sense objects are in

contact, are only the adjuncts which apparently clothe the Atman which is not different from Me.

The mind becomes bound by repeated contact with the sense objects, and the sense objects entrench themselves in the mind as sense impressions. Both these – the sense objects and their impressions – must be overcome by recognizing their identity with Me.

The states of sleep, dream and waking are modes of the individual consciousness only, and not of the atman. The Jiva is distinguished from them as the witness of these states.

As long as the atman is connected with the intellect (buddhi) by superimposition, so long will that connection involve the aspirant in the consciousness of the body and the mind, and the experiences gained through them. This involvement in matter can be overcome by recognizing the aspirant's identity with Me in the fourth (turiya) state of consciousness which is the witness of the first three states.

The bondage to sense objects established by ahamkara – the identification with the intellect (buddhi) manifesting as the ego-sense – detracts the atman from the Truth, causing untold suffering. The wise man should, therefore, cultivate dispassion for this life of bondage and its experiences, and abandon all thoughts, dwelling in Me in the fourth state of consciousness.

So long as an aspirant has not overcome the sense of reality for the many, through discrimination and reasoning, he is only a dreamer, though all the while he is apparently awake. He is like a somnambulist who is asleep, but behaves like one awake.

All the entities other than the Atman are false. So the body and all the institutions associated with it, the ends and practices based upon the false multiplicity like the varnashrama-dharma, the duties and religious practices based on it, and the imagined heavenly regions attainable through these as stated in the Mimamsa are equally false like the objects seen by a dreamer.

He who enjoys through the senses the perpetually changing gross objects of the external world during the waking hours, he who enjoys the subjective impressions of the same world in dream; and he who in deep sleep withdraws from all perceptions and is aware of nothing external, is the one unitary self as proved by the continuing memory of all these states of consciousness. He is the witness and master of all these movements of the body and the mind.

That there is continuing memory of experiences running through all these states of consciousness is proof of the existence of a unitary witness-consciousness in the self.

In this way, let an aspirant come to the conclusion that all the three states of consciousness are the manifestation of the gunas of Prakrti brought about by My Maya within Me. Let him sharpen his sword of understanding by sound reasoning and the instructions of the wise. So fortified, let him cut asunder the very knot of doubt, and resign himself to Me residing in his heart.

Know that this world experience is false like the dream experience. It is as unreal as the ring of fire produced by a whirling fire-brand. The one Consciousness appears as the three states and their content. This world of diversity produced by the evolution of Prakrti is only the projection of Maya, My mysterious power.

Withdrawing attention from the false objective world, abandoning all ideas of enjoyment from any object of desire, and immersed in the bliss of Self, the aspirant should withdraw from all work and sit absolutely quiet. But the world of multiplicity rejected by him will be experienced now and then owing to the strength of tendencies acquired in the past. But it will not detract and involve him in any way, as he has lost the sense of reality for it. The memory will persist but only as of a dream, all through life.

Such a man of realization is not even conscious of the body with the help of which he has attained that state, whatever happens to it by the power of prarabdha, whatever it does, just as a heavily drunken man knows not whether the cloth he has worn is on his body or has fallen off.

So long as the prarabdha-karma that has led to the present embodiment lasts, the body will remain alive. But the man of knowledge, who has attained the state of samadhi, will view the body and the world connected with it as a man awakened from dream views his dream-experiences.

Oh learned ones! I have now given you the quintessence, the most hidden part of the teachings of yoga and Sankhya. Know Me to be Yajna (Mahavishnu) come here to instruct you in the science of the spirit.

I am the goal, the support, the sustaining force behind all great endeavours and values – Sankhya, Yoga, Truth in its absolute and relative forms, lustre, sublimity of beauty, fame and self-control.

All the great virtues (gunas) like equanimity, dispassion, etc have their support in Me, the Transcendent beyond the gunas of Prakrti, who depends on nothing else, who is the Self of all, and, therefore, the dearest well-wisher of all.'

Sanaka and other rishis of his group had all their doubts cleared by Me in this way. They then saluted Me, and extolled Me in great hymns.

After they had thus worshipped and extolled Me, I moved on to My realm, as Brahma and others looked on.

9. Means of Spiritual Fulfillment

Uddhava said:

Oh Krishna! The Vedic scholars speak of many means for spiritual advancement of man. Are they all alike in efficacy individually, or is any one discipline considered the chief?

Oh Lord! You have instructed that communion with Thee through love (bhakti), in which one is to abandon desire and attachment for everything else and concentrate one's mind whole-heartedly and constantly on Thee, is an independent path requiring the help of no other path.

Sri Bhagawan said:

The Veda, which was lost at the time of Pralaya, was revealed by Me to Brahma at the beginning of the creative cycle. It is the Veda that contains the dharma, the way of life and disciplines, for directing the mind towards Me.

Brahma taught it to Swayambhuva, his son, and his group of seven sages known as the Saptarishis learned the Veda from Swayambhuva.

From these seven rishis, their off-spring consisting of Devas, asuras, guhyakas, men, siddhas, gandharvas, vidyadharas, charanas, kimdevas, kinneras, nagas, rakshasas and kimpurushas learnt it. According to the preponderance of the three gunas of sattva, rajas and tamas in them, they were of very diverse dispositions.

Because of the diversity of disposition, the forms, characters and ways of beings varied very much. So, following their own nature, their interpretation of the Vedas, too, is divergent.

Thus, because of the diversity of disposition in beings, their ways of thinking also vary. Some of them, though not instructed in the Vedas and their interpretation, hold to views inherited from ancestral traditions; while others, following their own nature, take to atheistic ways of thinking.

Oh noble one! Under the infatuation of My Maya, they speak divergently as to what constitutes the ultimate good of man according to their past karma and present tendencies.

Dharma, fame, enjoyment, truth, self-control, prosperity, eating, evacuating, yajna, austerity, charity, vows, etc are all among the divergent human ends and means, conceived by people according to their tendencies.

All aspirations and endeavours in these directions will lead the Jiva only to realms that are karma-borne, fleeting and productive of subsequent suffering. Founded in ignorance and yielding only pseudo-pleasure, they are bedeviled even at the time of enjoyment itself with defects like vindictiveness, jealousy, etc.

Oh Uddhava! In the case of a devotee who is free from all worldly desires and who has offered himself heart and soul to Me, I shine in his heart as his very self. The joy arising from this experience is something that a sense-bound creature can never realize.

The world respects one who is without any attachment, controlled in mind and senses, equipoised and even-sighted, and finding complete satisfaction in Me.

A devotee who has completely resigned himself to Me does not desire anything apart from Me, even the position of an emperor, the state of Brahma, the attainment of all yogic powers or even liberation from the cycle of birth and death.

Neither Brahma My offspring, nor Shankara My own emanation, nor Balarama My brother, nor Sri My consort, nor even My own Self is so dear to Me as you (devotees) are.

I always follow the footsteps of the sage who desires nothing, who is always tranquil and who has enmity to none, in order that all the worlds within Me get purified by the dust of his feet.

None else – including aspirants for salvation – can experience that state of desire-less bliss attainable by those devotees who have no wealth except Me, who have deep attachment to Me, who have universal love for all beings, and whose minds are free from the stain of lust.

Though a devotee of Mine might be under the domination of the senses at the beginning of his spiritual life, with the gradual growth of devotion, he is able to overcome them.

Just as a flaming fire reduces all fuel to ashes, so does devotion to Me destroy all sins obstructing its development.

Oh Uddhava! Neither yoga, nor philosophy, nor karma, nor Vedic study, nor austerity, nor renunciation attracts Me as intense bhakti does.

I, the very soul and the dearest love of all holy men, can be attained through intense faith and unswerving and whole-hearted devotion to Me. Steady and deep-rooted devotion to Me purifies and elevates even a man of ignoble birth in a society given to unclean ways of life.

Any dharma (religious or moral discipline) though it may be inculcating practices of truthfulness, compassion, learning, austerity, etc fails to purify a mind that has no place in it for cultivation of devotion to Me.

Where is bhakti, without the liquefaction of mind expressed through horripilation all over and the flow of tears of joy from the eyes? And without this kind of intense devotion, how can total purification of one's being be effected?

A devotee whose words falter owing to excess of joy, whose heart melts owing to the tenderness of love, who weeps from the grief of separation from Me, who now and then loudly laughs at the thought of the mysterious workings of My Maya; and who sings and dances in joy without any inhibition thinking of My play in creation, and as Incarnations, verily purifies the worlds.

Just as gold regains its natural brilliance on its impurities being removed by subjection to heat treatment, so too, through bhakti, a Jiva is able to overcome all impurities and attain to Me.

As the mind becomes more purified by the discipline of hearing the holy accounts of My deeds and excellences, it becomes more and more capable of understanding the very subtle truth of the Atman, just as the acuteness of eyesight to see subtle things is enhanced by the application of collyrium made of powerful medicinal herbs.

The mind of a man who always thinks of sense objects becomes attached to such objects, while the mind that thinks of Me gets dissolved in Me.

Therefore, concentrate on Me your mind purified by the practice of devotion to Me, abandoning all thoughts which are on par with the content of dreams and reveries.

Abandoning objects exciting sexual passion and persons who indulge in them let a seeker sit indrawn and resolute, in a place pleasing and secluded, and meditate on Me without lethargy.

Nothing can make a man spiritually bankrupt and wretched as sexual association with women and with persons addicted to such association can.

Uddava said:

Oh Lotus-eyed One! You ought to tell me how a spiritual aspirant should meditate on Thee, in what form and with what attributes.

Sri Bhagawan said:

Seated on a seat, not too elevated or too low, with body straight and hands in the lap, eyes half-closed and appearing to gaze at the nose, one should purify the path by

which the prana is functioning, by the practice of pranayama with the three stages of inhaling (puraka), retaining (kumbhaka) and exhaling (rechaka). After doing it first in the above order, one may also do in the reverse order, from the right to the left nostril. One must exercise control over the senses, too.

Like a fine thread of lotus stalk and like a continuous peel of a bell, the mystic sound AUM is extending from the muladhara up. By the regulation of the prana, this mystic sound should be raised to the heart and made clearly manifest there.

In this way, pranayama with pranava (AUM) should be practised ten times during the three sandhyas – morning, noon and evening. By practising that way for a month, one gains sufficient control over breath.

The aspirant should meditate on the lotus of the heart drooping on its stalk with its tip down, as now blooming upward with eight petals and a pericarp in the centre. In the pericarp, meditate on the sun, moon and fire as arranged one over the other. In the middle of the fire, let My Form, so auspicious for meditation, be invoked.

Let the Form be meditated upon with the following features: well proportioned limbs, extremely calm, tranquil and beautiful; four long and well-formed arms; the neck well-proportioned and handsome; shining cheeks illumined by a charming smile; fish marked pendants be-decking the ears; and gold-coloured cloth covering the body looking blue like a rain cloud, in the background of the habitat of Sri and Srivatsa.

The Form is to be meditated upon as equipped with conch, discus, mace and play-lotus, and decorated with a wreath of wild flowers, with shining anklets on the feet and the resplendent jewel Kaustubha on the neck.

The Form is to be visualized shining with diadem, wristlets, girdle, armlets, lovely in every limb, heart-bewitching, and with eyes radiating peace and joy.

The resolute seeker should withdraw the senses from the objects into the mind, and the mind, directed by the intellect, should be made to dwell on My Form in its fullness.

The mind thus made to dwell on the total Form is to be directed to concentrate exclusively on one limb or part, preferably on the face illumined by a smile. When the mind is so fixed, there is no need to think of the rest of the Form.

When the mind has thus got one-pointedness of attention, it gets transcended and dwells on Me as the Absolute Being, in a state of thoughtlessness.

The seeker who is in this state of consciousness will realize Me, the Supreme Brahman (Paramatman) in the Self, and the Self in the Supreme Brahman, without any difference, even as a minute point of light merges in a very luminous light.

For, a yogi who strives assiduously to practise meditation will soon overcome the erroneous view of the distinction among the seer, the seen and the act of seeing.

10. Siddhis or Psychic-powers

Sri Bhagawan said:

To the yogi who has thus conquered the senses, controlled the vital forces, attained steadiness of mind and concentrated only on Me, many psychic powers accrue.

Uddhava said:

Oh Achyuta! What kinds of concentration bring about what types of psychic powers? How are they obtained? How many are they in number? Be pleased to tell me all about this. For, Thou art the One who bestows these powers on yogis.

Sri Bhagawan said:

Experts in yoga say that there are eighteen types of psychic powers related to eighteen kinds of concentration for attaining them. Of these eight are generated from Me while the other ten arise from the dominance of the sattva aspect of Prakrti.

By concentrating on objects as they appear, as they are in themselves, on the subtle elements that constitute them, on their qualities, etc. one conquers all the elements and obtains the powers such as becoming infinitesimally small (anami), becoming infinitely large (mahima), becoming infinitesimally light (laghima), becoming infinitesimally heavy (gurutvam), the power of touching anything at any distance (prapti), obtaining anything desired (prakamya), lordship over everything (isitva) and control over everything (vasitva). These powers are called the Asta – siddhis, the most important ones. There are other less important powers realized, called Riddhis.

Recent studies in parapsychology accept such phenomena as tele-kinesis - producing motion in a body without the application of material force, clairvoyance - the power of seeing objects or actions removed from natural sight, clairaudience - the power of hearing sounds at a distance, telepathy - communication between minds by means other than sensory perception, apport - producing at a place an object which is at a far distant place, development of extra sensory perceptions and the like. These studies also admit the possibility of a person dematerializing, re-assembling himself elsewhere and reappearing there. They also accept “thought therapy” as a way of healing diseases by intense well-wishing, positive thinking and faith cure. Some practitioners in parapsychology organize inter-communication between the living and the spirits. Some hypnotize the living persons and take them into their past lives by way of regression to know the details thereof very vividly. They similarly organize progression to know the future lives of the souls. Indeed, parapsychologists such as Micheal Newton recall, in their studies, the journey of souls in between their lives on earth or elsewhere.

Parapsychologists also accept the miraculous phenomena as a science in the name of “Thaumaturgy”. They consider this science to be susceptible to rational and logical experimentation.

The other siddhis referred to are: to be free from hunger and thirst; seeing and hearing things at a distance; traveling at the speed of the mind; assuming any form one likes; entering into and assuming another body; to die only at will; witnessing the sports of celestials; attaining anything according to one’s desire; and unobstructed movement anywhere.

Besides these, there are five other subsidiary powers spoken of. These are: power of understanding the past, present and future; capacity to endure heat and cold and other pairs of opposites; reading the minds of others; overcoming the effects of fire, sun, light, water and poisons; and invincibility.

The above is a brief description of the powers attainable by yoga. Now listen what type of concentration leads to what type of siddhi, and how they are attained.

Concentrating on the subtle-elements or tanmatras as enlivened by Me, the mind gets to the rarefied state of these subtle elements. Such a meditator on tanmatras obtains the power of making the body very small.

The siddhi called mahima (to grow big in size) is obtained by concentrating on the Mahattattva, with Me as indweller. Meditating on Me as the indweller of any of the bhutas (elements) will help one attain to the vastness of the said bhuta.

One who concentrates the mind on Me as one with a paramanu (the subtlest atomic-particle) of any of the elements will attain to the lightness of a unit of space measured by the said paramanu.

Concentrating on Me with the adjunct of sattva aspect of ego-sense (ahamkara), the yogi will get the power called prapti, which will enable him to identify himself with the sense of any creature, and control it.

If one meditates on Me as Sutratman, the all-pervading Spirit, as the energy working through everything in the universe, one will get My most superior manifesting power through the adjunct of Sutratman, called prakamya, whereby even distant objects (both in space and in time) shine clear in one’s vision.

Concentrating on Me, Vishnu, the all-pervading, as the master of the three gunas and as manifested in the form of Time, one will obtain the power called isitva, which gives the capacity to control and direct the body and soul of any other being.

Concentrating on Me, Narayana who is denoted by the expression Bhagawan meaning the possessor of the six-fold divine treasures, and also called Turiya or the

Fourth who transcends the three aspects of Virat, Hiranyagarbha and the First cause, one obtains the power called vasitva, which keeps one unaffected and unperturbed like Me under all conditions.

Treasure, glory, strength, splendour, knowledge and renunciation are, in their entirety, the six treasures of the God-head – Bhagawan.

An aspirant who concentrates his purified mind on Me as the Brahman transcending the gunas of Prakrti (nirguna) will attain that Supreme Bliss (paramananda), which is the consummation of all desires.

He who meditates on Me as Anirudha, the Lord of the white continent, who is of unsullied purity and of the essence of dharma, will attain to the state of whiteness which consists in freedom from sorrow, delusion and the other six evils of the life of samsara.

By meditating on Me as the prana (vital energy) enveloping everything like the akasa (space), one will hear all sounds manifesting in akasa, irrespective of distance.

By meditating on Me at the junction where the eyesight is made to unite with the sun, one obtains extreme subtlety of perception, enabling one to see anything, however small or however far it is.

By uniting the body and the mind along with the prana accompanying them, with Me in meditation, one attains the power of physically reaching any place that the mind reaches.

By the power obtained by meditation on Me, the yogi can assume any form he likes by impressing that form on the mind-stuff.

A siddha (one with psychic power) who desires to enter another body should first mentally think as he being in that body. Then his subtle body comes out, merges with the air and as breath, enters into the other body, as a bee transits from one flower to another.

While pressing the anus with the heel, the subtle body or the linga-sarira constituting the adjunct of the atman should be raised to the heart, chest, neck and crown of the head, stage by stage. Then with the passing of the subtle body through the aperture at the crown called brahmarandhra, the gross body must be abandoned, and unity with the Brahman attained.

Those who desire to sport in heavenly gardens should meditate on suddhasattva, the undiluted divine substance. Then divine damsels who are formed of sattva will arrive in celestial vehicles and attend on him.

. When an aspirant, who is completely resigned to Me and dependent on Me, fixes his mind on Me, any particular wish willed in that state shall be instantly fulfilled.

He who has become absorbed in Me, the Lord and Master of all, the eternally free Being, will not meet with obstruction anywhere. His resolves and commands will be accomplished just like Mine.

He whose nature has become purified by bhakti and who knows the art of concentration can gain knowledge of the past, the present and the future, including his own birth and death in different bodies.

The yoga-practised body of a contemplative practising meditation will not be endangered by fire, just as aquatic creatures are not adversely affected by water.

One who meditates on My divine manifestations having all My embellishments like srivatsa mark, conch and discus, besides other paraphernalia like flag-staff, ceremonial umbrella and cowries will never meet with defeat.

Thus, those who practise adoration of Me according to the discipline of concentration described above will attain all the powers mentioned earlier without much difficulty.

For a yogi who has controlled the senses and the mind, who has the mastery of the prana, and who knows how to concentrate on Me, what siddhi is there that is unattainable?

Great men, however, say that these siddhis are obstacles in the way of a spiritual aspirant. For one who practises the highest yoga to reach Me, they cause delay.

All the siddhis that are found to accrue by birth, drugs, austerity, mantras, etc can be had by the practice of the yoga described before. But the siddhis accruing by birth, drugs, austerity, mantras, etc cannot yield as much as attained through yoga alone.

I, the Almighty, am the source and master of all siddhis. I am also the source and protector of Sankhya, Yoga, dharma and the knowledge of the Brahman.

I am the indwelling Self in all beings without in any way being limited by the bodies of beings. I am the Transcendent-Self, too. Just as the bhutas or the elements are within and without the objects that have come out of them, so am I both within and without, transcending all limitation.

11. Manifestations of Divine Glory

Uddhava said:

Thou art verily the Supreme Brahman without any limiting adjuncts, without beginning and end. Thou art also the cause of birth, life, preservation and death of all entities that are of the nature of effects.

The knowers of the Veda see and worship Thee in all that is high and low. This is beyond the understanding of impure and immature minds.

Deign to speak to Me all those aspects in which the great rishis adore Thee and attain to perfection.

Oh Creator! Thou, the all-pervading one, move in all beings, unseen and unclear. Because of the clouding of their vision by Thee, they do not see Thee, the seer of everything.

Oh Thou rich in divine attributes! Deign to tell me of whatever there is on the earth, in the heaven, or in rasatala occurring as Thy far-famed glorious manifestations, which are specially fortified by Thy power. My salutations to Thy holy feet, the seat of all sanctity!

Sri Bhagawan said:

Oh Uddhava! You are a clever interlocutor! This very question was put to Me at the battlefield of Kurukshetra by Arjuna where he had stationed himself in readiness to meet his enemies in battle.

Thinking that the slaughter of one's own kith and kin in battle for the sake of a Kingdom is sinful, he wanted to withdraw from the battle. For, he was overcome by the ordinary ignorant man's idea, 'I am the killer and he is the killed'.

When I restored in him the hero's balance of mind by rational instructions, he put to Me in that battlefield the same question you have now raised.

Oh Uddhava! I am the Atman (the Essence), the well-wisher, and the master of all beings. I am the All-formed, and I am simultaneously the One from whom all creations spring, by whom all beings are sustained and in whom they all dissolve.

I am the power of movement in all moving creatures; I am Time among all forces that attract all; among gunas I am sattva; and among the virtuous I am their natural virtue.

Of all the products of the gunas, I am the Sutratman, the spirit that runs as a thread through all; and of all-comprehending entities, I am the Mahattattva, the primeval category from which all things have evolved. Of subtle entities, I am the Jiva; and of the unconquerable ones, I am the mind.

Among the propagators of the Veda, I am Hirangarbha (Brahma). Among mantras, I am the sound symbol 'AUM' which combines in itself the three sound syllables a, u and m. Among letters, I am the letter A; and among Vedic metres, Gayatri.

Among Devas, I am Indra; and among the eight Vasus, I am Agni (the fire-deity), the transmitter of sacrificial offerings. Among the Adityas, I am Vishnu; and among Rudras I am Nilalohita, the blue-throated one.

Among brahmarishis, I am Bhrigu; among rajarishis (royal sages) I am Manu; among celestial sages, I am Narada; and among cows, I am Kamadhenu.

Among the master-siddhas (adepts), I am Kapila; among the birds, Garuda; among the prajapatis, Daksha; and among pitris (manes), Aryama.

Know, Oh Uddhava, that I am Prahlada among daityas; Soma, their King, among the stars and the planets; and Kubera, their ruler, among the rakshas and the yakshas.

Among the great elephants, I am Airavata; among dwellers of the water, Varuna, their Lord; among the hot and brilliant bodies, the sun; and among men, the king.

Know Me to be Uchchaisravas among horses; gold among metals; Yama among disciplinarians; and Vasuki among serpents.

Among the great nagas, I am Ananta; among animals having horns and fangs, their king the lion. Among the various stations of life, I am the sannyasa, and among varnas, the brahmana.

I am Ganga (the Ganges) among the holy rivers, and the ocean among lakes; among the weapons, I am the bow, and among wielders of the bow, Parameswara, the destroyer of the Tripuras.

Among the places providing residence, I am Meru; and among the regions difficult of access, I am the Himalaya. Among trees, I am Aswattha, and barley among cereals.

I am Vasista among the priests, and Brihaspati among the knowers of the meaning (bhashya) of the Veda. Among generals, I am Skanda, and among workers for righteousness, Brahma.

Among sacrifices, I am the sacrifice of japa, and among vows, the vow of non-injury. Among purifying agents, I am the purifier in the shape of air, fire, sun, water and the words of holy men.

In ways of spiritual communion, I am samadhi; in those who aspire for victory, I am policy based on proper deliberation; among methods of investigation, I am the discriminative process by which the spirit is differentiated from matter; and among theoreticians on the problems of truth and illusion, I am their persisting differences.

Among women, I am Satarupa; among men, Swayambhuva; among munis, Narayana; and among celibates, Sanatkumara.

Among the virtuous ways of life, I am sannyasa; among the means of happiness, I am the capacity to make the mind inward-looking. Among the means of keeping secrets, I am silence, and sweet and careful speech. Among the couples of men and women, I am Brahma who was the first to assume the forms of both.

Among the wink-less and the vigilant, I am the year; among the seasons, the spring; among the months, the Margasirsha; and among the constellations, the Abhijit.

Among yugas, I am Krita-yuga; among the wise and firm-minded, I am Asita and Devala. Among the Vyasas (editors), I am Dvaipayana who rearranged the Vedas; and among the farsighted, I am the Rishi Sukra.

Among those who deserve the appellation of Bhagawan, I am Vasudev; and among those to be called bhagavatas (devotees), I am yourself. Among kimpurushas, I am Hanuman; and among vidyadharas, Sudarsana.

Among precious jewels, I am the ruby (padmaraga); among the beautiful objects, the lotus; among various kinds of grass, kusa; and among materials for offering in yajna, the ghee derived from the milk of the cow.

I am the wealth of the industrious; and I am the deceit of the deceitful gambler. I am the fortitude of the forbearing; and I am the power of the powerful.

I am the vigour and the sustaining power of the strong; I am the rites which the pious perform; and I am the first of the nine forms of the deity that vaishnavas worship – Vasudeva, Sankarshana, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Narayana, Hayagriva, Varaha, Narasimha and Vamana.

Among gandharvas, I am Viswvasu; and among apsaras, Purvachitti. I am the firmness of mountains and the subtle fragrance of the earth.

I am the sweet taste of water. Among the heat-producing agents, I am fire. I am the shine of the sun, the moon and the stars, and I am the unmodified sound of akasa.

Among those who revere holy men, I am Bali; among heroes, I am Arjuna; and I am the origin, sustenance and dissolution of all beings.

I am the functioning of the five organs of action – walking, speech, evacuation, holding and regeneration – and also of the functioning of the five organs of knowledge – touch, sight, taste, hearing and smell. I am, in all the senses, the power that enables them to grasp their objects.

The seven categories consisting of subtle aspects (tanmatras) of the five elements, the earth, air, sky, fire and water, as also the ego-sense and the Mahattattva; the sixteen categories including the five gross elements and the eleven indriyas (sense faculties); and also the Jiva, the Avyakta (the unmodified Prakrti), the three gunas and the Supreme Being – all these categories, their enumeration, their understanding and the determination of their understanding and the determination of their true nature – all these I am. There is no existence other than Me, the all-inclusive and the all-pervading Being, who am Iswara and the Jiva, the substance and the attribute.

It may be possible for Me to count all the fundamental particles of the universe in the course of a vast period of time. But even I cannot exhaustively count and estimate My powers and glories; for out of them crores and crores of world systems are always originating, thus setting no limits to them.

Know that a part of Me is present wherever you notice extraordinary manifestation of powers, prosperity, fame, lordliness, modesty, renunciation, attractiveness, luck, courage, endurance and knowledge.

I have briefly described to you My glories. They are only mental conceptions clothed in words to help man direct his mind to the Supreme Being.

Control the speech, control the mind, control the vital energies, control the senses and control the lower self by the higher self. If this is achieved, there is no more involvement in samsara.

If a sannyasin fails to control his speech and his mind, the effects of his spiritual striving by means of vows, austerities and acts of charity will all leak out, like water kept in an unbaked pot.

Therefore, one who has resigned oneself to Me should control one's speech, mind and prana with one's understanding soaked in devotion to Me. That will lead one to life's fulfillment.

12. Varnashrama: Brahmacharin and Grihastha

Uddhava said:

In ancient times Thou hadst given Thy teaching on swadharma, the way of life by following which persons included in the four varnas and ashramas as well as others can attain devotion to Thee. It behoves Thee, Oh lotus-eyed One, to tell me how bhakti is generated by such actions known as swadharma.

True, in ages past, in Thy incarnation as the Swan, Thou, Oh Madhava, Thou Lord of all, didst reveal to Brahma the dharma, which is the pathway to salvation. The passage of time has, however, dimmed it in the minds of men.

Oh Achyuta! Even in the following of Brahma, where all the arts and sciences are present in embodied forms to present their teachings, Thou art the only one competent authority to expound, put into practice and protect dharma.

Oh Madhusudana! When Thou, who art the promulgator, the protector and the teacher of dharma, have left the world at the close of Thy divine play as the Incarnate, who will be there to revive this dharma when it is lost by disuse?

So, Oh knower of dharma in all its aspects! Deign to speak to me about dharma that will augment devotion to Thee, to whom this dharma is ordained, and how they are to practise it.

Sri Suka said:

Being thus questioned by His servant, Sri Hari expounded dharma as follows, with great joy for the benefit of all mankind.

Sri Bhagawan said:

Oh Uddhava! Your question pertaining to dharma will be very beneficial to the followers of varnashrama-dharma as also to other righteous men, as it will help to promote their spiritual evolution.

In the first Krita-yuga after the beginning of the kalpa, there was only one varna known as hamsa. That yuga was called Krita, because all men then were naturally kritakrityas – self-fulfilled and perfect.

In that primeval age, the Veda was pranava (AUM) alone, and I manifested as dharma with its four aspects intact. The worshippers then were pure and sinless, and their worship took the form of meditation.

In the Treta-yuga, the Veda emerged from My heart with prana as the medium. Thus I appeared as the Yajna with its three divisions represented by three priestly functionaries – Hota, Adhvaryu and Udgata.

From the face, hands, thighs and feet of the Virat-purusa, Me in My cosmic form, were born the four varnas, the brahamana, kshatriya, vaisya and sudra respectively. They have their specific duties naturally laid down for them.

The ashrama of the house-holder sprang from my hip; of the brahmacharin from My heart; of the forest-dweller (vanaprastha) from My chest; and of the sannyasin from My head.

The nature of the members of the varnas and the ashramas was determined by the place of their origin in the Virat. Those who were born of the higher regions were endowed with nobler nature and those who originated from lower parts were of lower nature.

The brahmanas are characterized by control of mind and senses, purity - internal and external, contemplation, contentment, forbearance, integrity, devotion to Me, kindness and truthfulness.

Impressiveness, strength, self-control, courage, endurance, generosity, enterprise, firmness, reverence for holy men and commanding power are the inborn characteristics of a kshatriya.

Faith in God and the Veda, charity, absence of arrogance, service of holy men and insatiable acquisitiveness are the natural traits of a vaisya.

The spirit of sincere service of the holy men and those of all other varnas, the cows, etc, satisfaction with what he receives for his services are the inborn traits of a sudra.

Impurity, duplicity, thieving, lack of belief in God and Veda, wanton quarrelsomeness, lust, anger and greed are the characteristics of people outside the varnashrama-dharma.

It is the common dharma (sadharana-dharma) of persons belonging to all varnas to be free from cruelty, dishonesty, thieving, lust, anger and greed as also to do what is good and pleasing to all creatures.

A dvija or a member of the first three varnas should have undergone all the prenatal and postnatal purificatory rites and attained his second birth with the upanayana, with the investiture of the sacred thread, which makes him eligible for study of the Veda and performance of the rites enshrined therein. He should then live in the house-hold of the guru, a highly disciplined life, studying the Veda from the guru.

Brahmacharins are of two classes – upakurvanas and naishtikas. The duties stated above relate to the former.

Dressed in deer skin, wearing a grass girdle and a sacred thread, having matted locks, holding in hand a staff, stringed beads of japa, a water pot and some kusa grass, a brahmacharin should live without bestowing much attention on his physical appearance, dress, fashions and personal comforts.

He should observe silence while bathing, taking food, evacuating, performing sacrificial rites and making japa. He should not pare his nails or shave off his hair, including those under the arm pits and the private parts.

A student who has taken the vow of a brahmacharin should never consciously allow the ejaculation of his semen to take place. If it were to take place naturally by itself, he should, immediately thereafter, bathe, perform pranayama and utter the Gayatri mantra.

Observing purity of body and mind and bestowing deep attention, he should do service to the fire, sun, teacher, cow, holy men, elders, old people, Devas, etc. At sunrise and sunset he should sit in silence and repeat the Gayatri.

He should look upon the guru to be Me, and not as a mere man. He should never insult him or revolt against him. For, the guru is the embodiment of all divinities.

The brahmacharin should, morning and evening, go about bhiksha, and present whatever food material or other things he has collected as offerings to the guru. Restraining his own impulse to eat, he should take only such of those things as the guru permits him to eat.

He should serve the guru like a servant, going behind him wherever he goes, sleeping near where he sleeps, massaging his feet when he rests, and standing with joined palms nearby when he sits.

Until his education is over, he should live in this way at the guru's house, avoiding luxury, following a code of austere disciplines, and observing the vow of celibacy without compromise.

If the brahmacharin aspires to attain to Brahma-loka, he should make his vow of being celibate lifelong, and dedicate himself to the guru with a view to utilizing his whole life for the study of the Veda. Such a lifelong celibate is called a naishtika brahmacharin (in contrast to the upakurvana brahmacharin described earlier).

A life-long brahmacharin, with his spiritual splendor augmented by Vedic study and a pure life, should meditate on Me as manifesting in the fire, in the guru, in himself and in all beings, in an attitude of non-separateness.

Excepting the house-holder, the others should not indulge in sexually motivated behaviour towards women like viewing, touching, holding homely conversations, joking, etc. They should also avoid the sight of animals and birds copulating.

The naishtika brahmacharin should, along with members of all other ashramas, practise the following universal disciplines: cleanliness, sipping water ceremonially (achamana), bathing, performing sandhya-vandana, being straightforward, visiting holy places, doing japa, avoiding contacts, food and associations that are degrading, habituating to feel My presence in everyone, and control of mind, speech and action, etc.

A naishtika brahmacharin, who follows this intensely austere way of life, will shine like fire; his mind with all its tendencies will be purified in the fire of knowledge. He will consequently develop intense devotion to Me.

After having studied the Veda with its meaning, one desirous of entering the life of the house-holder should make adequate parting presents to the learned teacher of the Veda, and with the blessings of the teacher, perform the ceremonial bath of samavartana, indicating the conclusion of Vedic study and of the period of brahmacharya.

He is now free to become a house-holder or a forest-dwelling ascetic (vanaprastha) – the former, if he seeks enjoyment, and the later, if he seeks purification of the mind. But if he is an aspirant of the highest order, he can become a sannyasin directly. According to his choice (and fitness), he can pass from one ashrama to a superior ashrama. But a devotee of Me should never do the reverse, nor should he remain without adopting any ashrama.

He who enters the house-holder's ashrama should marry a girl younger than him in age, unblemished in respect of family traditions and auspiciousness, and well-matched to him in all respects. She must be of his own varna and, if absolutely necessary, girls from lower varnas may be taken as wives, in their succeeding order.

Performance of Yajna, learning the Veda and making gifts form the duty of all the dvijas (twice-born). But receiving gifts, teaching the Veda and conducting yajnas is the exclusive right of the brahmanas.

If one thinks that acceptance of gifts is detrimental to austerity, spirituality and good name, one may live by the other two occupations of teaching Veda and conducting yajnas (sacrifices). If one finds even these defective, one may subsist on fallen grains gathered from the fields after harvest.

The body of the brahmana is not meant for indulgence in vulgar enjoyment. It is meant for a life of hardship and austerity here and for eternal bliss hereafter.

One, who thus lives on stray grains collected from fields and home-steads, who is content with what one has, and who follows the lofty ideals of a desireless life dedicated to dharma, with his mind wholly resigned to Me and free from attachments, will attain liberation even while remaining a house-holder.

I will save anyone who renders help in difficulties to such a holy man who is entirely dedicated to Me, when he is himself in difficulties, as a boat saves a drowning one from the ocean.

A king should protect his subjects from all dangers as a father does his children. As an elephant saves itself and its herd, so should a king be a saviour of all.

Such a king will overcome all his sins here itself, and he will hereafter reside with Indra in a mansion resplendent like the sun, and enjoy heavenly delights.

If a brahmana is in a dangerous situation which upsets his way of life, he may take to trading like a vaisya until he gets over the difficulties. If difficulties overwhelm him there also, he may take to the sword like a kshatriya. But he should never descend to the livelihood of a dog, serving a mean master.

A kshatriya, too, when he is in danger, can take to trading or to hunting for his livelihood, or even to the duty of a brahmana, but he should never descend to the life of a dog, serving a mean master.

If a vaisya falls into a dangerous situation, he can follow the duty of a sudra, and if a sudra is in difficulty, he can take to a carpenter's or mat-maker's work for livelihood. When one is free from the difficulties, one should not continue to live by inferior professions.

Feeling My presence in them, a house-holder should daily adore Devas, rishis, pitris, men and lower creations with offerings in the forms of homas, Vedic study, sraaddhas, festive feeding and edibles respectively.

This is called the panchamahayajna, incumbent on a house-holder.

With wealth that has come to one unexpectedly or what one has earned by honest means, one may perform other yajnas also without causing any discomfort to one's dependants and servants.

Even though one has a family, one should not get too much attached to its members. Without any slackness, one should be vigilant in regard to the true nature of life. One must bear in mind that all the enjoyments expected in the after-life are as perishable as those of this life.

The association with sons, wives, dear friends and relatives is no better than the chance-gathering of a group of travelers in a caravanserai. Just as dream relatives

change in the recurring dream-states that follow sleep, so do those of the waking state change in repeated embodiments.

A person will not get attached to the home, if he reflects on this truth, and lives in the home like a guest, without any feelings of 'I' and 'mine', with regard to anything or anybody in life.

One who is devoted to Me can continue to live in the home itself till one's end, performing all the duties related to the home as offerings to Me. Or one can become a forest-dweller, living the life of an ascetic in the forest. Or, entrusting all house-hold affairs to one's son, one can become a sannyasin, a holy wanderer in the world with no fixed residence.

He, whose mind is extremely attached to the home, ever worried with thoughts of his children, wealth and luxuries, and is pitifully petty-minded and grossly ignorant of spiritual matters, is strongly fastened with the chain of 'I' and 'mine'.

He will be given to such thoughts as this: 'Alas! Sorrow-stricken by my death, how will my old parents and my wife with orphaned children get on in this world without me!'

Attracted in this way by the insatiable attachment to home, the ignorant man ruminates again and again over the experiences and enjoyment of home-life until death overtakes him. Birth in lower level, dominated by the blinding darkness of ignorance, awaits him thereafter.

13. Varnashrama: Vanaprastha and the Sannyasin

Sri Bhagavan said:

He who desires to be a forest-dweller should spend the third part of his life (from fifty-one to seventy-five years of age) in the forest hermitage, leaving his wife to the care of his son at home, or accompanied by her.

He should subsist on permitted roots, tubers and fruits available in the forest. For dress, he should use tree-bark, grass or deer skin.

He should leave his body untended and uncared for, allowing his hair and nails to grow uncut. Care of the teeth must be minimal. He should bathe thrice a day and sleep on the floor.

In the summer, he should practise concentration sitting amidst the heat of five fires – four fires on the four sides and the sun above. In the rainy season, he should observe the vow of abhravakasa consisting in exposure to torrential rain. In winter, he should stay-put in neck-deep water, an austere practice called udakavasa. A forest-dweller should thus lead a life of austere practices.

He can eat things cooked in fire, or ripened by time. He can use cereals pounded in mortar or with stones, or merely masticate them with the mortar of his teeth.

A forest-dweller should gather material of his food from the forest himself. As far as the conditions of place and time would permit, he should not store material of food got from elsewhere, for use afterwards.

He can perform seasonal sacrifices like agrayana enjoined on him with offerings of charu and purodasa made of wild cereals. A forest-dweller should not perform any Vedic rite involving animal sacrifice.

The Vedic scholars say that the forest-dweller should perform the ordained rites such as agnihotra, darsa, purnamasa and chaturmasya as before, but with the ingredients available in the forest.

Worshipping Me, the embodiment of Tapas (penance), in this way by severe austerities that emaciate him to reveal the contours of all his blood vessels, the forest-dweller reaches Me, stage by stage, passing through maharloka and other spheres.

Who can be more thoughtless than the one who utilizes this noble and difficult discipline of tapas which can take one to liberation, for attainment of petty worldly pleasures?

When a forest-dweller becomes feeble and tottering because of advancing age, and is unable to perform his obligatory duties (swadharna), he should, through contemplation, withdraw into the heart the sacred fires he has been tending, and then concentrating his mind fully on Me immolate himself in a well-lit pyre.

When complete dispassion for life is generated in a seeker by the recognition that all places and experiences are unworthy of living, then such a person is fit to give up his duties of fire-rites and take to the life of a wandering sannyasin.

Adoring Me with the prajapatya sacrifice according to the instruction received, giving up all one's possessions as gifts to the assisting priests, and withdrawing one's sacred fires into the Self, one should take to the life of a sannyasin without looking for anything to depend upon.

But out of jealousy that one, taking to sannyasa, will go beyond their pale of influence and importance, the Devas will at first cause obstructions to such an aspirant, appearing in the guise of children.

A sannyasin should have cod-piece alone as dress, and should he wear anything more, it should only be a loin cloth to cover the cod-piece. He should not keep with him any properties of his previous station of life except his staff and water-pot. Nothing-else he should keep except in times of grave danger.

He should take paces only carefully, lest he should trample upon any living creatures. For the same reason, he should drink water only after filtering it with cloth; he should speak only what has got the sacred stamp of Truth; he should act only what has been sanctified by proper reflection.

Oh Uddhava! A person, merely because he carries a three-pronged staff of bamboo (tridanda), will not become a tridandi-sannyasin, unless he is also equipped with the three staffs of silence, breath control and desireless-ness, which constitute the restraints of speech, body and mind.

Except from those given to evil ways of life, he can take bhiksha (holy alms) daily from seven homes of persons of the four varnas, without any pre-determination or selection of the homes or persons to be visited.

Going out of the village to a river or tank, doing the purificatory water-rites like achamana and prokshana, and observing silence, he can take all that food, after having offered it to God and to whomever he wants to share it with.

He should wander alone in the world, unattached, self-controlled, even-sighted, established in the Self, and having his recreation and enjoyment in the Self.

Resorting to the sanctuary of solitude, and purified by devotion to Me, the sage should think of the pervading Self in all as One and as non-different from Me.

One should reflect on the state of bondage caused by ignorance, and of liberation resulting from firmly established knowledge. Bondage is the state in which the senses are completely outward directed. Their control is salvation (moksha).

Therefore, with the mind immersed in Me, the sage should move about, controlling all his senses, entertaining no hankering after mean pleasures, and finding deep joy in the Self.

Entering towns, villages, cowherd settlements and alm-houses only to collecting holy alms (bhiksha), he should wander about the world visiting all holy lands, holy rivers, holy mountains, and settlements of holy men.

He should take bhiksha (holy alms) frequently from the settlements of forest-dwellers. For, the food of these hermits, made of grains collected by gleaning the fields, is highly purifying; and those who take it will be purified soon in mind, freed from delusion, and blessed with quick advancement in spiritual life.

One should not consider this world of sense experiences as ultimate. For, it is seen to be temporary and fleeting. Therefore, let him renounce, without any lingering attachments, all objects of this world and the next.

Rejecting, on the proof offered by dream experience, this whole world including one's own body, pranas and mind as an insubstantial projection of the atman, one should remain established in one's self, without even the memory of the world.

If one has reached the state of firm establishment in knowledge and absolute renunciation, or if one has abandoned even the desire for salvation, one may give up the external symbols of his ashrama like the staff, and move about as a Paramahansa without being subject to any commandments.

Though wise, one should sport like a child unconcerned about status; though highly intelligent, one should behave like a dull-witted person without any plans; though learned, one should speak like an intoxicated person in order to avoid popularity; though established in the Truth taught by the Veda, one should roam about like cattle with absolute unconcern and abandon for all established codes of conduct.

A sannyasin should not be concerned with the eulogistic sentences of the Veda which deal with ritualism, nor should he be an unbeliever in the Veda, or a vain disputant. He should not take sides in purposeless logic-chopping controversies.

He should have no cause to fear the populace, and men, in general, should have nothing to fear from the sannyasin. He should put up with criticism and disparagement patiently, but he himself should never insult others. He should not have animosity towards others like beasts, from bodily considerations.

For, the same Supreme Spirit dwells in all objects and in all living beings, just as the same moon dwells as reflection in numerous water pots. In respect of their bodies too, all creatures have come out of the same matter.

A sannyasin should not feel depressed if he fails to get food at times, nor should he feel any glee when he gets it. For, it is all determined by one's past karma.

It is but proper that one strives for food; for, food is needed for keeping oneself alive. A healthy body enables one to reflect on Truth, leading to realization of the Atman and to liberation from samsara.

Food that comes to one by chance should be partaken, whether it is well-cooked or ill-cooked. So also one should accept, without any consideration of being good or bad, whatever food or cloth one gets by chance.

One need not do cleaning, bathing, etc on account of any compulsion or commandments enjoining on one. One need attend to them only as a free-spirit, just as I act everywhere as play in complete freedom.

One has no divisive consciousness as it has been obliterated on realizing Me. A semblance of it seen in taking food, etc will last only so long as the body is there. When the body falls, one merges into Me.

One may realize that suffering is the final fruit of desires and, by this realization, may develop renunciation for worldly life. One may also have mastery of the senses. But one may yet be ignorant of the highest dharma leading to the attainment of Me. Such a person, in order to be so instructed, must seek a guru who is a muni (sage), and who is fully absorbed in the reflection on the Atman.

There are two types of muni – a sage who observes mouna or silence. One is the rigid ascetic and the other is the liberated sage. The rigid ascetic forcibly restrains his senses and engages himself in dry activities, devoid of wisdom and with fanaticism. The liberated sage, on the other hand, knows the Truth as Truth and the unreal as unreal. He is endowed with self-knowledge and yet behaves like any other ordinary person. What is regarded as mouna or silence is based on the nature and behaviour of the sage concerned.

Until one attains to spiritual realization, one should serve the guru with great faith and attention, avoiding all adverse thoughts against him, and looking upon him as Me.

A man who has not subdued his six enemies, the senses, whose will (buddhi) is perverted by the deep-seated desires, who is devoid of knowledge and renunciation, and yet assumes and displays the triple staff of the sannyasin as a means of livelihood is a traitor to dharma, deceives the adorable Devas, his own self, and Me, the dweller in all

beings including himself. With all evil tendencies latent and waiting to come out, he loses this world and the next.

The principal dharma of the sannyasin consists in tranquility and practice of universal love; of the forest-dweller in austerity and introspective quest after Truth; of the house-holder in service of all and performance of yajnas; and of the brahmacharin in the service of the teacher.

The house-holder, too, should practise, in a way suited to his station in life, such virtues as continence (brahmacharya), austerity, freedom from passions, contentment and friendliness to all. Consorting with one's wife only at the prescribed time is considered continence for the house-holder. The adoration of the Supreme Being is the duty of all.

He who adores Me in this way by the performance of swadharma (prescribed duties) with his mind fixed on Me alone and viewing Me as present in all beings, will attain devotion to Me before long.

Oh Uddhava! By that one-pointed and constant devotion will he attain to Me who am the Brahman, the Lord of all the worlds and the Revealer of the Veda – the source, the support and the dissolution of all beings.

One who has obtained purity of mind through the observance of swadharma, who has been endowed with the Truth and experienced My Being, and who has fully understood the limitlessness of My Being and power will, without delay, come to Me and attain salvation.

The observance of the rules of varna and ashrama in themselves leads one to the world of the pitris. But when it is dedicated to Me out of devotion, it becomes an instrument of liberation.

I have now answered your question how a devotee observing his swadharma supported by devotion attains to Me, the Supreme and Transcendent Being.

14. The Spiritual Goal

Sri Bhagawan said:

One endowed with scriptural knowledge ending in realization – for whom spiritual understanding has passed from mere topic of intellectual debate into a matter of experience – should, on knowing that the whole world of objective experience is Maya (an appearance), abandon in Me that world and the knowledge that negates its ultimacy. This is vidvat-sannyasa or enlightened renunciation.

For one, endowed with self-knowledge and experience, I am the final end and the means for it; I am, to him, both heaven and liberation. There is no other love for him than Me.

Those that are endowed with self-knowledge and experience attain to My Transcendent State. The one of self-knowledge is, therefore, the most beloved of Me. For, through knowledge, he bears Me ever in himself.

The attainment through enlightenment (jnana) is not through austerity, pilgrimage to holy places, recantation of mantras, charity and other holy spiritual disciplines.

Oh Uddhava! Knowing yourself as the Spirit – the Self, through enlightened understanding, and endowed with self-knowledge and experience, adore Me with loving devotion.

The sages of the past made sacrificial offering of their knowledge and realization to Me, the Master of all sacrifices, dwelling as the Self within, and thereby attained the highest.

The three-fold formation of the gross, subtle and causal bodies, having you as their centre is only a passing appearance. At the beginning and the end of the series, the bodies are not seen. Change is only a phenomenon in the middle. As the Self subsisted prior to the series of changes and as it is bound to subsist at the end of the series, you have to accept that the Self has been there in the middle, too, though hidden by the changing forms that are phenomenal. In the case of the universe, too, which comes into being, subsists and dissolves, you have no cause to feel confused. The Universal Spirit, from whom the series of changes that you call the world started, existed even before the world came into being and will exist even when it is dissolved. As the Universal Spirit existed in the beginning and exists in the end, IT must be existant in the middle, too, though covered with the ever-changing physicality called the phenomenal universe.

Uddhava said:

Oh Lord of all, having the universe as Thy form! Be pleased to explain to me in all facets the ancient gospel of knowledge supported by renunciation and realization, as also Thy path of communion through devotion, a rare gift of Thine which even Brahma and other divinities have not been able to attain.

Oh Lord! For men who are tortured by the heat of the miseries of physical, non-physical and meta-physical origin on their journey through samsara, I find no other shelter than the nectar-dripping umbrella of Thy holy feet.

Oh great one! Be pleased to shower Thy nectarine words, and lift this humble servant that has fallen into the pit of samsara, and who, in spite of being thus bitten by the serpent of Time, still entertains longing for the petty pleasures of life.

Sri Bhagawan said:

Yudhishtira, the one without an enemy, put the same question, in the hearing of all of us, to Bhishma, the greatest among the knowers of dharma.

After the all-Bharata war was over, Yudhishtira, depressed by brooding over the slaughter of his kith and kin, sought relief in discussing various aspects of dharma with Bhishma. Finally, he questioned him on the way of man's spiritual liberation.

I shall now tell you what I heard at that time from the mouth of Devavrata - the great teachings on knowledge, renunciation, spiritual experience, sraddha, bhakti and similar subjects.

I consider that as knowledge (jnana) by which one perceives, through all beings from Brahma down to an ant, the continuing persistence of the twenty five causal categories and the three gunas, and further sees that all these causal categories and their effects - the embodied beings, are interpenetrated by one Consciousness.

Vijnana or immediate experience is this. In jnana or contemplative experience, one sees the presence of the one Substance persisting through numerous changing modes. When the permeating Substance alone is seen to the exclusion of all changing modes apprehended as different from IT, then that understanding is called vijnana. One should perceive all these modes of gunas as originating, subsisting and dissolving in that Substance alone.

Only That which thus persistently continues in a series of effects passing from one to the next, maintaining continuity, and remains the same at the end of the series as it was as at the beginning, is the Sat – the Existence (the Essence).

The four ways of knowing the Truth – the scripture, perception, inference and traditional wisdom transmitted by the wise declare that diversity has no final basis. A wise man, therefore, renounces this world of multiplicity.

The man of discrimination realizes that, just as the pleasures of this ‘seen world’, the result of karma, are temporary, and finally cause misery, so are all the heavenly felicities enjoyed by the Jiva in the ‘unseen realms’ up to that of Brahma.

I had taught you Bhakti-yoga earlier, but out of my love for you, I shall teach you that yoga once again, together with what generates and develops bhakti.

Faith in, and reverence for, the account of My Divine activities and excellences, constant chanting of My name and glory in varied ways, steadiness in the worship of Me, reciting hymns and praises of Me, prostrating with all the limbs and offering salutations to Me, diligence in the service of My devotees, memory of My presence in all beings;

utilizing one’s limbs in the services to Me, devoting one’s speech to describe My excellence, dedicating one’s mind to Me, and renouncing all desires;

giving up wealth and enjoyment for My sake; and performing all yajnas, charities, sacrifices, repetition of mantras, vows, austerities and other sacred duties as offerings to Me. All these are disciplines for the development of bhakti.

Oh Uddhava! Devotees, who have by such disciplines reached the state of complete self-surrender, develop pure loving devotion, motiveless, deep-rooted and unwavering. For them there is nothing greater to achieve.

When the mind that is completely pure and tranquil is offered to Me, the Supreme Spirit, then all such excellences like dharma, jnana, renunciation and divine power develop in an aspirant automatically.

The same mind when it plunges into the world of multiplicity, runs in the world of multiplicity and runs about along with the senses among the objects of enjoyment, becomes dominated by rajas and gets engrossed with false, unspiritual values. Such a mind moves in just the opposite direction of the state described earlier.

Dharma is what generates devotion to Me; jnana is perception of the one Atman pervading all; vairagya is non-attachment to worldly objects; and aishvarya (lordliness) consists in yogic powers like anima, etc.

Uddhava said:

Oh Heroic One! How many disciplines are involved in yama and niyama? What is sama? What is dama? And what, Oh Lord, is titiksha (patience) and dhriti (firmness)?

What is dana (charity) and what is tapas (austerity)? What is saurya (valour)? What is satya (honesty) and what is rita (truthfulness)? What is tyaga (renunciation) and what is unstained wealth? What is yajna (sacrifice) and what is dakshina (holy gift)?

Oh Lord of Sri! What does man's strength consist in? Oh Kesava! What is bhaga (fortune)? What is profit? What is supreme knowledge and what are supreme Hri (shyness) and Sri (beauty)? What constitutes happiness and what constitutes suffering?

Who is a pundit and who is an ignorant one? What is the right path and what is perverse? What is heaven and what is hell? Who is a relative and what is home?

Who is wealthy and who is a pauper? Who is a pitiable creature and who is the Lord? Be pleased to enlighten me on these issues explaining both the positive and the negative implications thereof.

Sri Bhagawan said:

Yama and niyama consist in the observance of disciplines internally and externally. Non-injury, truth, non-covetousness, non-attachment, conscientiousness, non-hoarding, faith in the scriptures, continence, moderation in speech, constancy, forgiveness and fearlessness are the twelve internal disciplines known as yama. Cleanliness, purity of mind, japa (repetition of holy name or mantra), tapas (austerity), homa (sacrificial fire), sraddha (absolute faith in spiritual matters), hospitality, worship of the Divine, pilgrimage to holy places, service to others, contentment and servitude to the guru are the twelve external disciplines known as niyama. Those who follow these disciplines attain whatever they want, either material or spiritual.

Apart from yama and niyama, a seeker after liberation is to follow other disciplines known as sama, dama, titiksha and dhriti. Sama is firmly to settle the mind in the Lord, and not mere calmness of mind. Dama is overcoming the senses, and not their suppression. Titiksha is the forbearance of all suffering in the discharge of one's duties, and not mere endurance. Dhriti is to overcome the sensuality of taste and sex, and not mere avoidance.

The highest charity (param-danam) is the abandonment of the tendency to harm other living beings and not mere doling out of alms. The highest form of tapas is the abstinence from sexuality and not the performance of body-torturing rites like kricchra and chadrayana. Heroism (saurya) lies in the conquest of one's animal nature and not in mere combativeness. And Truth is seeing God in everything, and not mere factual speech.

Great men have said that rita consists in speech that is factual and beneficial; purity (soucha) is non-attachment in work; and tyaga (abandonment) is sannyasa or renunciation of worldliness and worldly life.

The greatest wealth of man is dharma, not mere material possessions. The real yajna is I, the Supreme Lord, and not a mere ritual. The dakshina is the humble service to the teacher imparting knowledge, and not mere gifts of money or goods. Real strength consists in pranayama which helps one to control the mind, and not in mere muscular strength.

Bhaga or bhagya (good fortune) consists in becoming a participant of My bhagas or six divine majesties - lordliness, power, fame, Sri (beauty-cum-prosperity), wisdom and non-attachment. Real profit (labha) is the attainment of devotion to Me and not the gain of wealth, children and other worldly objects. Vidya is eradication of the sense of duality in the atman, and not mere knowledge. Hri or bashfulness is the reluctance to do what is evil, and not mere sense of shame.

True beauty arises from desireless-ness and austerity, and not by mere decoration and jewellery. True happiness consists in seeking neither pleasure nor misery, but remaining detached and unconcerned in all situations. True misery lies in seeking sexual satisfactions, and not in fire accidents and similar calamities. A really learned man is one who has a clear apprehension of the states of bandage and liberation, and not a mere learned of books.

The ignorant man (murkha) is the one who thinks of himself as the body only and not one merely unlearned. The true path is the path of renunciation that leads one to Me and not the ways that lead to worldly ends. The perverted way is the life of unrestricted extroversion and not merely the way of thieves. Swarga is the dawn of sattva-guna, and not a place in Indra's heaven.

Naraka is dominance of the quality of tamas and not a region called hell. The true relative is the guru, and not brothers and sons. And the guru is Me. The home is the human body, and not what is made of brick and mortar. The wealthy man is one rich in virtues, and not the individual with physical wealth.

The pauper is the greedy man who is never satisfied with anything he gets and not one who has not much wealth. The pitiable man is one who is not able to control one's senses. The true master is one who is free from bondage to gunas or the senses and their objects; and his opposite, the slave, is one who is attached to them.

Oh Uddhava! All your questions have been thus properly considered and answered. This, in brief, is the description of the good and the bad. What is the use of too long a description? To transcend the feeling of distinction between the two is real virtue.

15. Ways of Realization

Uddhava said:

The Veda, which is the commandment of Thine, the Lord of all, consists of injunctions and prohibitions. Injunctions and prohibitions presuppose that some actions are good and, therefore, should be done, and that some are bad and, therefore, should be avoided.

The determination of varnas and their duties, the differences between the two types of marriage called anuloma and pratiloma, the nature of substances, place, age and time, the distinction of heaven and hell, etc are the differentiations and classifications stated in the Veda, on the basis of the distinction between the good and the bad, the high and the low.

Without accepting the absolute distinction between merit and demerit, how can Thy word, the Veda, stand? How can the doctrine of salvation be justified?

Thy word, the Veda, is for men, pitris and Devas the principal guidance in matters unseen and unattained – in understanding the goal and the means in this field of the unseen.

From Thy revelation, the Veda, man has come to understand this distinction between the good and the bad; it is not his nature that has helped him do so. So when Thou sayeth that there is no such distinction between them, we are confused.

Sri Bhagawan said:

I have proclaimed three types of communion for spiritual enlightenment of man. These are the yogas of jnana, karma and bhakti. There is no other way besides these three.

Communion through jnana or knowledge is for those who are disgusted with the Veda-ordained works and their fruits and who, therefore, abandon such works out of true renunciation. Communion through karma or action is for those who have desires and are, therefore, not yet disgusted with works and their fruits.

Bhakti yoga becomes easily fruitful in the case of a man who, by some good fortune resulting from his karma or the Lord's grace, develops sraddha or zealous faith in listening to accounts of My works and excellence, and who is neither endowed with a very keen spirit of renunciation, nor is so much attached to things of the world.

It is only until man has developed disgust for worldly fulfillments or until he has had zealous faith in hearing of, and contemplating on My works and excellence,

that it is incumbent on him to perform the Veda-ordained works, ritualistic or otherwise.

Oh Uddhava! A person, who is devoted to the performance of the Veda-ordained duties (swadharma), if he performs those yajnas ordained in the Veda as an offering to Me without any desire for their fruits, and if he also refrains from any prohibited or desire-prompted actions, will not have to be in heaven for enjoying the felicities springing from his works, nor will he be consigned to the hell (naraka).

Oh sinless one! A person who thus performs his swadharma will attain to purity of mind and have knowledge of the Atman. Or if he is very fortunate, he may develop love for Me.

Just as those consigned to the hell (purgatory) desire to get a human body, so do the denizens of heaven aspire for such a body. For, it is only with the human body that self-knowledge and bhakti (devotion) can be attained, and not with bodies pertaining to other spheres.

Therefore, a man of intelligence and insight should not desire for the heavenly regions even as he does not desire for the hell, where the Jiva suffer for their past karma. He should not entertain any desire for a human body, too, for, the passionate attachment to the body will deny him of his ultimate spiritual goal.

Thus understanding that this human body, though capable of taking him to the highest level of enlightenment, is in itself mortal, a man of discrimination should strive with great alertness and self-effort for attainment of the spiritual goal even before death overtakes him.

When the wood-cutter cuts down trees without any compassion, the birds having nests thereon fly away easily to places of safety as they are without attachment to their habitats.

Similarly, a seeker should realize that the tree of his life-span is being cut down with the passing of every night and day. This realization will help him free himself from all attachments in life, become desireless, and be established in tranquility, contemplating on the Supreme Being.

Suppose that one has obtained a human body which is the first requirement of higher life. Though very rare, the ship of a human body, very well-built, has now become available to one by one's good fortune, and it is captained by a competent guru and favoured by the wind of My Grace. If, with all these favourable conditions, one fails to utilize them and cross the ocean of samsara, one shall be deemed to have committed spiritual suicide.

When one has become averse to worldly desires because of true abhorrence of worldly values and when, as a consequence, one has gained mastery over the senses,

one should strive to make one's mind recollected and steady by repeated practice of inward concentration.

Though one seeks to concentrate one's mind on Me, it may still run away in all directions in a chaotic manner. Then the yogi should, with great alertness, bring it round slowly, adopting the conciliatory way of allowing it to dwell on un-prohibited objects of its choice for a while.

After one establishes control over the prana and the senses, one should not allow the mind to wander about further. One should bring it under one's control through pure intellect that arises because of pure food and noble sense-impressions.

Such restraint of the mind is what is considered the highest reach of yoga. The seeker should attain it like a horse-trainer brings an uncontrollable horse under his control. He allows the horse some freedom to move about as it likes, but with the reins in hand, he controls its movements slowly and gradually. Similarly, a seeker should establish general control over his mind.

Next, until the mind becomes calm and recollected, a seeker should, through philosophic reflection, perceive the origin and evolution of everything from Mahatattva to the elements, and their involution in the reverse order.

A seeker who is disgusted with rituals, endowed with renunciation and has received instruction from guru will abandon attachment to, and identification with, the body by repeated reflection on the instruction imparted by the guru.

By the disciplines of yoga with its eight steps beginning with yama, through philosophic analysis and reflection on the path of knowledge, or through the worship of My images or other forms of devotion, the mind should be made to dwell exclusively on the Divine which is the goal of yoga. One shall not adopt any other means to still or transcend the mind.

If a seeker practising spiritual communion happens to commit a sin, that sin is to be sought to be burnt by the power of spiritual communion, and not by penance (prayaschitta).

What is described 'good' consists in adhering to works and ways of living, coming within one's spiritual and moral sphere. This is mainly to regulate and limit desire-prompted actions that are, by nature, impure. As all evil tendencies cannot be abandoned at once by everybody, a gradual process of reaching, step by step, the state of total non-attachment and renunciation is, therefore, prescribed.

One may have developed strong faith in Me and the scriptures dealing with Me. One may have developed abhorrence for all karma and gained the understanding that all desires lead to suffering ultimately. Yet one may not have the requisite will to practise total renunciation. Such a person may continue to live fulfilling his desires and

simultaneously worshipping Me with joy, faith and determination. But he should do so with the full awareness of the unedifying nature of such a life. For, discrimination and worship will soon raise him from that way of life to divinity.

When a seeker thus continues to follow the disciplines of bhakti without any let-up, I begin to dwell in his heart and, thereupon, all the desires of the heart are destroyed owing to My presence within.

When a seeker realizes Me, the Soul of All, his ego-sense is cut asunder. All his doubts about the reality of God, the Atman, etc are dispelled; the effect of his past karma gets attenuated.

For one, who is thus endowed with devotion that constantly makes the mind centred in Me, there is no need of knowledge and renunciation for realization of the Supreme Self.

A seeker on the path of devotion can attain, without any difficulty, if he so desires, whatever can be attained by performance of Vedic rites and austerities, knowledge, dispassion, yoga, charity or any other spiritual discipline – be that the abode of the celestials, liberation or Vaikuntha, the abode of Lord Vishnu.

But holy men of firm mind, endowed with unswerving devotion to Me, do not desire or accept liberation or salvation which gives freedom from birth and death, even if I offer it to them.

The state of mind in which a man is free from any desire or want is the state of blessedness (nishreya), infinite in its scope. Pure devotion for Me dawns only on such a seeker who desires neither worldly fulfillment nor salvation from Me.

Holy men, unswerving in their devotion to Me, even-minded in all situations, with intellect transcended, are not affected by any merit or demerit for their actions arising from scriptural commandments or prohibitions.

Those that follow the path of devotion and self-surrender propounded by Me attain to the state of My Supreme Beatitude – the Supreme Brahman.

16. Virtue and Vice

Sri Bhagawan said:

Those that neglect the paths of devotion, knowledge and / or action leading to liberation, and indulge in the enjoyment of vulgar pleasures with their fleeting sense faculties pass from birth to birth, being subject to the effects of their good and bad actions.

Adherence to action that comes within one's power is good; the opposite is evil. Thus are virtue and vice determined according to their relevance in the spiritual advancement of man, and not owing to any thing inherent in them.

The system of determining the order of objects and actions as good or bad to be followed or avoided according to one's power has been laid down in order to check one in the pursuit of one's natural inclinations, first by generating a doubt in one about their inherent propriety.

For the sake of those who are burdened with an obsessive extrovert nature, I have laid down the rules of conduct in the form of smritis. Some of these rules are meant to help man in his spiritual progress in a given situation; some are relevant only from practical considerations of life; and still others are meant for the maintenance of life in dangerous situations.

There is no absoluteness in any of these rules of conduct. Their object is only to make man more inward-looking, step by step.

From Brahma down to the immovable objects like trees, all are created on the same pattern, their bodies being combinations of the five elements united with the atman.

Being constituted of the five elements, the basic nature of their bodies is the same. But their bodies have developed diversities of names, forms and capacities for the Jiva's gradual attainment of the four great ends of life, namely, dharma, artha, kama and moksha. The Veda has, therefore, categorized them according to their capacities and laid down rules for their development from stage to stage.

Oh Uddhava! It is only to limit karma that propriety and impropriety have been laid down with regard to places, time, results, competent persons and ingredients.

The places where there are no black-bucks and where there is no respect for holy men are impure. Even if black-bucks are present, the regions of keekata, the places inhabited by people of low moral standards and deserts are considered impure.

An auspicious time for a rite is determined by the availability of the ingredients of worship at that time, or for some other reasons inherent in the time. The seasons when the required ingredients are not available or times when there are obstacles from external circumstances are considered inauspicious for the performance of rites.

The purity or impurity of ingredients is determined by contact with other ingredients, by authoritative pronouncements, by purificatory rites, by lapse of time or by relative size.

Purity or impurity is determined by one's strength or weakness, by one's knowledge or ignorance, or by one's wealth or poverty. So a virtue or vice arises according to time and place.

The purification of objects like grains, wooden utensils, those made of ivory, textiles, oily substances, precious metals, skins and pots is effected by air, fire, earth and water singly or in combination, and by the passage of time.

The purifier is that which, with whatever agent, removes the filth and bad odour of an object smeared with dirt, and restores it to its pristine purity.

A dwija is to purify himself before he performs a scriptural rite with water, charity, austerity, attainment of proper age and capacity, sandhya-vandana, or meditation on the Supreme Being.

The acquisition of a mantra from a guru is the purification of the mantra. A work or a rite is purified by its being offered to Me. Anything conforming to dharma must be subject to purification in time, place, substance, mantra, the performer and the rite itself. Being non-purified in any of these factors reduces a rite into adharma.

What is right in one context can become its opposite in another by the force of Vedic injunction. So also what is wrong can become right. The difficulty of determining right or wrong affects the very basis of such distinction.

For example, receiving gifts is wrong conduct for a brahmana in normal times; but it becomes right in times of turmoil and danger. Not to care for the home is wrong conduct for a house-holder. But it is proper conduct for a sannyasin.

An act which is sin for a man morally elevated or in a particular station of life need not be so for a fallen man, or for one in a low state of evolution, or for one belonging to a different order of life. The reason is that a man who is lying on the ground cannot have a further fall. It is only a man who is at a higher level or erect that is liable to fall.

For example, drinking and immoral-living will not harm a man at a low level of evolution, but it will be highly sinful for a morally elevated man. To have attachment to

his possessions and family, and to live with his wife is normal and natural for a householder, and he incurs no sin by it. But it is a sin for a sannyasin.

The lesson to be drawn from this indeterminate and flexible nature of dharma and adharma is that man should, little by little and to the extent possible, retire from the pursuit of desires and ritualistic works, and take to renunciation. To the extent he renounces, to that extent he is free. That is the way of life that will eliminate sorrow, delusion and fear, and establish him in bliss.

Man develops attachment to sense-objects when he falsely begins to think that they will promote his good. Such attachment matures into craving, and it is from the craving of intense desires that conflicts erupt among men. From conflicts arise uncontrollable anger. This is followed by delusion – complete inability to distinguish between right and wrong, the proper and the improper. Delusion quickly swallows his moral sense completely. Oh good friend! Man then becomes a zero as far as his humanity is concerned. He is as good as dead. He loses all the great values that obtain in human life.

He merely exists, absorbing food like a tree, and breathing like a pair of bellows. Owing to his excitement with sensuous pleasures, he knows not anything about his own real nature, nor does he have any love and sympathy for others.

The karmakanda (the ritualistic section of the Veda) is sweet with promises of enjoyment, as fruits of ritualistic works. They do not enlighten man on his ultimate good. They are only a means to stimulate man engrossed in sensuality to higher goals. Just as children are prompted to take medicine by promise of delicious edibles, the promises of ritualism are meant to stimulate man, stagnating in abject inertia, to the first steps towards the highest good.

Man is naturally inclined to sense-enjoyment, to his own physical welfare, and to the promotion of the interests of his relatives. All these are hindrances in his spiritual development. How then can a centre of divine wisdom like the Veda – an authority to which men of such unregenerate nature wandering in the path of sin and unhappiness look with reverence and which they approach for guidance – confirm them in their sensuality and selfishness?

There are some men of perverted intelligence who do not understand this feature of the Veda, but take its flowery descriptions of the fruits of yajnas literally. But real knowers of the Veda like Vyasa do not do so.

Desire-ridden, greedy and pitiable, the former mistake the possibility of future acquisition of heavenly felicities for the fruit of sat-chit-ananda. Befooled by their exaggerated faith in the scope of fire-sacrifices, they at last go by the path of smoke, without knowing anything about the nature of their own self.

With ritualism as their main instrument and sense-enjoyment as their sole objective, they are like men blinded by darkness produced by mist which prevents them from seeing even the nearest object. For, thanks to ritualism and sensuality, they do not know Me, the source of this whole universe, though I am present in their very heart.

If people are fond of meat-eating, let it be confined to occasions of sacrifice. Let it be a mere permission and not a commandment. This view of Mine is indirectly expressed in passages dealing with the killing of animals at sacrifices. Without understanding this, these people, sensuous and cruel by nature, delight in organizing bloody sacrifices for inferior deities, manes and elementals, utilizing those occasions for obtaining satisfaction of their cruel instincts and their hunger for meat.

Just as an avaricious merchant wastes his wealth in speculation, they waste their resources in expectation of enjoyment in realms and regions, dreamlike in their substantiality, but immensely delightful for the ears to hear about.

Themselves dominated by sattva, rajas and tamas, the gunas of Prakrti, they adore Indra and other Devas of a similar nature, but not Me who am beyond these three gunas.

Even the worship offered to Indra and others is offered only unto the Supreme Being, because IT is the indwelling Spirit in all Divinities. But, as these votaries do not know this truth and adore the externally perceived deities dominated by gunas, their worship is ineffective as far as the path of devotion is concerned.

These conceited and sensuous-enjoyment seeking people listen to such dictums as ‘a votary can sacrifice here to the deities, and after death he will go to their heavens and have enjoyment. At the end of heavenly felicities, he will be born again on earth in a high family and become a great house-holder, performing sacrifices once again.’ Carried away by such dictums, they will abhor even any reference to Me, the Supreme Being.

The Veda, consisting of the three sections dealing with karma (rituals), upasana (meditation) and jnana (knowledge-cum-devotion), has the Brahman-Atman as its fulcrum and purport. The Veda is couched in language that is indirect, and cast in riddles. I favour this indirect way of expression.

It is said that it is so because people, who are otherwise fit only for karma on account of the impurity of the mind, would, otherwise, abandon karma, too, and lapse into the idleness of tamas.

The sabda-Brahman (the sound phenomenon - AUM) with its three subtle stages of manifestation known as Para, Pasyanti and Madhyama, expressed in and through the prana and the mind, besides the articulate form Vaikhari expressed through the organ of sound, is difficult to be understood in itself fully; it is infinite, deep and unfathomable

like the ocean. For, of these four stages of its manifestation, only the Vaikhari is articulate sound; the others are inaudible and inarticulate.

Proceeding from Me, the Infinite Brahman, changeless and limitless in power, the sabda-Brahman is heard by the enlightened as subtle resonance (nada) pervading all living beings, like the slender filament within a lotus-stalk.

Just as the spider brings out its web from within itself through the mouth, the Supreme Being, the embodiment of Veda and the seat of bliss, manifesting as Hiranyagarbha, brings out of IT the stuff of subtle sound called nada. Through the instrumentality of the mind, the subtle sound fashions the body of consonants, vowels, aspirates, etc from the Pranava (AUM), the articulate body of sounds called the Veda which is decoded (couched) in wonderful language and in several metres, each successive one having four letters more than the previous one. The Veda is infinite in its scope and profundity. IT brings out and withdraws the Veda, which has a vast and varied vocabulary and employs numerous metres.

Some of these metres are the Gayatri with twenty four letters, followed by other metres, each with four more letters than the previous one. These are Ushnik, Anushtup, Brihati, Pankti, Trishtup, Jagati, Aticchandas, Atyashti, Atijagati and Virat.

No one but I know, in truth, what injunctions the Veda lays down in the Karmakanda, what it lays down in the Upasanakanda, and what prima facie views it states to deny them afterwards in the Jnanakanda.

In the Karmakanda, what I enjoin as injunctions am Me in the form of yajna. In the Upasanakanda, it is Me that I describe in the form of various deities. And in the Jnanakanda, what is first accepted prima facie and then negated is also Me. The Veda asserts this universe tentatively as an expression of My power, Maya. When, through the world of manifestation, the Jiva is taken to merge (dissolve) in Me, the Veda denies the manifestation and completes its task. This is the function of the Veda.

17. The Atman

Uddhava said:

Oh Lord! How many categories are recognized by sages? There seems to be different views about it. I heard Thee saying that they are twenty eight divided into nine, eleven, five and three.

Some say they are twenty six; and others, twenty five. Still others speak of them variously as seven, nine, six and four; and some others as eleven.

There are some which hold that they are seventeen, sixteen and thirteen. It behoves Thee to tell me why and on what basis sages have expressed such diverse views about the primordial categories.

Sri Bhagawan said:

The different views of the philosophers on the question are all acceptable. All the categories are implicit in every one of them included in these different views, either in their casual or effect conditions. Moreover, for those who philosophize accepting the reality of My Maya, there is no difficulty to explain anything or reconcile any contradiction.

The reason for the people contending 'What you say is not right; what I say is right' lies in the three gunas of which people's nature is constituted. The different mental constitutions of individuals arising from the gunas of sattva, rajas and tamas make views contrary to a person's nature incomprehensible to that person.

It is from the modifications of sattva, rajas and tamas constituting the nature of men that the differences which cause controversies arise. So it is seen that when pacification of the mind and control of the senses are effected, controversies naturally disappear.

As the categories are involved mutually in their conditions as cause and effect, philosophers can enumerate them differently according to their points of view.

Whether it is as cause or as effect, it is seen that in each category all other categories are implicit, as is the case with mud and all objects made of it. The three gunas, the common cause of them all, are present in all the categories which, in turn, are involved in the gunas.

Whatever the philosophers say about the sequence of these categories and the difference in their numbers, we gladly accept as they are all equally reasonable from the different points of view.

Philosophers who accept a fundamental difference between Iswara and Jiva contend that, as the Atman in the Jiva is under the spell of Avidya (Ignorance) from eternity, the Atman can never free itself from ignorance without the help of another centre of intelligence which is ever free from ignorance. That centre of intelligence is Iswara, and He is different from the Jiva.

As against this, some others contend that there is not even the slightest difference between the Jiva and Iswara. As for the Jiva being helped with jnana, jnana is a property of the sattva-guna of Prakrti, and it is, therefore, latent in Prakrti.

Prakrti is the state of equilibrium of the gunas - sattva, rajas and tamas. These gunas, therefore, belong to Prakrti and not to the Atman. They are the cause of preservation, creation and dissolution respectively.

Accordingly, sattva is identified with intelligence and knowledge, rajas with works, and tamas with inertia and ignorance. Time is the Lord's power aspect causing agitation in the gunas of Prakrti, and what is called swabhava (Nature) is Mahatattva (the all-inclusive category).

I have given out the categories as nine – Purusa, Prakrti, Mahatattva, ahamkara and the five tanmatras.

The tattvas I have revealed are eleven. They are the five organs of knowledge like seeing, hearing, etc, the five organs of action, and the mind that supports both.

The enumeration of tattvas as five refers to the five gross elements that are the objects of hearing, touch, taste, smell and sight. The five forms of action such as motion, speech, evacuation, regeneration and physical labour are not tattvas or categories, but functions of the organs of action.

At the beginning of creation, Prakrti of which the causal state and the manifested state are its constituents becomes activated by its gunas of sattva, rajas and tamas, and evolves into the multitudinous universe. But the Purusa, the Supreme Spirit, immutable, is the witness-consciousness of Prakrti in the form of the manifested universe.

The evolutes of Prakrti like Mahatattva rendered potent by the consciousness of Purusa and sustained by Prakrti combine together to manifest the Brahmanda or the Cosmic-Shell.

It is implied that the Brahmanda, being the effect of the categories, has been involved in the said categories.

There are some who reckon the categories as seven taking into account the five tanmatras (subtle elements), the Jiva – the individual self and the Atman that is the support of both. From these seven categories are evolved senses, vitality and the like.

There is another view that there are only six categories comprising the five gross elements and the Paramatman. According to this view, the Paramatman creates the universe with the five elements that evolve out of Him and then enters into it as the Jiva. In this view, the Jiva is part of the Paramatman.

There is a school which holds the categories to be four being fire, water, earth and the Atman, the first three evolving out of the fourth.

There is another view that the categories are seventeen consisting of the five gross elements, the five subtle elements (tanmatras), the five senses, the manas (mind) and the atman.

Those who hold that the categories are only sixteen accept the above enumeration except that the atman is taken as the mind itself. Some others consider the categories only thirteen consisting of the five elements, the five senses, the mind, the Jiva and the Paramatman.

In the view of the categories being eleven are enumerated the five senses, the five elements and the Atman. In this view, the Atman includes the mind and Iswara, too. In the view that holds them to be nine, the root Prakrti, its seven evolutes and the Atman are taken into account.

In this way, sages have expressed various views about the number of categories. The purpose of such enumeration is not so much the identification of the categories exactly as to distinguish the Purusa from the categories. Each view has its own justification and reasonableness. Whatever wise men say is always meaningful.

Uddhava said:

Oh Krishna! Though Prakrti and Purusa are different in their attributes, it is difficult to distinguish them as they are always perceived together. The Atman is seen in a body and the body with the Atman.

Oh all-knowing One! It behoves Thee to remove this serious doubt of mine by Thy persuasive dialectic.

Both the knowledge and ignorance of the Jiva spring from Thy power, Thy Atman-Maya whose functioning is known only to Thee and to none else.

Sri Bhagawan said:

Oh noble one! No doubt, Purusa and Prakrti are absolutely separate. This body which is ever in change is the result of the permutation and combination of the gunas.

With the help of the three gunas, my Maya generates differences in objects and the ways of their apprehension. All the ever-changing conditions of effects can be

brought under the three heads – the Adhyatmika, the Adhidaivika and the Adhibhautika. They relate to the Self, the divinities and the creatures in that order.

Take eye-sight as an example. The organ eye is adhyatma; the forms and colours visible are adhibhuta; and the aspect of the deity in the eye is the adhidaiva. Without the power of the deity in the eye, the physical eye cannot see. So, these aspects of eye-sight, namely, organ, object and deity go together, though separate. The same triune division holds good in respect of all the senses like hearing, touch, taste, smell, etc.

The atman or the ‘I-consciousness’ is the original being in whose consciousness all these sense-combinations function. That atman is independent of all these combinations and the deities. The atman is the self-luminous and self-conscious light in which all other entities are revealed. The atman is thus different from the body and its functions.

The cause of all the delusive experience of divisiveness is ahamkara (ego-sense) which, in the three aspects of sattva, rajas and tamas, is evolved from Mahatattva, itself an evolute of Pradhana (Prakrti), by the action of Time which is the principal factor causing the agitation of the gunas and the evolution of the categories.

The Atman is the self-conscious effulgence which reveals Itself and all objects. Still there is a great dispute as to what really exists and what does not. But all this is relevant only on the acceptance of the reality of differences. One accepts the reality of differences, though unreal, when one has turned away from Me, even as one in the state of dreaming accepts the reality of the objects of the dream while dreaming, though one realizes the falsity of the dream objects in the state of one’s waking consciousness.

Uddhava said:

Oh Lord! Tell me how the forces of their own karma carry the souls, who turn away from Thee, to bodies that are at a higher or lower stage of evolution, and how these souls abandon their bodies on death. Oh Govinda! This is a subject which philosophers, who have not controlled their mind and senses, cannot understand or teach, being under the delusive influence of Maya. There are few learned men who can speak authoritatively on this subject.

Sri Bhagawan said:

The linga-sarira (subtle-body) comprising the mind, the five indriyas and the tendencies (samskaras) derived from karma transmigrates from one body to another. The atman, though different from the linga-sarira, also seems to follow it because of the connectivity between them resulting from avidya (ignorance).

The mind of the dying man, swayed by his own actions and their impressions, thinks intensely on experiences he had in life, on what he had seen, heard, and passed

through. Consequently he feels, at the time of death, that he is entering a new realm that has manifested by his intense thought, and leaves the old body. On rebirth, with the coming of the consciousness of the new body, there is complete oblivion of the old body and its history in the world.

On account of the intensity of attraction felt for the new body for whatever reason, the memory of the old one is completely effaced. Death means this complete forgetfulness of the old body and its affairs by the Jiva.

Oh generous one! The acceptance of a new body by the Jiva and its complete identification with it is called birth. How this happens is found in the examples of dreams and reveries.

As man does in these states, the Jiva becomes completely oblivious of the old body and gets identified with the new one. The identification is so absolute that the Jiva forgets its pre-existence and comes to believe that it has come into being with the new body alone.

By the creative power of the mind, which is the sole support of all faculties like the senses, the threefold divisive experience arises in the atman. This experience consists of the sense of 'within' oneself, of the sense of 'without' oneself, and of the objects experienced in the 'without'. This bears analogy to the dream-experience in which the self sees many non-existent objects as the non-self outside of oneself, on account of the creative power of the mind.

Oh dear one! Caught up in the imperceptible movement of Time, the bodies of beings constantly come into existence and perish. Ignorant people do not perceive this subtle process.

The flames of fire, the flow of water, the fruits of trees, etc are ever subject to change. In the same way, Time subjects the bodies of all to the process of change by way of aging.

Though the flame is ever in change, men may say it is the same flame. The flow of water in a river is continuous; yet men may speak of it as the same water. In these cases, resemblance is mistaken for identity. Similarly, ignorant men think and speak of the man of today as the same as of yesterday, though he has long ceased to be.

Even in the case of an ignorant man, he (the spirit within -atman) is not really born as the result of the tendencies arising from karma, nor does he die as he (the atman) is immortal by nature. It is just like fire arising by the rubbing together of wooden pieces. Fire is latent ever in the fire-sticks. The rubbing or the separation of its adjuncts, the two pieces of fire-sticks, only helps or hinders its manifestation.

Conception, fetus, birth, infancy, childhood, youth, middle-age, old-age and death are the nine stages of the growth and decline of the gross body, and not of the spirit.

All these states, high and low, the products of the imaginative faculty, are of the body. But by identification with the body, the Jiva takes them upon itself. Just a few men overcome this identification, by the grace of the Lord.

Seeing the death of the father's body and the birth of the son's, one can easily infer that one's own case is similar. The atman which is the knower of the birth and death of the body and which is the one without a second cannot itself be the subject of these processes. The seer can never be the seen.

Just as a man who observes the growth of a plant from its seed and its decay is different from the plant, so also is the atman, knower of the body and its transformations.

The ignorant man, incapable of distinguishing the atman from the body which is an evolute of Prakrti, identifies himself with the body and gets entangled in the objects of the senses, and consequently in the cycle of birth and death.

By the force of tendencies generated by karma, the ignorant Jiva get the bodies of rishis and Devas if the sattva is the binding element, of asuras and men if rajas is the dominant element, and of evil spirits and brute creation if tamas happens to predominate.

Just as persons who witness dance or listen to music, dance or sing within their minds in tune with the artistes through identification, so the Jiva, though by nature actionless, is drawn by the intellect (buddhi) to behave like itself by identification.

In water that is in ripples, trees reflected in it are seen to bend and be moving. Similarly, to the whirling eyes, all panoramas seem to be whirling.

Oh Uddhava! Just as the pleasures experienced in dream and a reverie are only a 'seeming', so are such experiences of the Jiva in samsara.

Just as for a sleeping person the obsession of dream experiences, which are the products of his continuous brooding, will continue so long as the sleep lasts, so also until one is awakened into Truth, the experience of samsara will continue.

Therefore, O Uddhava, never run after treacherous sense enjoyment with abandon. Know that it is the want of awareness of the Atman that is the cause of this delusion of the mind.

An aspirant for the spiritual summum bonum might be subjected by evil men to abuse, insult, ridicule and calumny, might be beaten, imprisoned, deprived of

livelihood, spat upon, urinated upon, persecuted for his faith, or might fall into any dangerous situation. In all such conditions he should, without getting shaken from his high spiritual elevation, remain calm with the Self as the support, looking upon all these experiences as brought about by one's karma.

Uddhava said:

Oh, the best among the learned! Deign to tell me how man can attain to this state of mind. Except for those who are the followers of the Bhagavata-dharma and who have attained to tranquility by having their home at Thy feet, it is impossible to get this attitude of mind in the face of suffering and persecution. However learned and wise a man might be, he cannot overcome nature which invariably prompts him to react against persecution and insult.

18. The Mendicant's Realization

Sri Suka said:

Requested in this way by His great devotee and servant Uddhava, the Lord who was born as the chief of the Yadus, and whose powers and achievements provide the best material for the human ears to hear, spoke to His servant as follows, expressing His approval of the question.

Sri Bhagawan said:

Oh disciple of Brihaspati! There is hardly anyone in this world who can control his mind that has been agitated by the evil words of wicked men.

The sharp arrows struck at vital parts of the body do not mortify a man to the same extent as the arrows of filthy abuse which evil men release at him.

Oh Uddhava! Enlightened men have a traditional legend of great holiness, in connection with this subject. I shall narrate it to you. Listen to it attentively.

Listen to this recital of a mendicant who was insulted and ill-treated by some evil men, and who put up with it, taking it all to be the result of his karma.

In the kingdom of Avanti, there lived a very rich brahmana engaged in agriculture and trade as the sources of his livelihood. He was ill-tempered, extremely greedy and very miserly.

He never welcomed even verbally his relatives or guests. In his house, empty of inhabitants, there was no proper provision to meet even his needs.

His sons and relatives felt oppressed because of his perversity and miserliness. Even his wife, daughters and servants were so depressed that they did not strive to please him.

His five 'co-sharers' (the agencies adored through Pancha-mahayajna, namely, Devas, rishis, manes, bhutas and men) were displeased with him, as he never cared to share his wealth with them, but only guarded it securely like a goblin (bhuta). As a consequence, he lost the prospects of his future evolution in the life hereafter as well as his welfare and enjoyment in this life itself.

For, the anger of the deities of Pancha-mahayajna deprived him even of that merit which had enabled him to accumulate wealth. As a consequence, his entire wealth was lost in spite of all the hard work he had put in for its acquisition and retention.

His relatives appropriated some of it; thieves relieved him of some; and fire, accident, bad seasons, and the exaction of the kings completed the process of his impoverishment.

Thus deprived of the means to perform his religious duties and meet his worldly needs, and deserted also by his relatives, he was filled with worrying thoughts.

As he was being mentally burnt by the sorrow arising from total impoverishment and was shedding bitter tears about his condition over and over again, there arose in him, by the Lord's grace, a powerful fit of renunciation for all worldly values.

He began to think, 'Vain has been all my hard work for the acquisition of wealth which I failed to use for religious work or worldly enjoyment.

The wealth of misers never turns out to be a means of happiness. Its rewards are worry here and hell hereafter.

Just as leucoderma mars the beauty of even a perfect form, even a little of miserliness compromises the clean reputation and the otherwise praiseworthy character of man.

Great effort is required to earn, augment and protect wealth. Even if it is acquired, in expending and enjoying it, great fear and worry are likely, while its loss will depress man and bring him to the brink of madness.

Wise men say that theft, slaughter, falsehood, hypocrisy, greed, anger, egotism, pride, partiality, rancour, suspicion, jealousy, sexuality, gambling, drunkenness are the fifteen vices produced in men by wealth. So, let those who aspire for liberation abandon it from afar, as artha, wealth, is really anartha, the cause of all evil.

Brothers, wives, parents and such close relatives so dear to one another, and living together as if they were one in body, become bitter enemies for the sake of a few coins.

Dispute over a trifle is sufficient to inflame them with anger and make them fight among themselves forgetting all loving relationship, and ever intent on mutual destruction.

Birth among the most abominable species is the dismal reward for those who, having obtained a human birth and that as a brahmana – a circumstance which is the highest aspiration even of Devas, cast it off like a trifle without striving for the attainment of spiritual freedom, which is the highest end of living beings.

A person does not deserve to be called human if he fails to make proper use of this embodiment as man, the gateway to heaven and liberation, but runs after wealth, which is the source of every kind of misery during the short span of life given to him.

Surely downfall awaits a man who accumulates wealth like a treasure-guarding yaksha without distributing it among deities, rishis, Pitris, elementals, relatives, associates and others who have claims to it.

Oblivious of all the higher values of life because of vain greed for wealth, my strength, my life and my wealth have all gone to sheer waste. Wise men utilize wealth as means to salvation. But what can I, an old and decrepit man, now do?

How is it then those even wise men, who know all these evil consequences of the pursuit of wealth, struggle for it without end in spite of all difficulties? Surely it is because that the whole world is under the spell of delusion cast by the Maya of the Lord of infinite potency.

For man who is already in the mouth of the serpent of death, of what significance are wealth and those who help him getting it? Of what use are enjoyment, too, and those who provide him with it?

Surely the worshipful Lord Hari, the embodiment of all divinities, has been pleased with me and brought me to this state of mind. He has provided me, out of His grace, with this boat of renunciation with which I can cross the ocean of samsara.

Whatever length of life-span is still left for me, I shall dedicate it to the earnest pursuit of the higher values of life, finding my joy exclusively in the Atman, and subjecting my body to rigorous discipline for this purpose.

In this effort, may I have the blessing of all the divinities who are the rulers of the three worlds? By the Lord's grace, the king Khatvanga attained to Brahmaloaka in a trice. Why not I, too?'

Sri Bhagawan said:

Resolving like this in mind, that brahmana at Avanti abandoned all the knotty desires of his heart, became tranquil and took to the life of a mendicant.

With his mind, senses and pranas controlled, he wandered from one place to another all over the country, entering towns and villages only for alms, completely unattached, and in no way demonstrating his past greatness.

Oh good friend! Evil men persecuted and insulted him in many ways, seeing him old, decrepit, untended and ill-clad.

Some pulled at his staff; some his water-pot and begging bowl; some at his seat; some at his beads; and some at his rags and bark-cloth.

Some gave back to him his personal effects, only to take them away again. Some wretches among them passed urine in the mendicant's food collected by holy alms, while he was taking it on the river bank. Some others spat on his face. They tried their best to break his vow of silence; and when they failed, they thrashed him to make him speak.

Some tried to frighten him shouting that he was a thief, while others proceeded to bind him with cords.

Still others insulted him declaring him a hypocrite, who, having lost all his belongings and being deserted by his friends, had assumed this mendicant's role only to deceive people.

Some said, 'Possessed of great strength of mind and endurance that will do credit to a mountain, this man remains silent like a crane with determination, and achieves his purpose. It is most remarkable indeed!'

While some made fun of him as stated above, others passed dirty wind at him, and still others bound, imprisoned and treated him like a pet animal or bird.

Whatever sufferings came to him in this manner from external, supernatural or mental sources, he put up with them all with the thought that he was bound to suffer them all, as part of his prarabdha.

Though evil men thus tried their best to shake him from his swadharma by persecution, he remained steadfast in his sattva-guna and his swadharma.

The mendicant brooded:

'These men are not the cause of my enjoyment or suffering; nor are any divinity, the self, any star, karma, Time. According to wise men, the mind alone is the sole cause for turning the wheel of samsara.

The powerful mind generates the modes and movement of all the senses. Senses give rise to actions of the nature of sattva, rajas or tamas. Out of actions, according to their nature, arise embodied celestials, men and creatures.

Though perceived as associated with the active mind, the atman, charged with self-consciousness, never acts but is the witness to the modes of the mind and the activity of the senses. But the Jiva identifies itself with that mind whose activity projects the samsara on the atman. Through this imaginative identification, the Jiva appears to be subject to the pleasures and pains resulting from the activity of the mind.

Charity, disinterested discharge of one's duties, tranquility of mind and the senses, study of scriptures, various rites and vows stated in the scriptures have the objective of controlling the mind. Transcendence of the mind is samadhi, being established in total peace. It is the highest yoga.

If a man's mind has already attained tranquility and is established in the Supreme Being, of what further use are charity and other spiritual disciplines for him? Equally, of what use are charity and other spiritual disciplines for him if his mind continues to run after sensuous pleasures, or is immersed in torpor and lethargy?

All the senses are subject to the mind, but the mind is not subject to any. This formidable entity called mind is more powerful than any other centre of power. He, who has been able to conquer it, is the true master of all the senses.

One's own mind is one's invincible enemy which works with unimaginable speed, and pierces all the vital parts. Without conquering or making an effort to conquer it, a fool enters into vain quarrels with others looking upon them as friends, foes or indifferent.

Subject to the delusion of considering his body, a product of his mental construction, as himself, a person with a clouded mind looks upon him and others as entirely different beings, and thus entangles himself in the darkness of the endless samsara.

For the sake of argument, if it is accepted that it is others that make one happy or miserable, how does this affect the atman which is metaphysical - a spirit and not the body? What is done by others to the body cannot affect the atman. If it is said that the pain and pleasure caused by others, even if it be to the body, are even felt by the atman, where is the scope for being pleased or annoyed with others as the atman in everybody including the enemies is the same?

If it is said that the agent inflicting suffering and the subject undergoing suffering are the deities presiding over the corresponding limbs, even then it is of no consequence to the immutable atman. It is like one limb of one body striking at the limb of another body raising the question 'who is to be angry and at whom?' For, the deities in the limbs of both the persons are one and the same.

If it be the contention that the atman, in the course of its self-caused evolutionary process, brings on itself happiness and suffering, then at whom can one be angry, as that suffering is natural being self-caused? If it is said that it is caused by another, it may be that there is no 'another', the atman being the sole existence. The 'another' is only an appearance and not a reality. As there is no cause outside the atman, there can be neither joy nor sorrow brought about by another.

If the planets are the cause of happiness and misery that attach only to the body, of what consequence is it to the atman that is eternal and immutable?

Some say that karma is the cause of happiness and misery of one. But as the atman, by nature, is without action, how can karma affect one? Besides, karma may affect only something that is inert and yet conscious. The atman (spirit) is always conscious and the body (matter) is always inert. So, there can be nothing that it is both conscious and inert at the same time. Such a postulation is self-contradictory. In such an event, there can be nothing like karma, too, much less enjoyment and suffering arising from it.

If the cause of enjoyment and suffering is said to be Time, how can it affect the atman? For, the atman is Time itself. Fire does not burn up its flames that are only its part. Nor does coldness destroy or melt its products like pieces of ice. The atman is beyond the pairs of opposites such as enjoyment and suffering. Who then will one be angry at?

It is the ego-sense, the experiencer of the cycle of birth and death that is attracted to the pairs of opposites such as heat and cold, pleasure and pain, virtue and vice, etc. The atman, the I-consciousness, is the spirit within and beyond the pairs of opposites. It is only such person that has not awakened to this truth that is subject to the fear of others.

Adopting the discipline leading to total absorption in the Supreme Self following the sages of the past, and taking to the service of the feet of the worshipful Mukunda, I shall soon get across the limitless expanse of the darkness of ignorance’.

Sri Bhagawan said:

Thus did the mendicant proclaim on losing all his wealth, and thereby attaining total dispassion and freedom from all worldly cares. Though insulted and persecuted by evil men, he roamed about the land without budging from his swadharma.

This samsara, giving rise to happiness and misery, and the distinction of friend, foe and the indifferent, is a delusion of the mind; it is entirely a product of ignorance.

Oh Uddhava! Therefore, equipped with a mind entirely dedicated to Me, put in your best effort to rein in and transcend it. This is the sum and substance of all yoga.

Whoever listens, with faith and devotion, to this song (brooding) of the mendicant relating to being established in the consciousness of the Brahman, or makes others listen to and brood over it, will no longer be overcome by the contradictions of life.

19. The Philosophy of Creation and Dissolution

Sri Bhagawan said:

I shall next expound to you the Sankhya-yoga taught by wise men of ancient times like Kapila. On knowing that, a seeker will abandon the delusion of difference.

This world of multiplicity with its basic differences of the seer and the seen, the subject and the object, etc is one with Pure Consciousness. In pralaya, at the early stage of the creative cycle, and in the consciousness of men of spiritual enlightenment, the unitary Consciousness alone abides.

That Pure Consciousness, unmodified and beyond the comprehension of thought and speech, becomes two as the seer and the seen, the subject and the object, as the consequence of the operation of My mysterious power Maya, whose ways baffle thought and description.

Of these two, one is Prakrti, the object, with its manifest and un-manifest states; and the other is Purusa, the Consciousness or the subject.

Out of Prakrti agitated by Me, because of the urge of the karma tendencies of the Jiva submerged in Prakrti, came its three gunas or aspects of sattva, rajas and tamas.

Out of the three gunas arose the Sutratman, the Pervading Self and from That the Mahatattva. But the Mahatattva is one with the Sutratman and both can be considered identical. From the transformation of Mahatattva has evolved the ego-sense (ahamkara), which causes delusion.

The Pervading Self is called the Sutratman when IT is considered the power of action (kriya-sakti). IT is called the Mahatattva when IT is considered the power of knowledge (jnana-sakti).

Ahamkara (ego-sense), which is a complex of consciousness and unconsciousness, has three aspects dominated by sattva, rajas and tamas respectively. From ahamkara have arisen the tanmatras (subtle elements), the indriyas (senses), manas (mind) and the deities presiding over the senses.

The bhutas or gross elements have evolved from the tamas aspect of ego-sense, passing through their causal condition as subtle elements or tanmatras. From the rajas aspect of ego-sense have arisen the ten deities presiding over the indriyas, and also the mind.

All these categories, on being activated by Me, combined into the all-inclusive Cosmic Shell, which became the noble abode of My all-pervading Self.

In that Cosmic Shell, I manifested as Narayana, and out of My navel came the World-lotus within which the self-born Brahma, the creator, arose.

Endowed with rajas, and blessed by Me, Brahma, who is the embodiment of the universe, created, by the power he got through austerity, all the worlds included in Bhur-loka, Bhuvar-loka and Swar-loka, and the presiding deities of the worlds.

The Swar-loka (heaven) is the abode of the Devas; the Bhuvar-loka (space) is the habitation of the spirits (bhutas); Bhur-loka (earth) belongs to the humans; the worlds superior to these three are for the siddhas (highly evolved souls).

Brahma created separate habitations for asuras and nagas regions like Atala, Vitala and others at levels inferior to the earth. The reason for this arrangement is that the attainment of the worlds of Swar, Bhuvar and Bhur is the fruit of actions based on the three qualities of sattva, rajas and tamas.

By yoga, austerity and sannyasa, the Jiva attain to higher regions than the three lokas, these being Mahar-loka, Jana-loka, Tapo-loka and Satya-loka. By the practice of bhakti, one reaches My abode (Vaikuntha).

All the beings in the worlds up to the Bhrahma-loka, bound by their karma, are moved by Me as Time, to regions high and low, submerging and re-emerging in the current of the gunas of Prakrti.

All objects, big or small, bulky or thin, are permeated by their cause, the Purusa and the Prakrti, from whom they have sprung.

The substance which was at the beginning and is present in the same way after the intervening series of changes have ended must have been there in the middle also. Therefore, that substance alone is real, and not the changing conditions which have only an empirical value for the time being, just like ornaments and pot with reference to their particular causal substances.

The reality is the causal substance which forms the stuff or material of the effects following, and which continues to be the same at the beginning and at the end of the series of changes producing effects. Thus the effects have no substantiality apart from the causal substance which is the ultimate reality.

Prakrti is the substance or the material cause of this universe. The Purusa is the adhara – the inner Controller and Master – of Prakrti. Time is the factor that manifests the effect – the universe out of its causal condition. All these three are Me, the Supreme Brahman.

As long as the creative will of the Lord operates sustaining this continuous flow of material energy as a succession of causes and effects, that flow persists, providing scope for the Jiva to enjoy or suffer on account of their karma.

When the creative will subsides and the Pralaya or the process of dissolution sets in, this Cosmic shell in which innumerable universes arise and decay is invaded and overcast by Me as Time, bringing about the dissolution of all things into their elemental condition.

The body dissolves into food; food into seed; seed into earth, earth into smell; smell into water; water into taste; taste into fire; fire into form; form into air; air into touch; touch into sky; sky into sound; the senses into their presiding deities; the deities into the mind which is a product of sattva and the controller of all; sound or sabda into the tamas aspect of ahamkara (ego-sense); and ahamkara, which infatuates all, into the Mahatattva.

That superior category Mahatattva dissolves into its cause, the three gunas of Prakrti; and these into Prakrti, which is the state of equilibrium of its constituents, the gunas. Prakrti dissolves in Time which is now without any movement; Prakrti and Time become one.

Time dissolves in the Creative Spirit, which is My power of Maya, and that Power in Me the Eternal and Unborn Being. I, the Pure Spirit, forming the basic substance on which creation manifests and the residuary substratum in which it dissolves, remain, without the limitation of any adjunct.

How does there occur the delusion of difference or multiplicity in the mind of one who constantly thinks over this process? It will take to wings as darkness before the sun. Even if it comes occasionally, how can it take any firm root in the heart?

This philosophy of the Sankhya, which can cut all knotty doubts, has been thus taught by Me, the Knower of everything, gross and subtle, in the form of a discourse on creation and dissolution, on how categories evolve and dissolve.

20. Gunas and Freedom from Them

Sri Bhagawan said:

Oh noble one! Learn how the nature of man is affected by the three gunas of Prakrti when they are in their pristine state, without interaction among themselves.

The signs of sattva are control of mind and senses, forbearance, discrimination, austerity, truthfulness, compassion, memory, contentment, self-sacrifice, desirelessness, faith, revulsion from evil, charity and absorption in the Self.

The signs of rajas are desire, activity, pride, greed, haughtiness, longing for one's selfish ends, sense of difference between man and things, sensuality, enthusiasm arising from excitement, craving for name and fame, indulgence in ridicule of others, demonstrativeness and aggressiveness.

The signs of tamas are anger, greed, perfidy, cruelty, beggarliness, hypocrisy, languor, quarrelsomeness, depression, delusion, despondency, wretchedness, lassitude, vain expectation, fear and lack of initiative, and vigour at work.

The above is a description of the modes of mind in succession, generated by the gunas of sattva, rajas and tamas individually. Now listen about the qualities produced by their combination and interaction.

Oh Uddhava! In the feelings of 'I' and 'mine', the gunas of Prakrti function, in combination, simultaneously. All the activities of the mind, tanmatras, senses and pranas are the result of the combined functioning of the three gunas.

When man is firm and resolute in his pursuit of artha, kama and dharma, then is generated in him earnestness, attachment and desire to possess and enjoy. This is the result of the combination of the gunas.

Even adherence to dharma can arise from a combination of the gunas in the case of a house-holder. His resolve to do action prompted by desire is rajas. His resolve to perform swadharma is sattva. His resolve to stay idle and do no work is tamas.

If one is in a state of tranquility and possesses qualities allied to it, it may be inferred that he is predominantly constituted of sattva. If he is dominated by craving for acquisition, it may be inferred that he is predominantly constituted of rajas. If his chief characteristic is anger, it may be inferred that he is predominantly constituted of tamas.

Know one, whether it be man or woman, to be possessed of sattva, if he or she is found to adore Me with devotion, by the performance of all works that one ought to do, eschewing all self-centred desires.

Whenever anyone is found adoring Me with the performance of his duties, entertaining many desires to be fulfilled thereby, know him to be possessed of rajas. Whenever anyone does so for the destruction of his enemies, know him to be possessed of tamas.

Sattva, rajas and tamas, which manifest in the mind, affect the Jiva, but not Me, the Lord of all. And even among the Jiva, they affect only those who are attached to the body and material objects, and not those un-attached.

When sattva, brilliant, pure and peaceful, dominates over the other two gunas, then man is happy, established in morality and knowledge.

When rajas, characterized by attachment, sense of difference, and consciousness of one's power, dominates over sattva and tamas, then man becomes subject to suffering, following as he does the path of desire-prompted actions seeking wealth and fame.

When tamas, characterized by lack of discriminative power, lethargy and inertia, dominates over rajas and sattva, then man becomes subject to pessimism, delusion, sloth, cruelty and indulgence in vain expectations.

When the mind is serene and the senses are at rest, when the body is free from affliction and disease and the heart from attachment, then know that there is dominance of sattva, the quality through which I manifest.

When there is a plethora of activity and man becomes a confirmed extrovert, when his mind and senses cease to have any rest, and when he becomes subject to physical ailments and mental excitement and confusion, then know that rajas is dominant.

When the drooping mind, unable to sustain consciousness, dissolves into sleep, when thought ceases to function owing to dominance of inertia and pessimism, then know that tamas is prevalent.

At the ascent of sattva, the introspective power of the senses represented by the Devas increases; at that of rajas, the active tendencies represented by the asuras dominate; and at that of tamas, the delusive mood represented by the rakshasas (demons) prevails.

The waking state is from sattva; the dream state, from rajas; and the state of sleep, from tamas. The turiya (fourth) state is the Spirit which prevails in all the three states, and transcends the gunas.

Those that follow the vaidika rites and way of life will, with the predominance of sattva, go to heavenly regions and become celestials. With the predominance of

tamas, one degenerates to the level of plants. With the predominance of rajas, one is re-born man who is at a middle stage of evolution, between the above two.

Those, who die when sattva is dominant, go to the heavenly region; those, when rajas is dominant, become men; and those, when tamas dominates, go to infernal regions. But those who are beyond any of these gunas of Prakrti attain to Me.

Swadharma (performance of legitimate and ordained duties), performed as offering unto Me or without any desires, is influenced by sattva. Actions done with desire for the fruits of the works are influenced by rajas; and those involving cruelty and other expressions of brute-nature are influenced by tamas.

The knowledge of the atman as unconnected with the body is an expression of sattva. The acceptance of it as tenanted a body is an expression of rajas. The acceptance of the atman as the body itself, characteristic of children and ignorant people, is the effect of tamas. The consciousness that grasps Me is beyond the three gunas.

Dwelling in the solitude of a forest is sattva; in a village, rajas; and in a gambling den, tamas. The holy places associated with Me are beyond the realm of the three gunas.

The man devoid of attachment to works is under the influence of sattva; the one blinded by attachment is under the influence of rajas; and the one in delusion is under the influence of tamas. But the devotee self-surrendered to Me is beyond all the three gunas.

Faith in the spiritual verity is born of sattva; faith in action, of rajas; and faith in the evil and the unrighteous, of tamas. But faith in service to Me is beyond the gunas of Prakrti.

The food which is pure, healthy and obtained easily is characterized by sattva; the food that is delightful at the time of eating is characterized by rajas; and the food that is impure and unhealthy is characterized by tamas. But the food offered to Me is free from the influence of the gunas.

The happiness born of spiritual contemplation is of sattva; that born of the sense contacts is of rajas; and that which springs from delusion owing to practices like drinking, and from the pitiable state of dependence on others is of tamas. But the happiness born of devotion to Me is beyond the gunas.

Substance, place, results, time, knowledge, action, agent, faith, the three states of waking, dream and sleep, forms like those of Devas, man etc, and abidance in realms like heaven are based in the three gunas.

In short, Oh the best of men! Whatever there are seen, heard and thought of, being based on Prakrti and Purusa, are constituted of the three gunas.

The Jiva goes round and round the trans-migratory cycle according to the gunas it is associated with, and the karma springing from them. He who overcomes the influence of these gunas manifesting in the mind, becomes established securely in Me through devotion, and becomes fit for My state. So let all persons of intelligence that have got this human body, which is a means for spiritual enlightenment, abandon attachment to objects of material life, and adore Me and Me alone. Let a man of discrimination adore Me, and let him master his senses and practise non-attachment, being extremely vigilant in his spiritual striving.

The sage should cultivate sattva by taking in only pure food, and accepting pure and holy sense-impressions. By means of sattva, he should overcome rajas and tamas. By making the mind free of desire, tranquil and one with the Divine, he should overcome sattva, too, thus allowing the mind to dissolve in its substratum.

The Jiva, on abandoning its causal body, is free from the gunas of Prakrti and attains to Me. The Jiva, on its liberation from the ego-sense and the subtle impressions of the mind, becomes filled with Me, the Brahman and seeks no more satisfaction within or without.

21. Exhortation to Avoid Evil Company

Sri Bhagawan said:

Having obtained the human body suited for realizing Me, at being established in My Self, one attains to Me – the Supreme Self, the consummation of Bliss, who dwells within as the Inner Pervader.

One, who has been firmly established in the knowledge of the Atman and thereby liberated from the ego-sense in regard to the body and the mind, may still live among the products of the gunas so long as the body is alive. But as he is aware of the products being false presentations born of Maya, he is no longer bound by them in spite of his being in their midst.

One should never associate with people whose ideal in life is mere satisfaction of hunger and sex. One who keeps company of such persons is consigned to the dense darkness of ignorance, just as a blind man led by another blind man is.

The famous emperor Pururavas, on recovery from the terribly distracting state of mind into which he had fallen because of separation from Urvasi, became possessed of an intense spirit of dispassion and expressed his feelings poetically.

With Urvasi deserting him, the emperor ran after her, naked, like a mad man, moaning in desperation, appealing to her not to run away.

With his passion for her un-satiated and his whole mind still absorbed in her, he was not aware of the long time he had spent in her company and of the years ahead in his life.

Pururavas said:

‘Lo! How surprising is the intensity of the sexual passion that swayed me all along. I spent a considerable spell of my life – days and nights in the embrace of Urvasi, unconscious of the period so spent.

With her robbing me of my heart, I never knew in her company when the sun had risen or set. Nor was I aware of the countless years that had passed this way.

Look at the enormity of my delusion and ignorance! I am a jewel in the community of the ruling princess, nay an emperor. In spite of it, I have just been reduced to a mere pet animal of a woman.

Wailing and naked, like a mad man, I followed the track of the woman who had discarded me like a blade of grass, me with all the power, and insignia of an emperor.

What happened to my imperial power and majesty, when I pursued this deserting woman like a jackass following its female companion and receiving its kicks?

Of what use are learning, austerity, abandonment, Vedic study, solitude and silence, if one's heart is carried away by a woman?

Fie on me priding on my being emperor, and on my learning, but without any understanding of my own good - a veritable ass or bull subordinated completely by female species!

The long years I had spent enjoying the honey of Urvashi's lips did not satiate my sexual urge. On the other hand, it had the same effect as the offering of ghee to the sacrificial fire.

Who could release my mind captivated by this courtesan except the supreme worshipful Lord Mahavishnu, the One who transcends all sense-perception, and yet draws and holds the minds (souls) of even sages who are immersed in the bliss of the Self?

Though Urvashi gave me sound advice, the absolute slave of the senses that I am, it has all been ineffective in dispelling the powerful infatuation that has seized my mind.

In fact, she has done me no harm. My woes are entirely due to my own uncontrolled sense-impressions. If a man gets frightened by mistaking a rope for a snake, the rope is not at all to blame.

What is this body, a mass of foul-smelling substances, extremely impure and dirty? Where are beauty and other attractive qualities one has been associating with the body? Certainly they are not in the body that is foul and filthy in everyway. The beauty and other qualities are only a superimposition on the body by the ignorant mind.

It is impossible to determine as to who have claim to this body. Does it belong to parents as it has arisen from them? Does it belong to wife as she claims to have enjoyment and protection from it? Does it belong to one's employer because of its subordination to him? Does it belong to dogs and vultures, as it provides food to them on its death, if it is left as such without cremation or burial? Does it belong to one's friends, as they expect many forms of help from it?

For the body of a woman, the dirtiest of all world-stuff, bound to be reduced into worthless substances like ashes or food for worms, man develops intense attachment and goes about exclaiming 'how beautiful is this woman?, how charming is her smile?'

What difference is there between worms and ourselves (men) both of whom seek delight in a body constituted of skin, flesh, blood, fat, marrow, bone, etc and full of filthy fasces and urine?

Though contemplation can reveal the hollowness and stupidity of physical attraction, the reflective seeker should not keep the company of women or of others enslaved by women. For, the mind gets agitated when the senses and their objects come into mutual juxtaposition.

Mind cannot have attraction for objects that have never been seen or heard of. The mind of a man who never allows his senses to dally with their objects becomes gradually controlled and tranquil.

So, one should not have physical contact with women or men who are 'women's men'. For, even men of discrimination should not put too much trust in their capacity to withstand the onslaught of senses in relation of their objects. Men of ignorance can never do it.'

Sri Bhagawan said:

Expressing such thoughts, Pururavas, worthy of respect among men and celestials, left the realm of Urvasi. He realized Me, the Supreme Spirit, as indwelling him, shed all delusion through enlightenment, and attained supreme peace.

So a man of wisdom should abandon contact with men of sensuous dispositions and seek the company of holy ones. By their guidance, holy men help to efface the sensuous tendencies of the mind.

The holy ones are those who depend on none except Me, who always think of Me, who are tranquil, even-minded, without ego, beyond the pairs of opposites, and who do not accept gifts or accumulate riches.

Oh noble-minded Uddhava! Holy men always speak of My excellences and achievements with a very beneficial effect on all. Their company eradicates sinful tendencies in the minds of people.

Those, who respectfully listen to the discourses of holy men, glorify Me in songs and recitals, feel enlightened with them and become devoted to Me developing firm faith in Me and delight in My contemplation.

Oh pious friend! What more is there to be attained by one who has developed loving devotion to Me – the Brahman, the repository of infinite auspicious qualities, the abounding field of infinite bliss and consciousness?

Just as one who approaches fire gets rid of cold, darkness and fear, so does the company of holy men help one to overcome the chillness of ritualism, the darkness of ignorance and the fear of samsara.

Holy men with the knowledge of the Brahman and established in pure tranquility are the sole support of men struggling in the ocean of samsara, just as a strong boat is for people ship-wrecked on the sea.

Just as food is the source of life to living beings, just as I am the support to the distressed, just as one's dharma is one's wealth after death, so for those overpowered by life in samsara, the holy man is the only centre of relief.

The saints give you the spiritual eyes to realize the Lord in His glory and in His immanence. As the sun, high up in the sky, enables one perceive the externals only, the saints, the real patron-deities and relatives, enable one recognize the Atman and even Me.

Now Pururavas gave up his infatuation for Urvasi completely. He lost all hankering after, and attachment to worldly objects, and wandered about in the land, with his heart steeped in the bliss of the Atman.

22. Kriya-Yoga or Devotional Ritualism

Uddhava said:

Oh Lord, Thou the leader of the clan of Yadus! Deign to expound to me the way of ritualistic communion which the devotees follow.

Many worshipful sages like Narada, Vedavyasa and Brihaspati, the son of Angiras and the teacher of the Devas praise this way of communion as supremely good for man.

Instruction on this path of ritualistic communion, first revealed by Thee, was imparted by Brahma to Bhrigu and his other offspring on the one hand, and by Sri Parameswara to Parvati on the other.

The path is open to all varnas and ashramas. For women and sudras, this path is the most beneficial for spiritual progress.

Oh lotus-eyed One! Oh Lord of the universe! Deign to expound this path to Me, Thy loving servant and devotee, for destruction of my bondage to karma.

Sri Bhagawan said:

The way of worship to Me through rites and rituals is without end in extent and scope. I shall, therefore, give you a brief description of its parts in the order of their succession.

Worship of Me based on rituals is of three forms, first based on Vedic mantras, second based on tantrik texts and the third based on a mix of these two. One can worship Me following any of these paths.

Listen, how members of the three varnas after attaining the status of dwija, on performance of upanayana, adore Me with faith and devotion.

A devotee is, with all sincerity, to worship Me, the Supreme Deity with various offerings in an image, in a symbolic diagram drawn on the floor, in the sun, in water, in a holy man or in one's own heart.

After cleaning teeth, he is to take bath for the sake of cleanliness of his body. While bathing, he is to chant mantras from the Veda and / or the Tantra, while rubbing the body with mud or other cleaning agent.

He is to perform the essential rites like the sandhya as ordained in the Veda, even while he engages himself in adoration of Me through ardent devotional communion which will free him from the bondage to karma.

My images of worship are of eight kinds, namely, those made of stone, wood, metals, sand and precious stones, symbolic diagrams drawn on the floor, of pictures and those mentally conceived.

Images which are the veritable tabernacles of the Lord are of two kinds – the movable and the immovable. Oh Uddhava! There is no need to invoking Divine presence (avahana) or vacating the presence (udvasana) in the case of immovable images. In them the Divine presence is permanent.

Even in some movable images like salagrama, there is no need for the two rites of invoking or vacating the Divine presence. But those rites are necessary in the case of the idols made of sand. In respect of movable images made otherwise, the rites are optional. Except for the images made of diagrams on the floor or the pictures, ceremonial bath is to be performed. For the images made of diagrams and the pictures, cleaning is sufficient.

If a person's worship is prompted by desires, then he should worship Me with choicest offerings. But a devotee without any desires can adore Me with any ingredients he may gather. In the case of worship in mind, all offerings are necessarily mental.

Oh Uddhava! In worship on fixed images alone, ceremonial bath and decoration are the most important. In worship on consecrated enclosures on the floor, the most important thing is to locate the various divinities at their proper places with appropriate mantras. When the worship is done in fire, offering of oblations in plenty of ghee is the most important feature.

When the worship is done in the sun, it should take the form of a prayer and praise; when it is in water, it should take the form of tarpana or libations with water. But what is the most important is sraddha (sincere faith) of the devotee. When an offering is made by a devotee with faith, be it only water, I accept it with great delight. Not to speak then of My delight when I am worshipped by a devotee with flowers, incense, sandal paste and food offering! But offerings, however rich, do not please Me if they are not backed by devotion.

After having collected and got ready all the ingredients of worship, even before his purificatory bath, the worshipper should make a seat of darbha-grass and sit turning eastward or northward. If it is fixed image, he should sit facing it.

After doing nyasa (ceremonial location) on oneself and the image, the latter must be cleansed with hands. The purna-kumbha (vessel filled fully with water) and another with water for prokshana (sprinkling) should be kept ready, consecrated with flowers, sandal paste, etc.

From the vessel meant for prokshana, water must be taken and sprinkled on the spot of worship, the ingredients of worship and oneself. From the purna-kumbha, water

is to be drawn and filled in three vessels for padya and other rites. Flowers, sandal paste and other ingredients are to be put in the three vessels for purifying water therein.

One, who worships according to the instructions of the guru, should consecrate the water kept in the vessels for padya, arghya, and achamana with the mantras 'hridayaya namah', 'sirshne swaha', 'sikhaya vashat' respectively, and all the vessels with Gayatri mantra.

In the heart-lotus of the body, which has been dried by prana, burnt by the fire in muladhara, and soaked in the flow of nectar from the lunar sphere in the forehead, there is the very subtle sound of AUM followed by bindu and nada, crowned by My supreme form of extreme subtlety as Narayana, on which men of great spiritual attainments meditate.

When one's body has, through meditation, been irradiated by the presence of Narayana, then that presence be worshipped mentally in the heart. Becoming one with Him through communion, His presence should be transferred to the image, and the image worshipped with all appropriate rituals.

Let a seat be made with divine majesties like dharma, enlightenment, non-attachment, etc and with the nine powers such as Vimala, Utkarshini and others. On that the worshipper is to conceive a lotus of eight petals luminous with other parts like pericarp and filaments, and with the sun, moon and fire placed one above the other within. In that way, I should be worshipped with the chanting of appropriate Vedic and tantrik mantras, and with offerings of arghya, padya, achamana, etc. Prayers should be made for one's material welfare and spiritual emancipation.

The weapons, ornaments, attendants and associates of the Lord be also worshipped. The weapons such as sudarsana, panchajanya, mace kaumodaki, sword nandaka, bow sarnga, plough, pestle, and the decorations such as the neck-jewel kaustubha, floral wreath and srivasta be worshipped.

The attendants Nanda, Sunanda, Prachanda, Chanda, Mahabala, Bala, Kumuda and Kumudaksha conceived as stationed in the eight quarters as also Garuda in front be meditated upon and worshipped.

Durga, Ganapati, Vyasa and Vishvaksena be stationed in their proper places in the four corners; the gurus are to be placed on the left and the Devas in the east, etc. They shall all be facing the Deity and be worshipped with arghya and all other items.

If the devotee has the means, he may use, for ceremonial bath of the image, water that has been consecrated by mantras and made fragrant with sandal, usira, camphor, saffron and aloes.

He shall adore Me with devotion by uttering the holy mantras like suvarna, gharma and parivedana, by chanting holy formulae, by reciting purusa-sukta, by chanting samans, etc.

The devotee is to decorate Me, with great devotion, with wearing-cloth, wrapping-cloth, ornaments, garlands, sandal-paste, unguents, etc.

He is, with great faith, to offer Me water for padya, arghya and achamana, and make offerings of sandal-paste, flowers, rice-grains, light, incense and food.

If he is of sufficient means, he may offer savoury food items like payasa (sweet rice-pudding), sweet-cake, snacks, wheat boiled in milk, curd, etc.

On festive days, or if he is of sufficient means, everyday, the devotee may elaborate the adoration with oil-bath, offering of tooth-brush, mirror, etc, panchamruta-bath, feast, music, dance, etc.

In the sacrificial pit, made according to the scriptural injunctions, with zones, fire-pocket and altar, fire must be lighted and the burning twigs gathered together to form a single flame.

Darbha grass is to be laid around the pit with ceremonial water sprinkled thereon. The anvadhana rite is then to follow. All the sacrificial ingredients are to be placed to the north of the fire. After doing prokshana, the worshipper shall meditate on Me as manifesting in the fire as follows.

Brilliant like molten-gold, possessed of four arms, holding the conch, discus, mace and lotus, tranquil, wearing a yellow cloth of the colour of the pistil of the lotus, decorated with brilliant ornaments like diadem, bracelets, girdle and superb armlets, having the tattoo known as the srivatsa on the chest, wearing the splendourous jewel kaustabha in the neck, and having a thick floral wreath surrounding the chest and the abdomen.

Thus meditating on Me, the wise devotee is to worship Me. He is then to consign twigs soaked in ghee to the sacrificial fire, and perform the aghara rite followed by the aiyabhaga rite strictly following the scriptural injunctions. Then he is to make ghee-soaked oblations, chanting the mula-mantra and the purusa-sukta. The sixteen riks of the mula-mantra and the purusa-sukta shall be chanted with an oblation following each rik. The worshipper shall offer oblations to dharma chanting relevant mantras. Finally he shall propitiate the Fire-deity with the vishtakrita offering.

Afterwards, flower offerings together with prostrations are to be made to Me manifesting in the middle of the sacrificial fire. On eight sides, sacrifice (food) is to be offered to My attendants and associates. Then the worshipper shall again be seated and meditate on Me, the Infinite Brahman as Narayana and make japa of the mula-mantra.

At the places of worship and of the homa, the worshipper is to meditate on the Deity as having completed His meal; then he is to offer Him water for washing followed by the presentation of fragrant betel-leaves, etc for purification of the mouth. This rite is to be followed by worshipping the Deity again with flowers. The remnants of the food offered are to be given to Vishvakṣena.

Thereafter, for a short while at least, the devotee is to spend time in blissful relaxation, singing My exploits, acting some of them, dancing in ecstasy and also narrating accounts of My deeds to other devotees.

Then he is to sing loudly hymns composed by ancient seers, as also compositions of great men of later days in the local spoken tongue, and fall like a stick in prostration crying out ‘Oh Lord! Be gracious unto me!’

Placing his head on My feet and holding them with both his hands, he shall pray, ‘Deign to give shelter to this servant seeking refuge at Thy feet, out of fear of this ocean of samsara infested by the crocodile of death’.

The devotee is then to contemplate that he is receiving flowers, sandal-paste, etc as holy prasād from Me, and reverentially place them on his head. Next, if the Divine Presence is sought to be withdrawn, he shall, through contemplation, take the prasād back into the Presence within.

I, the Essence of All, am present in every object and the worshipper himself. So, worship of Me can be done through any object or image that stimulates faith in the worshipper at any time. Faith is the most important factor in the efficacy of worship.

A devotee who worships Me thus, through this ritual of adoration that combines the vaidika and the tantrik modes in itself, will attain, through My Grace, all that is good here and hereafter.

The devotee is to construct temples, consistent with his resources, and have My holy images consecrated therein. He shall arrange to raise flower gardens and make endowment of arable lands, houses, villages, etc, the revenue from which is to be utilized for proper and ceremonial worship either daily or on special occasions. In this way, the devotee is to seek to attain to My Being.

By the consecration of My image in a temple, one can become an emperor; by building a temple, one can become the Lord of the three worlds; by worshipping in a temple, one can attain Brahma-loka; and by doing all these three, one can attain to My Being.

One attains Me through devotion without any desire. And one who worships Me, in the way described, attains that state of desirelessness in which true devotion flourishes.

Whoever appropriates for himself such wealth as has been given by devotees for the service of the Lord and holy men becomes a worm subsisting on excreta for countless years.

Those who help, prompt or encourage others to commit such acts of unholy misappropriation will meet similar fate. The more is the involvement of the accomplice, the more are the consequences accruing to him.

23. Jnana-Yoga

Sri Bhagawan said:

Seeing the whole world as sprung from the union of Prakrti and Purusa, a person should see the world as a unified whole and, as a consequence, cease from praising or criticizing anyone for his nature or actions.

The man, who takes to praising men's actions and character or to criticizing them, quickly swerves away from his goal of unitary consciousness because of his mind getting excited over impure and changing values.

When the senses, which are the products of tajas-ahamkara, are overcome by drowsiness, the individual is in the false world of dream. When the mind is dissolved in deep sleep, he falls into total unconsciousness, resembling death itself. The man who sees multiplicity is very much in multiple states of awareness as to his spiritual identity.

In the realm of duality, the classification of things as good and bad has no significance. For, all that is spoken by words, experienced by the senses and thought by the mind belong to the realm of falsity.

Though a reflection, an echo or a 'snake in a rope' has no active resistance, still it generates experiences felt as pleasant or unpleasant. Even so, the body and the entities allied to it generate fears until illumination destroys the identification of the atman with these experiences.

All this world is nothing but the Atman. That Omnipotent Supreme Being is the creator and the created, the savior and the saved. That Eternal Being is what destroys and what is destroyed.

Therefore, great seers have not accepted any existent entity other than the uninvolved and unaffected Atman as Reality. It is He, the Supreme Cause that shines as the many. What is accepted as the universe in its three-fold aspect of adhyatmika, adhidaivika and adhibhautika is a false appearance on the Atman. This world constituted of the three gunas is the creation of Maya, Its power.

One, who has intellectually understood and spiritually realized the truth that I revealed to you, will neither praise nor insult anyone, but go about the world like the sun which is utterly unconcerned with all that is high or low.

Understanding through observation, reasoning, scriptures and one's own realization that everything, having a beginning and an end, is false, one should cultivate absolute detachment.

Uddhava said:

Oh Lord! Involvement in trans-migratory cycle cannot occur to the body because it is inert and an object of perception. Nor can it happen to the atman which is pure self-awareness and the subject revealing everything. Samsara, therefore, cannot occur to either of these two. But we find that samsara is experienced.

The atman is un-decaying, free from passion, unaffected by merits and demerits, untouched by ignorance and free from the limitations of space and time. As for the body, it is an inert substance in itself, like a log of wood. It being so, whose is the involvement in samsara?

Sri Bhagawan said:

As long as the atman interacts with the intellect (buddhi), the sense-organs and the body, samsara, though unreal, is experienced as a result of delusion.

In the case of a man who thinks of various objects in waking consciousness, the impressions left in his mind by that consciousness and its objects make him see many phantoms in dream. Similarly, the body and other objects are perceived real as a result of the delusion arising from their super-imposition on the atman. Samsara persists so long as this delusion continues.

A man who has awakened from a dream is free from the delusion of enjoyment and / or suffering he was having in the dream state, though he retains a memory of it in his waking-state.

Sorrow, joy, fear, anger, greed, delusion and all forms of desire, as also experiences like birth and death pertain to the ego-sense and not to the atman. When one is in deep-sleep, there is no ego-sense and then all such experiences disappear.

It is the Jiva that is involved in the trans-migratory cycle, not mere ego-sense. The trans-migrating self or the Jiva is none but the atman which identifies itself as the 'I' with reference to the complex of the body, senses, mind and prana by way of super-imposition. It is the subtle body (linga-sarira). Residing within this complex, in identification with it, the Jiva is mistaken as an expression of the modification of matter and within the realm of Time.

The sage wanders about, cutting asunder the knot of ego-sense with the sword of knowledge rendered sharp by the service of the Lord and the guru.

Knowledge means discriminative understanding. The means for developing it are the scripture, tapas, tradition, reasoning and experience. It consists in the understanding that the Supreme Spirit alone had been before universe came into being, is what exists in the middle and will continue to be when the universe including Time dissolves itself into IT.

The gold of which several ornaments are made is the same at the beginning and at the end of the series of its changes as objects. In spite of all its transformation, the same gold is there when the objects made of it are seen as existing. In the same way, I am the One that appears as the multitudinous and changing universe.

Oh dear Uddhava! The Pure Consciousness permeates and illumines the mind in its three states of waking, dream and deep sleep. IT illumines also the three gunas of Prakrti forming the cause of these states as also the universe with its triple division of cause, effect and agency. The Pure Consciousness exists in the fourth (turiya) state beyond the three states of human consciousness. As IT is concomitant with the world of objects as also existent in its transcendence, the Pure Consciousness alone is the ultimate Reality.

An entity that did not exist before its origin and ceases to be after it no longer exists cannot be there in the middle. If it is seen to exist, it is said to exist only in name. Whatever is the substance with which a thing is made and held in manifestation, alone can be the causal and manifesting substance. This is My firm and settled view.

This multitudinous world which is a projection of rajas was non-existent before it came into being, and is yet experienced as existing. It is so because the Brahman alone, self-existent and self-luminous, shines as all these effects – the world.

One is to withdraw from objects of the lustful senses and be established in the Atman. One is to cut asunder all doubts about the Supreme Being with the help of the scriptures and sound dialectic that dispel the view that the body is the Self.

The body is not the Self as it is constituted of physical matter as pots are made of clay. In the same way, the senses, the vital energy, the intellect, the ego-sense, etc cannot be the atman as they are not spiritual, but non-physical. The five gross elements, the five tanmatras, Prakrti, etc cannot be the atman, for they are not spiritual.

For one who has known My Being fully and is established in IT, of what consequences, good or bad, are the controlled or the wandering moods of the senses? Does the gathering or dispersal of clouds make any difference to the sun?

Just as air, fire, water and earth do not dry, burn, wet or contaminate the space, just as the recurring climatic changes like summer, winter, etc do not make any impression on it, so the un-decaying Self which transcends the ego-sense is not affected by sattva, rajas and tamas, the gunas of Prakrti causing involvement to the Jiva in samsara.

Though this is, in fact, the truth, the aspirant should not slacken his efforts at self-control. Until, by whole hearted devotion to Me, the aspirant has totally cleansed his mind of its addiction to sense-enjoyment, he should, with extreme vigilance, prevent his mind from cultivating attachment to objects of the senses created by Maya.

Just as an inadequately treated disease lurks behind and troubles a patient from time to time, so also an immature yogi, whose sensuous and active tendencies lie suppressed and hidden, is constantly harassed by these tendencies subsisting in his subconscious mind.

But such yogis, whose fall is caused by such agencies as friends and relatives, return to the path of yoga in their next life on account of the powerful impressions of their past life. They will no more be addicted to worldliness.

An ignorant Jiva, prompted by some desire or other, will be performing karma till the fall of its body, carrying further the impressions of such actions. But a man of enlightenment, though living in the body, is free from all desires as he is established in the Self. Being thus free from ego-centred desires, his actions do not affect him.

An enlightened man who is ever established in the Self does not even know that he has a body, much less that he is doing anything, even when he is seen performing all natural functions like resting, sitting, walking, lying, eating and evacuating.

Even though such person perceives the objects of the senses, he is convinced of their falsity, just like the experiences of a dream on awakening.

Oh Uddhava! In the state of ignorance, the body wrought out of the gunas of Prakrti and karma, which are the products of ignorance, is super-imposed on the atman. It is, therefore, experienced in inseparable identity with it. It is this ignorance, and its product, the body that are sublimed by jnana. The atman, on the other hand, is always the same. It is not newly realized in liberation, nor is it lost in bondage.

Just as the sun, when it rises, only removes the obstacle to vision from the eye, and does not create anything new to be seen, so the perfect spiritual intuition relating to Me only removes the ignorance from the aspirant's understanding. Thereupon the Atman shines as it always has been shining. Nothing new comes into being.

The Atman is the self-luminous Consciousness, un-originated and unfathomable. IT is the Self-Consciousness all-pervading, without the polarity of 'subject and object'. IT is the Absolute One without a second, intuited beyond word and thought.

When the Atman is the sole Existence, it is a delusion of the mind to see anything different from IT. For, apart from IT, the Atman realized as the Self, there is no other support for duality or multiplicity of the world of objects.

It is only the purva-mimamsakas that consider this world of multiplicity, constituted of the five gross elements and distinguished by name and form, as real and hold that the passages in the Vedanta revealing the nature of Reality are only eulogies of the agents, celestials and other factors entering into the sacrificial cult of the Veda. Such a contention is without basis.

Yogis who are yet to attain the goal of realization may suffer from physical ailments. The following is the instruction for counter-acting such a state.

By concentration (dharana) on sun and moon, the fevers owing to cold and heat respectively can be counteracted. Ailments owing to vata (wind-related) can be overcome by asanas (yogic postures) combined with concentration. Other ailments arising from sins, planetary influence and serpents can be overcome by austerity, mantras and (herbal) medicines.

Emotions like lust and anger can be overcome by the continuous practice of the disciplines of hearing, praising and remembering Me. Pride, hypocrisy and other bad traits of character can be overcome by the service of great men.

There are some yogis who, through ways stated above and otherwise, seek to make the body strong and young, and then utilize it for acquisition of psychic powers (siddhis).

Wise men shall not approve of such course. For, the body being perishable like the fruit of a tree, any attempt to preserve it for all time is futile.

A person following the path of yoga may have health and strength of body. But the intelligent devotee holding Me as the highest end for attainment shall not divert his attention from spiritual discipline to physical well-being and attainment of siddhis.

But, if the aspirant treading the path of yoga, entirely dependent on Me, is completely desire-less, he will meet with no obstacles, being full of bliss of the Self.

24. Concluding Instruction to Uddhava

Uddhava said:

Oh Lord! The path of communion through knowledge that you have described is extremely difficult for one who has not yet conquered one's senses. Oh Achyuta! Expound to me, in an easily understandable manner, a way of communion which is practicable for an ordinary person.

Oh lotus-eyed One! Generally the yogis, who try to obtain mastery over their mind, exhaust themselves in that effort in vain. Having failed in their effort they get frustrated.

Therefore, men of true discrimination, instead of going for these difficult ways, seek shelter at Thy nectar-showering feet and are at ease. Oh Lord of All! Those others who, out of pride in their own capacity, take the paths of karma and yoga, are deluded by Thy Maya.

Oh Achyuta! Oh Thou, the well-wisher of all! Such is Thy glory that even all the world-lords like Brahma are always making their obeisance to Thee touching Thy feet with their crowns. In spite of this abounding glory, Thou didst condescend to seek the friendship of mere animals in Thy incarnation as Rama and of cattle and lowly men in the present incarnation as Krishna. What wonder is there then in Thy giving Thy own self to Thy devotees, Thy servants who have none but Thee as refuge?

Who that is conscious of the invaluable blessings received from Thee will not yearn to serve Thee, the soul of all, the most lovable of all, the bestower of the prayers of all? Who will, in preference to Thy service, seek heaven and other boons, even if bestowed by Thee, as they lead to mere sensuous enjoyment and consequent forgetfulness of Thee? There is nothing that Thy servants cannot get; but a true servant of Thine cares for nothing but the service of Thy feet.

Even enlightened beings like Brahma are not able to repay even to a small extent Thy gracious blessing in spite of serving Thee joyfully for two paraardhas as Thy agent in creation. That blessing consists in Thy manifesting as the inner-pervader within and as the guru without, effacing all evil tendencies of the Jiva and thereby revealing one's real nature as the Atman.

Sri Suka said:

Being thus questioned with intense love by Uddhava, the Supreme Lord, who has manifested Himself as the Trimurti by assuming the three powers of His, and who plays with the world as His toy, replied with a loving and attractive smile lighting His face.

Sri Bhagawan said:

I shall now speak to you about the glorious dharma propounded by Me, by observing which, with faith and devotion, man can overcome samsara which is difficult to be conquered by other means.

Always remembering Me, having one's mind, both conscious and sub-conscious, resigned to Me, and having full conviction in, and acceptance of, My Bhagavata dharma, an aspirant should do all actions deliberately as offerings unto Me.

He should make pilgrimage to places that have gained sanctity by the stay of My great devotees. He should also try to follow the examples set by My great devotees among different species of beings like Devas, asuras and men.

He should, individually or in association with others, observe days especially sacred to Me with grand celebrations attended with music, dance, processions, and display of royal insignia like the ceremonial umbrella.

The pure-minded devotee should recognize Me, Lord of All, as the Spirit pervading, within and without, every object including him, like the space pervading everything unobstructed by any barriers.

Oh Uddhava of mighty intelligence! Know him to be a man of true illumination (pandit) who, with the help of the insight born of knowledge, could have evenness of outlook, and perceive and honour all beings as My manifestations, be they holy men or out-castes, persecutors or adorers of holy men, the sun or a spark of fire, a tranquil person or a ferocious and cruel man.

In those who constantly seek to find My Presence in all human beings, there will no longer be any competition with equals, jealousy towards superiors, contempt for inferiors, and too much self-consciousness with regard to oneself.

Overlooking the ridicule of friends and relatives, casting aside the sense of high or low on mere physical considerations, and throwing away all shyness and shame based on such ideas, one should fall down in prostration like a stick before all beings – even dogs, outcastes, cattle, asses, etc, seeing all of them as manifestation of the Supreme Being.

Until the consciousness that all these beings are My manifestation has been established in the mind, one should seek to commune with Me through external worship, and My presence in all through thought, word and action.

By virtue of perceiving the presence of the Atman everywhere, a devotee gains that knowledge by which he perceives everything as the Brahman. He becomes free of all doubts, and he can abandon all karma.

Of all means of spiritual disciplines, the best, according to Me, is to realize My presence in everything through the functioning of the three instruments – mind, speech and action.

Oh Uddhava! When the dharma propounded by Me (Bhagavata-dharma), in which all actions are done in dedication to Me without an eye on the fruits of action, is accepted and practised, there is no wastage what-so-ever in one's efforts from the beginning. For, unlike in rites done with desires for fruits, which would end in total failure if done improperly, here in this path whatever is done helps one's spiritual evolution in this birth or in what follows, and one can continue from where one has left. Its basis is spiritual and not material, and so its effects are imperishable. This is as I, the Supreme One, have ordained.

Oh noble one! Even ordinary vain worldly actions like running away and crying owing to fear and sorrow, if done in dedication to Me, will have spiritual potency. There is no need then to speak about the high spiritual efficacy of Bhagavata-dharma consciously practised.

The attainment of Me, the True and the Immortal, with the help of even this insignificant mortal body, is the real wisdom of the wise and the skill of the skillful.

I have now expounded to you the essence of the doctrine of the Brahman propounded in the Veda (Upanisads), both in summary and in detail. Even the Devas cannot have the benefit of such an exposition.

These teachings on spiritual wisdom have been clearly expounded to you again and again in the light of valid reasoning. Hearing this, all doubts will have been cleared and liberation attained.

Even a person who reflects on the questions put by you and the answers I have given will attain to that imperishable Brahman whose truth is revealed by the Veda.

To that pious person who fully expounds this teaching on the Brahman among My devotees, I gift My own Self out of love for him.

He, who every day reads loudly this holy and sanctifying discourse, will be revealing Me to all with he lamp of knowledge. Thereby he sanctifies himself as well as others.

A man, who hears it every day diligently in an attitude of supreme devotion to Me, will be free of bondage to karma.

Oh Uddhava, my dear friend! Have you fully grasped the Supreme Truth I have explained to you? Is your mind free of grief and delusion?

You should not reveal this to a hypocrite having no real faith, to an atheist who accepts neither God nor His revelation, to a crafty man, to one who does not like to hear it, or to one without any trace of devotion.

You can impart it to persons who are devoted to holy men and to Me, who are of high moral standard, and who are pure in life. If they have devotion, it can be imparted even to persons of inferior birth.

After studying this discourse, there is nothing more for a spiritual aspirant to enquire about and understand, just as, after one takes nectar, there is nothing better to drink.

For a highly evolved devotee like you, I am verily the four ultimate values of life, namely dharma obtained through karma; wealth and prosperity obtained through trade, industry and state-craft; siddhis and enjoyment obtained through yoga; and liberation obtained through enlightenment.

When a man abandons dependence on all self-centred actions and resigns himself to Me, he then becomes very dear to Me. Established in the sense that he is the Immortal Spirit, he becomes one with the Universal Being, the Brahman.

Sri Suka said:

Being thus instructed by the Lord in the path of spiritual communion ending in enlightenment, Uddhava stood there dumb for a while, his voice choked by the surging waves of love and his eyes overflowing with tears.

With great effort, he controlled his mind that had been overpowered by Divine Love to the point of speechlessness. Conscious of the great blessing that the Lord had bestowed on him, with palms joined in salutation, and his head touching the lotus feet of Krishna, the Lord of the clan of Yadus,

Uddhava said:

Oh Thou, more ancient than Brahma himself! Thy very proximity has liquidated the ignorance-born darkness of delusion in me, a refugee at Thy feet. Where is cold, darkness and fear for a man who sits near a burning fire!

Still Thou hast taken the trouble to transmit the light of knowledge to Thy servant through this elaborate exposition. Which grateful man will desert the service of so loving a master and seek any other shelter?

That strong bond of love embracing the clans of Vrishnis, Dasarhas, Andhakas, Sattvatas established by Thy Yogamaya for the progress of Thy creative activities has now been cut asunder by Thee with the sword of self-knowledge.

Salutations to Thee, Oh master Yogi who confers the fruits of their striving on yogis! Bless me, Thy refugee, so that I may have constant and unwavering attachment to Thy sacred feet!

Sri Bhagawan said:

Oh Uddhava! I direct you to go to the celebrated place of pilgrimage known as Badaryashrama, specially sanctified by My Presence. There is the river Alak-nanda whose sight itself is purifying. By achamana in that river which carries the sanctified water flowing from My feet, you will be rid of all sins. Wearing tree-bark as clothing, subsisting on roots and fruits, and free from all desires for enjoyment, live without caring for extremes of climate and ready to put up patiently with any situation that you might face. Self-controlled, tranquil, good-natured, undistracted and endowed with knowledge and experience, think deeply in solitude over what I have taught you. With speech and thought absorbed in Me, and living according to the dharma I have taught, you will pass out of all material realms and attain to My transcendent state.

Sri Suka said:

Instructed thus by Sri Hari, whose remembrance is the antidote for samsara, Uddhava circumambulated the Lord, and placed his head at the feet of Lord. Though his mind had transcended the three gunas, the thought of going away to Badari leaving his Lord melted his heart, and the agony of his love expressed itself in torrential tears that washed the Lord's holy feet.

With a mind stricken by the thought of separation from his most beloved Lord, he felt extremely distressed and found it impossible to take leave of Him and start for Badari. Then placing on his head the Lord's sandals presented to him, and prostrating before him again and again, he left the place somehow.

Realizing the Lord as lodged in his heart, the great devotee left for Visala (Badaryashrama). Staying there, he practised what the Lord, the universal friend of all, had instructed, and attained to the state of Hari.

Thus the Lord Krishna, whose feet are worshipped by the great yogis, collected this cream of knowledge from the ocean of Bliss, the extensive devotional tradition, for the instruction of His devotee Uddhava. He, who imbibes it with pure and powerful faith in its potency, will save himself as also any one who associates with him.

In order to rid devotees of the fear of death and old age, the great Being Krishna, from whom the Veda originated, herein gathered, from the extensive garden of Vedic thought, this concentrated honey of knowledge for realization of the Supreme. As He collected the nectar (amrita) from the ocean of milk for distribution among the Devas, so has He placed this teaching before all devotees for all time to come, for their benefit! I salute that Supreme Person Krishna, the greatest of all beings.