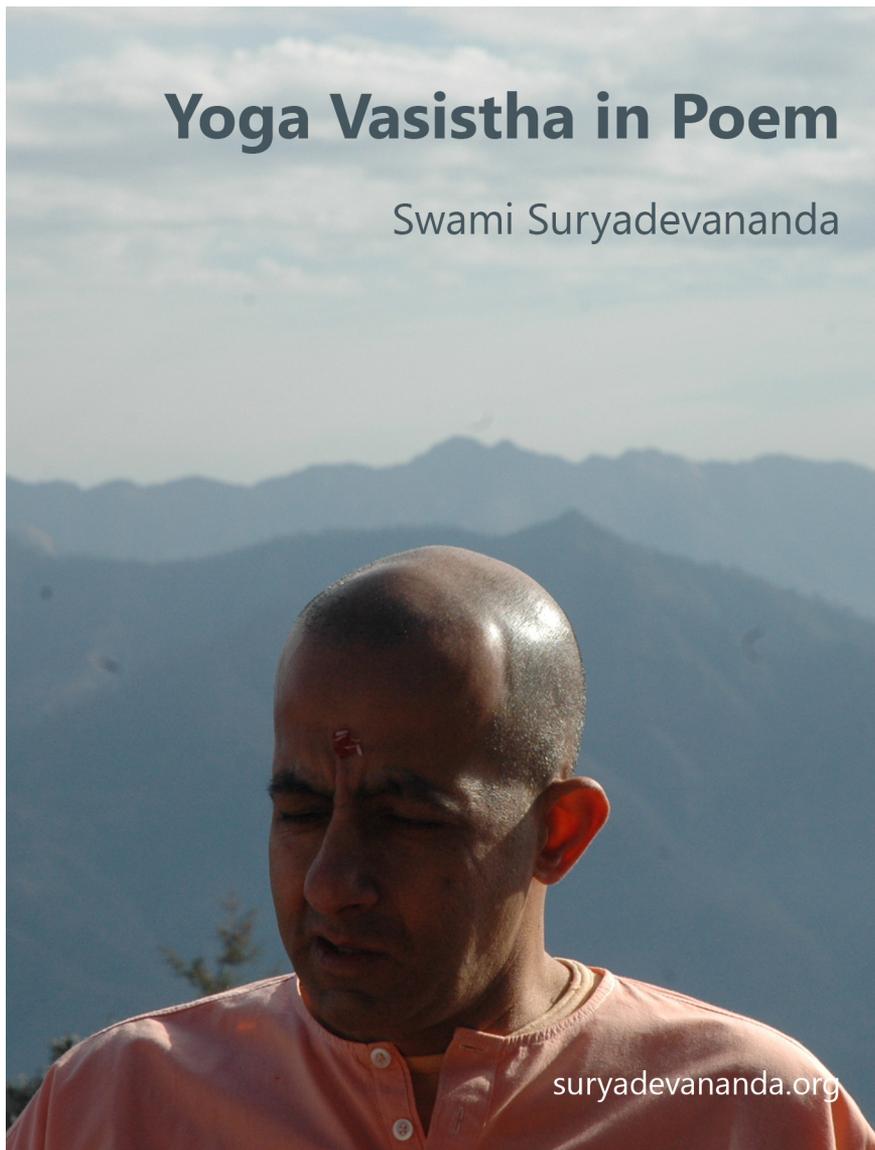


# Yoga Vasistha in Poem

Swami Suryadevananda



[suryadevananda.org](http://suryadevananda.org)



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Swami Suryadevananda

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[suryadevananda.org](http://suryadevananda.org)



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*Dedicated to*



*Swami Venkatesananda*

## Introduction

The Yoga Vasistha is a manual for the sincere spiritual seeker. Through the use of stories and illustrations, Vasistha brings out the most subtle points, not in theory but for practice. The way of bringing out these points inspires the seeker towards their actualization in practice—both in life and the mat—these being one and the same. The opening story of the first chapter sets the stage that both life which includes all activity and meditation or practice lead to the goal like two wings of a bird.

Vasistha makes it very clear that the problem is confusion of the real with the unreal or changing due to the seeming reality of its appearance. Life is the field where this takes place and life must also be the field where this is corrected. Meditation or practice sharpens the instrument which allows for a life where we deal with things as they are, without the interference of thought. This thins the mind and the mind and this thinned mind is ready for deeper meditation so one's true nature can be seen.

Life or activity and meditation or practice feed on each other in a cycle of ridding the mind of its impurities so one's true nature can be seen. This is the task on hand and this mighty scripture is a blazing light on the path.

It took about a year to complete this work which is dedicated to Swami Venkatesananda whose writings and teachings on the Yoga Vasistha have inspired this effort. This work is not intended as a complete poetic rendition but expressing in poetry what I myself found most useful.

This work was completed in the early part of this year but not released in a single eBook. There is now a print friendly version set in two columns to save paper and reduce its size and this

eBook version in a single column to work best with electronic readers.

I am most thankful to Sivananda-Usha for her tremendous help with editing this work.

Swami Suryadevananda

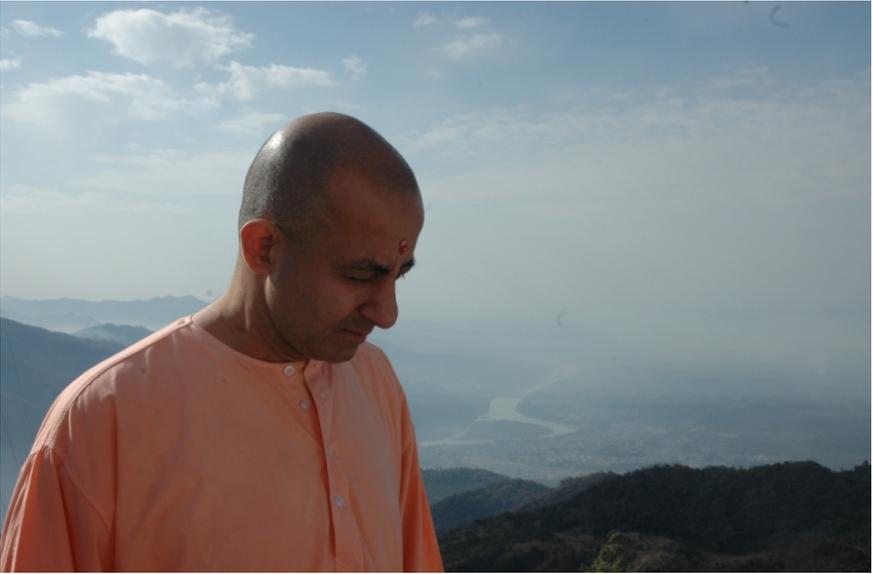
24 December 2012

# Contents

Introduction.....	4
Prayer Before Reading.....	9
<b>CHAPTER I: DEALING WITH DISPASSION.....</b>	<b>10</b>
1. A Seeker's Plight: Work or Knowledge .....	10
2. Rama's Observation of Life .....	15
<b>CHAPTER II: THE BEHAVIOR OF THE SEEKER .....</b>	<b>29</b>
1. The Behavior of the Seeker .....	29
2. Vasistha's Instruction Begins .....	31
3. Narrative Dealing with Liberation.....	34
4. Four Gate-Keepers to Freedom .....	37
5. Study and Experience .....	42
<b>CHAPTER III: DEALING WITH CREATION .....</b>	<b>44</b>
1. The Secret of Creation .....	44
2. The Mind.....	47
3. The Supreme Lord.....	49
4. Liberated Ones.....	50
5. Reality and Appearance.....	51
6. Creation .....	54
7. The Story of Lila .....	57
8. The Mystery of Time .....	80
9. Story of Karkati .....	86
10. The Story of Indu's Sons .....	95
11. The Story of Ahalya.....	98
12. Brahma and Vasistha's Dialogue .....	99

13. Vasistha's Instruction Continues .....	102
14. The Story of the Great Forest .....	106
15. The Story of the Three Non-Existent Princes.....	109
16. The Story of Lavana .....	113
17. Steps of Ignorance and States of Wisdom.....	125
<b>CHAPTER IV: DEALING WITH EXISTENCE.....</b>	<b>131</b>
1. Dealing with Existence.....	131
2. The Story of Sukra.....	133
3. The Story of The Three Demons .....	143
4. The Story of Dashura .....	151
5. Kaca's Song .....	157
<b>CHAPTER V: DEALING WITH DISSOLUTION .....</b>	<b>160</b>
1. Section Dealing with Dissolution .....	160
2. The Story of King Janaka.....	164
3. On the Inner Intelligence .....	170
4. The Story of Punya and Pavana .....	178
5. The Story of King Bali.....	180
6. The Story of Prahlada .....	189
7. The Story of Gadhi .....	197
8. The Story of Uddalaka .....	208
9. The Story of Suraghu .....	224
10. The Story of Bhasa and Vilasa.....	230
11. The Story of Veetahavya.....	246
12. Death of the Mind .....	255
<b>CHAPTER VI: DEALING WITH LIBERATION.....</b>	<b>264</b>
1. Dealing with Liberation.....	264

2. On Brahman .....	276
3. Bhusunda's Story - The Way of Yoga .....	283
4. The Way of Wisdom and Meditation.....	291
5. The Story of the Wood-Apple .....	314
6. The Story of the Rock.....	316
7. The Story of Arjuna .....	324
8. The Story of the Hundred Rudra.....	328
9. The Story of the Vampire.....	340
10. The Story of Bhagirath .....	342
11. The Story of Sikhidhvaja and Chudala .....	346
12. The Story of Kaca .....	383
13. The Story of the Deluded Man .....	387
14. The Story of Vipaschit .....	388
15. The Story of the Hunter and the Sage .....	391
16. The World Within the Rock .....	402
17. The Sage from Outer Space .....	409
18. The Story of Bhringisa.....	411
19. The Story of Iksvaku.....	413
20. The Hunter and the Deer .....	416
21. The Seven States of Yoga.....	418



## **Prayer Before Reading**

Salutations to that supreme reality  
In which all shine as if independently  
In which they exist for a short while  
And into which they merge eventually

Salutations to that consciousness  
Source of apparent threefold division  
Of knower, knowledge and known  
Seer, sight and seen; doer, doing and deed

Salutations to that bliss-absolute  
Which is the life of all beings  
Deriving happiness from the shower  
Of its ocean of supreme bliss

# CHAPTER I: DEALING WITH DISPASSION

## 1. A Seeker's Plight: Work or Knowledge

### Which is More Conducive?

---

Wise sage kindly do thou instruct  
On this problem of liberation  
Which of these is more conducive  
Is it work or is it knowledge?

Dear one kindly consider  
Birds fly with both their wings  
Work and knowledge go together  
Leading to the goal of liberation

Hear now an ancient legend  
Consider, then do as you please  
There was a sage in days of yore  
Who was invited to heaven's abode

He asked the messenger inviting him  
Of heaven's merits and demerits  
As the wise never leap blindly  
Based on hearsay or appearance

The messenger informed the sage  
Heaven is where fruits were reaped  
Of good deeds after exhausting which  
One returns back to this very world

The sage could not see any wisdom  
In a short detour of indulgence  
As it weakens one's condition  
And returns one in worsened state

The sage declined the invitation  
Seeing it as a loss and not a gain  
The messenger requested the wise sage  
To kindly reconsider this once again

At the request of the messenger  
The sage sought counsel with Valmiki  
A wise sage who narrated to him  
The story of Rama and Vasistha

### **Sage Valmiki's Counsel**

---

Qualified is one to take up study  
Of the dialogue of Rama and Vasistha  
Who feels bound and seeks liberation  
Being neither ignorant nor enlightened

Valmiki spoke about the background  
Of the dialogue he revealed for all  
Containing the secret of liberation  
Of Rama and those who listened sincerely

This is not merely a story in the past  
But contains a teaching for eternity  
If you too live like they did live  
You will attain freedom from sorrow

This world-appearance is a confusion  
Just like the blueness of the sky  
It is better not to dwell on it  
But to ignore it while it lasts

Neither freedom nor self-realization  
Is possible till conviction arises  
That world-appearance is confusion  
Between the real and the unreal

Study this scripture or any other  
But get beyond the confusion  
Of appearance and reality  
And attain freedom from sorrow

Liberation is the total abandonment  
Of mental conditioning without reserve  
Impure conditioning causes birth  
Pure conditioning helps liberate

Abandon the roots of bondage  
Abandon their very seeds as well  
Abandon nescience and ego-sense  
Abide in the pure which does sustain

This pure and sustaining force  
Does not lead to rebirth at all  
It sustains by previous momentum  
And not by present motivation

Hear now the story of Rama  
Who lived enlightened like a sage  
Knowing the truth you will be freed  
From misunderstanding and all sorrow

### **The Story of Rama Begins**

---

Upon completing his education  
Rama toured the whole country  
The nature of a pilgrim is pilgrimage  
To see and discover things as they are

Returning he resumed his duties  
But a profound change he underwent  
He appeared thin, weak and in ill health  
But replied to all that he was fine

Sage Vasistha knew that every change  
Surely has a deeper hidden cause  
Rama's father, the king, did not wish to know  
As truth can be quite inconvenient

### **Sage Vishvamitra's Arrival**

---

Soon Sage Vishvamitra of world renown  
Arrived at Rama's father's court  
The king welcomed him with great praise  
Granting in advance any boon he sought

Vishvamitra revealed his mission clearly  
Asking for Rama's help for security  
As he was undertaking a religious rite  
And was being troubled by some demons

Because of the nature of the ritual  
He could not provide his own security  
And knowing Rama's true nature  
Felt this would bring him great glory

He asked the king not to delay  
On account of attachment to his son  
In sending Rama with him immediately  
He would confer on Rama great blessings

The stunned king gave various excuses  
Finally saying with Rama he could not part  
Often powerful demons occupied the stage  
And in time, the world stage they did depart

Vishvamitra was angered by these words  
As he knew very well who Rama was  
And promise given should be honored  
Seeing this Sage Vasistha intervened

Said Sage Vasistha to the wise king  
You should never go back on your word  
Kings are exemplars of righteous conduct  
Rama would be safe with Sage Vishvamitra

Sage Vasistha was the king's preceptor  
The king obeyed his guidance respectfully  
He asked his attendants to fetch Rama  
Hearing more from them about his son

### **Rama's Condition**

---

O king said the royal attendants  
Rama has changed so drastically  
He seems dejected and shuns company  
The king now inquired even further

The chamberlains said Rama had changed  
Since returning from the long pilgrimage  
He has no interest in princely ways  
And shuns all entertainment as poison

He rejects all princely royal privileges  
And sometimes muses to himself aloud  
What is the use of wealth and fortune  
All of this is unreal and sorrow giving

He remains alone contemplating silently  
He seems to relish his own solitude  
Ever immersed in his own thoughts  
Getting more emaciated by the day

He sings to himself repeatedly  
We want change but aren't willing to change  
We are wasting our life in various ways  
Instead of trying to reach the supreme

Seeing him and hearing his words  
We too are all greatly distressed  
He seems bereft of hope and desires  
Not deluded, not enlightened either

He says there is no use in any of these  
Wealth, family and even kingdom  
All the ambition in the world  
O king, please do find his remedy

Sage Vishvamitra then interceded  
He requested for Rama's presence  
Knowing dispassion born of wisdom  
Had blossomed leading to enlightenment

Just then Rama himself appeared in court  
Saluting and offering his respects to all  
His face shone with peace of maturity  
The king, his father, welcomed him warmly

Dear son do kindly explain to us  
What is it that seems to sadden you  
Dejection is an invitation to misery  
The wise sages nodded in agreement

## **2. Rama's Observation of Life**

### **Rama Speaks**

---

O sages, happy indeed was childhood  
The best of teachers instructed me  
But a trend of thought recently arisen  
Has taken a hold of me completely

My heart questions what happiness is  
How it can be had in the changing world

All beings are born to die in this world  
And all die to be born again as well

What is the meaning in all this change?  
Why do we suffer and sin endlessly?  
Unrelated beings come together  
The mind conjures relationships strangely

Everything verily depends on the mind  
And its ever changing attitude to all  
But this very mind appears unreal  
When inquired into quite seriously

We are running after a mirage foolishly  
Living without freedom in slavery  
Wandering the world's forest aimlessly  
Witnessing the dance of birth and death

How does this suffering finally end?  
Is there a way out of life's bondage?  
Though I shed no tears externally  
My heart cries and bleeds profusely

## **Wealth**

---

It is wealth which deludes the ignorant  
Creating worries, causing unsteadiness  
Generating an appetite for even more  
Indifferent to good and bad people

Wealth hardens the heart of all  
As they pursue more and more of it  
Happiness and wealth do not coexist  
Rare are the wealthy without enemies

Wealth is the seed of evil thoughts  
It adds fear to one's distress  
Wealth seems to seek the one  
Whom death has already chosen

## **Lifespan**

---

Short in duration is this lifespan  
Like a water droplet on a leaf  
This lifespan is only fruitful to those  
Who have attained self-knowledge

Blowing winds we may encompass  
Indivisible space we may divide  
Waves we may thread into a garland  
But hopes on this lifespan are futile

One tries vainly to extend his life  
Only to increase sorrow and suffering  
Only those who strive to know the self  
Can hope to have some real gain

Knowledge and wisdom are burdens  
To the unwise, full of desires  
Mind and lifespan are burdens too  
To the restless, without self-knowledge

The rat of time gnaws at lifespan  
Termites of disease eat one's vitals  
Just as a cat hungrily eyes the rat  
Death hungrily eyes this lifespan

## **Egotism**

---

Most fearful it is to contemplate  
The entry into wisdom by egotism

It approaches in darkness with stealth  
And flourishes in its own ignorance

Endless sinful tendencies it generates  
All suffering revolves around egotism  
It is always 'I' that does suffer  
It is the sole cause of mental distress

Egotism is the worst disease of all  
Masterfully pushing poison as pleasure  
Ruthlessly trapping all living beings  
All world's calamities it does create

## **The Mind**

---

Eclipsing self-control, it creates havoc  
Destroying virtue and equanimity  
All done with ego-notion is wasted  
From its clutches I now seek freedom

Bereft of grace earned through service  
The impure mind still drifts aimlessly  
Dissatisfied with all and anything it gets  
It is impossible to satisfy its appetite

This mind wanders without purpose  
Unable to find happiness anywhere  
Unmindful of the suffering it brings  
Ruthless it is in its blind pursuits

Bound by the knots of craving am I  
The net laid out by this mind only  
Just as rushing rivers carry away  
I feel uprooted and taken downstream

The cause of objects is the mind alone  
Whatever exists in all the worlds  
Is so because of mind-stuff only  
Worlds vanish without this mind

Many errors result when craving surges  
As darkness of ignorance eclipses wisdom  
All good qualities do get dried up  
The heart is hardened by craving's dance

Though I try hard to restrain craving  
It insists on its own appeasement  
Overpowered and carried away I am  
Now I revolve pinned to craving's wheel

Like birds in a net who cannot fly  
I feel trapped in the net of craving  
Which runs directionless like a mad horse  
Imposing a tight net of relationships

Hero converted to a coward I am  
With eyes to see but blind I am  
Full of joy but miserable I am  
A dreadful goblin is this craving

Unable to enjoy natural pleasures  
Coming unsought as gifts from above  
I am made to submit to vain efforts  
Leading to endless misery and suffering

Craving occupies life's stage dominantly  
An aged actress incapable of performing  
Dances to self-defeat and humiliation  
Yet refuses to stop her painful dance

Surging to the skies at one moment  
Then diving to the depths of gloom  
This up and down—based on emptiness  
Glory to sages, masters of the mind

## The Body

---

A pitiable composition is this body  
Source of pain though insentient  
Delighted with a little gratification  
Distressed by the least adversity

This body can be compared to a tree  
Branches for arms, trunk for torso  
Holes for eyes, fruits for head  
Leaves for its abundant illnesses

Resting place for all living beings  
Still we cannot say it is our own  
A boat to cross life's turbulent ocean  
It cannot be regarded as one's self

This tree born in the forest of samsara<sup>1</sup>  
Restless monkey mind plays on it  
Abode of crickets are our worries  
Insects of suffering eat it constantly

Serpent of craving resides in it  
Crow of anger stays here as well  
Flowers of laughter, fruits good and bad  
Wind of life-force does animate it

Birds on it are different senses  
Resorted to by traveler of desire

---

<sup>1</sup> Samsara: cycle of repetitive existence  
Yoga Vasistha in Poem

Providing pleasure as its shade  
Vulture of ego is seated on it

Hollow and empty is this tree  
It cannot give lasting happiness  
Living and falling in a short time  
Subject to decay, old age and death

Filled with impurities is this body  
I am not the least bit enamored by it  
Afflicted by the disease of ignorance  
How can this fulfill any hopes I have?

Home of illness and mental distress  
With changing emotions and moods  
Though we care and protect it well  
It abandons us at death ruthlessly

Its only purpose is to burn at death  
Shame on those bound to the body  
Deluded by the wine of ignorance  
Shame on those bound in this world

## **Childhood**

---

Regarded as enjoyable, but not really so  
Filled with helplessness and mishaps  
Cravings, inability to express oneself  
Utter foolishness, instability and weakness

The child is easily hurt and angered  
Easily bursts into tears and anguish  
Living completely at the mercy of others  
Exposed to everything without choice

Easily influenced by the wicked  
Subjected to control and punishment  
Filled with hidden sinful behavior  
Extremely restless and unhappy

The child must have new things daily  
Crying and weeping—its foremost activities  
Not getting what it wants each day  
It looks and acts heart broken

Being disciplined by its teachers  
Being promised everything by its parents  
The child begins to value things promised  
Seeds of delusion are sown in childhood

Unable to avoid heat and cold  
How is the child better than a tree?  
Leery is he like animals and birds  
As the child is fearful of its elders

## **Youth**

---

Transitioning from childhood to youth  
Unable to leave unhappiness behind  
Subjected to more and more conditioning  
He embraces things and desires increase

Wisdom is lost as desires increase  
Delusion enters the heart and mind  
Selfish actions become his activity  
Causing unhappiness to others and himself

Even as great forests are consumed by fire  
Lust and impurities consume the mind  
Distracted by thoughts of pleasures  
He loses his inner peace and calm

Dashing after short lived pleasures  
Makes a beggar of the young prince  
Continually distracted and ever wanting  
Youth breeds much mental distress

When lust and desires enter the heart  
Good qualities are hastily abandoned  
Each time this cycle repeats itself  
Goodness is set aside callously

Youth appears desirable physically  
It is most destructive to the mind  
Temptations plunge one to sorrow  
Hence I am not enamored by youth

They are great who have overcome  
Survived the taint and evils of youth  
Without succumbing to temptations  
Or increasing likes and dislikes

He becomes a slave of sexual attraction  
Though the body is full of impurities  
Wisdom is lost in the insistence  
Of what is not over what really is

## **Old Age**

---

Dissatisfaction of youth brings old age  
How cruel indeed is this life  
Just as the wind tosses a dew drop  
Old age mercilessly destroys the body

As a drop of poison enters the body  
And begins to thoroughly consume it  
Senility enters representing old age  
Making one a laughing stock for all

Unable to satisfy desires in old age  
But desires continue to grow  
Too late he begins to self-inquire  
Too late to change life's course

Senility is the royal attendant  
Weakness an invitation to death  
Rare are those without enemies  
Rarer those unaffected by senility

## **Time**

---

Enjoyments and pleasures are delusion  
Reflected in the mirror of the mind  
All controlled by the wheel of time  
Which leaves nothing undestroyed

Time gives a glimpse of itself  
As year and age but stays hidden  
Overpowering all and everything  
Consuming all most mercilessly

The greatest magician of all is time  
It cannot be analyzed at all  
Consuming insects and gods too  
In the fury of its insatiable appetite

Like a boy playing with a little ball  
Time plays with the sun and moon  
Creating and dissolving universes  
Time is established in the absolute

Continually at work without rest  
Time does not tire or rejoice  
Neither coming nor going at all  
Never rising—neither does it set

The gourmet time sees all objects  
As they ripen in the fire of sun  
As tasty treats for consuming  
And wipes them out playfully

To lotus of youth—the nightfall  
To elephant of time—the lion  
Destroying all and everything  
But indestructible is this time

As one sleeps after a hard day  
Time sleeps during dissolution  
With creation-potential hidden in it  
Unknowable and unfathomable is time

## **Life and Death**

---

All that we see is dream-like  
Appearing and ever changing  
Mountains become craters  
Fertile soil becomes arid desert

Not only do things keep changing  
But we are ever changing too  
Age, lifestyle and fortune  
Ever dance to their own tune

Life-and-death cycle—a skilled dancer  
With a skirt made of human souls  
Lifting them up in forward movement  
Hurling them down in backward step

Everything she consigns to memory  
Great deeds, rituals and rites too  
Humans are reborn as animals  
Is there anything unchanging here?

The gods are destroyed as well  
The pleasant reveal their ugliness  
Just as a boy plays with a mud ball  
Everything gets created and destroyed

### **Rama's Closing Thoughts**

---

Perception of defects in the world  
Has stilled my mind's tendencies  
Sense-pleasures do not arise within  
As mirages do not appear on water

The delightful appears bitter to me  
I do not relish pleasures or wealth  
I wish to remain at peace within  
Seeking freedom from this tyranny

I am constantly inquiring within  
How to wean heart from the world  
I do not care how long I live  
As long as I remain ever free

If not established in wisdom now  
Will there ever be another opportunity  
Indulgences will consume lifetimes  
Self-knowledge is all that I now seek

Therefore, O Sage, I pray to thee  
Kindly do thou please instruct me  
On freedom from anguish and distress  
In the light of your instruction

Destroy the ignorance in my heart  
This I humbly request of thee  
I am filled with grief and confused  
And shudder with each step I take

I have given up everything I have  
But am yet to be established in wisdom  
Partly caught and partly freed am I  
And wish self-control but haven't the means

Pray tell me that condition or state  
Which is beyond the experience of grief  
How does one live in this world  
And reach the abode of peace and bliss?

What attitude should one have in life?  
What is it that needs to be done?  
How does one free the mind of its lust?  
As the mind sees worth in the worthless

Whose biography should I study?  
How should I live in this world?  
How to be free of love and hate?  
What is the secret to escape grief?

Holy sir kindly do instruct me  
How to counteract habit of mind?  
That is itself spread out as creation  
In the form of this visible universe

Who are those great heroes  
Who have crossed over delusion?  
What methods did they adopt  
To free themselves of bondage?

Kind sage do thou please instruct me  
Of the way and of the means  
If you consider I am unfit for this  
I shall fast unto death certainly

## Valmiki Speaks

---

All assembled in the royal court  
Were greatly inspired by Rama's words  
It seems as if Rama spoke their plight  
They sat as statues in great delight

Among those who listened to Rama's words  
Were sages Vasistha and Vishvamitra  
The king and his court of ministers  
Citizens, servants, animals and birds too

Even gods and sages from near and far  
All acclaiming in one voice 'Bravo, bravo'  
Showers of flowers descended on Rama  
As none but he could give such expression

Then came about pin drop silence  
Skies and heavens stood at attention  
Hearing what was about to be revealed  
Sages and the wise came to listen and learn

All were received with due honors  
And seated respectfully in assembly  
All knowing this they could never miss  
Rama's wisdom was a priceless gift to all

End of Chapter One

# CHAPTER II: THE BEHAVIOR OF THE SEEKER

## 1. The Behavior of the Seeker

### Visvamitra Narrates the Story of Suka

---

O Rama, among the wise you are foremost  
There is nothing you really need to know  
Your knowledge needs inner confirmation  
Even as Suka received from Janaka

In depths of much contemplation  
Suka too arrived at this truth  
About the truth concerning existence  
Due to the world's changing nature

He attained supreme dispassion  
Though he couldn't affirm it as truth  
But because it was self-acquired  
He thus sought his father's confirmation

He approached the great Sage Vedavyasa  
Though his father, but as a disciple  
Inquiring humbly about this diversity  
Which appears, though as one creation

How has this world-creation come to be?  
How will this come to an end finally?  
Vedavyasa did give detailed answers  
But Suka felt he knew these intuitively

Vedavyasa sensed and said to Suka  
Son, I do not know any more than this  
King Janaka the sage knows even more  
Kindly approach him for confirmation

To Janaka's palace went young Suka  
And stood outside the palace doors  
Janaka the king was informed of this  
But ignored his presence for a week

At the behest of king Janaka  
Suka was ushered into the palace  
Entertained by dancers and musicians  
But Suka was unmoved by any of this

The sage king then gave Suka an audience  
Confirming that he was a knower of truth  
Nothing further needed to be known  
As Suka had direct self-realization

Janaka did offer some words of wisdom  
Diversity arises due to mental modifications  
When these cease, diversity too ceases  
Suka entered the state in meditation

Rama too has attained the highest wisdom  
He is unattracted by any worldly pleasures  
Subtle tendencies too have ceased in him  
He stands at the threshold of liberation

One who is not swayed by sense pleasures  
Who is able to do what needs to be done  
Without motive of any sort at all  
Is a liberated sage who has realized

Sage Vasistha, I request of your good self  
To kindly give Rama thy words of wisdom  
Thy instruction will confirm his intuition  
And we all too will be greatly inspired

## 2. Vasistha's Instruction Begins

### Countless Universes Exist

---

I shall impart to Rama the highest wisdom  
Revealed to me by the creator himself  
Countless universes have come into being  
And countless have been dissolved too

Countless universes exist at any moment  
All these can be realized in one's own heart  
All universes are creations of desires  
Rising and dissolving in one's heart

Though matter and creation appear real  
They are not truly real as they appear to be  
They are an appearance and presentation  
Seemingly real due to ignorance

Water remains water, ever unaffected  
By the presence or absence of waves  
So too the sage remains unchanged  
Whatever be his external appearance

### Self-Effort, Fate and Destiny

---

#### Self-Effort

Listen attentively to the instruction  
Darkness of ignorance will be dispelled  
All gain is due to self-effort put forth  
All failure is due to slackness in effort

Mental, verbal and physical action  
In accordance with scriptures

Or the instructions of holy men  
Is self-effort - fate does not exist

Self-effort now can triumph over  
Effort and fruits of previous births  
As fate is self-effort of the past  
So strive sincerely in the present

Obstruction in fruition has a cause  
It is deluded action in the past  
Correct this by right effort in the present  
All have this opportunity and ability

Grinding your teeth exert here and now  
Act wisely, exert in the present  
Overcome what is called evil and fate  
By wisdom-inspired present effort

Lazy people are worse than donkeys  
Never yield to laziness, exert ceaselessly  
Life ebbs away every moment  
Wasteful is indulgence in sense-pleasures

## **Fate**

Those who pin blame for failures on fate  
Are brainless and abandoned by good fortune  
Exert ceaselessly in every moment  
For direct self-realization here and now

As is the cause, so is the effect  
As is the effort, so is one's fate  
Fate being self-effort of the past  
Therefore exert without remission

Unexpected gains too have their cause  
It is always self-effort of the past

Not accident or good luck as people say  
Not divine acts or chance events

If efforts in the present seem fruitless  
Continue to exert wisely without ceasing  
What are called obstructions by people  
Are seeds sown in the past carelessly

## **Destiny**

Free yourself from likes and dislikes  
Engage in right action, reach the truth  
What is called divine will and destiny  
Is nothing but the fruit of self-effort

Shape your destiny by right self-effort  
Based on right understanding in the heart  
Which rises within after being exposed  
To scriptures and company of holy ones

You must keep your body free of illness  
Mind too must be free of all distress  
To pursue the path of self-knowledge  
For freedom from the pains of rebirth

Threefold root and threefold cause  
First is awakening in the inner intelligence  
Second is a decision in the mind  
Third is doing what ought to be done

Destiny can be shaped by these  
First is knowledge of the scriptures  
Second is instructions of the preceptor  
Third is one's own right self-effort

Two tendencies are brought forward  
Pure tendencies lead to liberation

Impure tendencies invite trouble  
Choose wisely and shape your destiny

Nothing and none can impel you  
Pure consciousness is your true nature  
Strengthen the pure, reap a good harvest  
The impure will wither away by disuse

All that anyone has ever attained  
Has been had by putting forth effort  
Fate can never give you anything  
As it is itself fruition of self-effort

Fate or such god has never been seen  
All experience results from actions done  
So promote your own good and salvation  
By holy company and right self-effort

If fate did really exist as an entity  
What would exertion mean at all  
Why would people work hard at all  
So why believe in fate or destiny

Renounce fatalism, exert correctly  
Fruition of action is fate and destiny  
Sages attained the highest by self-effort  
You too can attain if you exert intelligently

### **3. Narrative Dealing with Liberation**

#### **Background**

---

If you listen to this narrative attentively  
Revealed to me by the creator Brahma  
The Supreme Being will be realized  
Sorrow and destruction will come to end

The omnipresent omniscient alone shines  
When vibration arises in this cosmic being  
It gives rise to Brahma the creator  
Who begins to create endless variety

Pain and suffering are inherent in creation  
As are sacred centers, learning and piety  
But suffering's tight grip is merciless indeed  
Liberation from its clutches is a difficult task

I was brought into being by the creator  
And veiled by ignorance, self-forgetfulness  
Sunk in misery, unable and unwilling  
To find a way out, staying lazy and inactive

I prayed to the creator for his grace  
For a way out of suffering and grief  
Immediately the veil of ignorance was lifted  
I regained peace through self-realization

The creator told me the reason for veiling  
Was to experience the glory of realization  
As there is no other way to experience this  
Except self-forgetfulness and its transcendence

Experiencing suffering makes one compassionate  
As one feels and reaches to help spontaneously  
Thus equipped with this knowledge I am here  
And will continue till the end of creation

In every age sages are willed into being  
For the spiritual welfare of all beings  
As desires and greed harden the heart  
The cure is spiritual insight and wisdom

## Real Dispassion

---

The dispassion arisen in you is of discrimination  
It is superior to that born of circumstances  
Such dispassion is by the grace of God alone  
Maturing when lodged deep within the heart

Till this dispassion lodges deep in the heart  
One stays in the cycle of birth and death  
Listen therefore with a concentrated mind  
As the fire of wisdom destroys ignorance

One should approach the enlightened teacher  
With the right questions and attitude  
To elicit the teachings, light on the path  
Which must become part of your very being

The fool asks irrelevant questions disrespectfully  
The greater fool spurns the sage's wisdom  
'Tis not a sage who answers any of these  
Vain questions from a foolish questioner

You are indeed the foremost of seekers  
For you have reflected over the truth  
And are inspired by dispassion's fire  
Fix these teachings within your heart

The seeker must strive to fix in the heart  
Teachings of sages and the wise  
The seeker must avoid unwise company  
As the mind is unstable and impressionable

## 4. Four Gate-Keepers to Freedom

### Self-Knowledge: Your Foremost Duty

---

The entrance to the Realm of Freedom  
Are guarded by four gate-keepers  
Self-control, spirit of inquiry  
Contentment and good-company

Strive diligently to cultivate friendship  
With all four or at least one of them  
Overcome the deadly serpent of ignorance  
Or endless suffering will be thy lot

Overcoming this sorrow of samsara  
You will live here like gods right now  
Delusion alone is the prison house  
Inquiry into self-nature the means out

When the mind's disturbances have subsided  
There is unbroken flow of peace within  
The truth is seen by the heart directly  
This very world becomes an abode of peace

Such a person is untainted by life's defects  
Untouched by life's sorrows is he  
He sees nothing to acquire or to shun  
Though he appears to live quite normally

The past has lost its grip on him  
His mind has given up its restlessness  
He rests in the bliss of his own nature  
All by direct experience of self-knowledge

Self-knowledge alone is your foremost duty  
Disregard is an invitation to grievous harm

If you want to free yourself from samsara  
Receive this wholesome instruction sincerely

### **Self-Control: The First Gate-Keeper**

---

This formidable ocean of samsara  
Is like sleeping in a burning house  
Resort to the eternal and unchanging  
There alone does the mind find peace

You have nothing to lose by self-inquiry  
Only freedom to gain from life's turmoil  
Hence all should strive without remission  
To conquer the mind and end bondage

A pure mind is peaceful and tranquil  
Free of delusion and untangled  
It does not long for anything at all  
Nor does it feel a need to reject things

This is self-control or conquest of mind  
The first gate-keeper to the Absolute  
All that is good emanates from here  
All evil is dispelled by self-control too

No gain or pleasure can ever compare  
To the joy and delight of the self-controlled  
All trust one who is self-controlled  
It is the remedy for physical and mental ills

While functioning among the pleasant  
Among that considered unpleasant too  
He is neither elated nor depressed  
Living naturally in unbroken self-control

He looks upon all in equal vision  
Having disciplined the senses well  
Living amongst all, unaffected by them  
Even-minded is the person of self-control

### **Inquiry: The Second Gate-Keeper**

---

Inquiry is the second gate-keeper  
Undertaken by an intelligence purified  
By a close study of sacred scripture  
It must remain unbroken until liberation

The wise regard all gain as inquiry's fruit  
Spirit of inquiry is the best protection  
Absence of inquiry renders the mind dull  
Making one's life a journey in sorrow

Avoid the company of foolish ones  
Who live without the spirit of inquiry  
As they bring grief upon themselves  
And others by being in their company

Inquiry is not reasoning or analysis  
It is directly looking into oneself  
To know directly "Who am I?"  
"How has this samsara come to be?"

When the spirit of inquiry is ever awake  
You enlighten all who come in contact  
Dispelling ignorance and falsity  
By the light and fire of inner clarity

The light of inquiry brings realization  
Of what is unchanging amidst change  
Freedom from delusion and attachment  
One functions normally, completely free

Even in the midst of life's activities  
The eye of inquiry shines brightly  
Far better to be born as a worm in mud  
Than be without the eye of inquiry

From inquiry arises knowledge of truth  
From such knowledge arises tranquility  
Then, the peace that passeth understanding  
The end of sorrow and suffering permanently

### **Contentment: The Third Gate-Keeper**

---

Contentment is the third gate-keeper  
All craving is absent in the contented one  
He does not relish any sense pleasures  
Delighting in contentment, the destroyer of sins

Contentment is complete renunciation  
For all that is sought in every way  
Satisfied with what comes naturally  
Unsought, increasing the heart's purity

The contented mind is a continual feast  
The heart blooms like a continual spring  
Free of the sense of possessiveness  
Thereby owning the entire universe

### **Satsanga: The Fourth Gate-Keeper**

---

Satsanga is company of the wise  
The truly holy and enlightened ones  
It brightens one's inner light  
And awakens one's intelligence

Destroying ignorance and psychic distress  
Most precious of all is this good-company

Attain this at any cost to your own self  
Satsanga is light on the path of freedom

Superior to any and all religious practices  
To charity, austerity, pilgrimage and rites  
Serve and adore saints and holy ones  
Disrespecting them invites great suffering

### **Summary: Four Gate-Keepers to Freedom**

---

Self-control, spirit of inquiry  
Contentment and good-company  
These four are the surest means  
Of rescue from the ocean of samsara

Self-control is supreme happiness  
Self-inquiry is the highest wisdom  
Contentment is the supreme gain  
Satsanga is the very best company

If unable to befriend all four sentinels  
Then resort to at least one sincerely  
With diligent practice without remission  
The others will grow in you gradually

Tame the wild elephant of the mind  
Wisdom will seek you of its own accord  
Without this, there is no spiritual life  
No progress, only increasing vanity

Strive by all means to attain these four  
Necessary when on the spiritual path  
If you have these in good measure  
You are qualified to ascend spiritually

## 5. Study and Experience

### On Study

---

The seeds of knowledge of scriptures  
Must be sown deep in the heart  
Origin and author are not important  
The wisdom within is what is divine

Words of wisdom should be accepted  
If they be from the mouth of youth  
Unwise words should be rejected  
Even if they be from gods or any other

Listen carefully to these teachings  
Let the message contained reflect within  
It will lodge in your heart as wisdom  
A liberated sage you shall soon be

When truth has not been experienced  
Illustrations point to truth beautifully  
These have a definite scope and utility  
Do not stretch them beyond intention

Study this scripture again and again  
Until you reach complete enlightenment  
Stopping short will worsen confusion  
Imperfect knowledge is perversion

### On Direct Experience

---

As the ocean is substratum of the waves  
So also experience is basis for all proofs  
The substratum of experiencing intelligence  
Becomes experiencer, experiencing and experience

Just as movement is inherent in air  
Manifestation is in experiencing consciousness  
The perceiving mind ignorantly thinks  
'I am this object' and becomes it

What we call object or objectiveness  
Is experienced in the subject only  
Not experienced anywhere else at all  
It is experienced in the subject only

End of Chapter Two

# CHAPTER III: DEALING WITH CREATION

## 1. The Secret of Creation

### On Creation

---

Creation as it seems to exist  
And the resulting bondage  
Lasts as long as you invest  
Perceived objects with reality

Once the notion is removed  
The bondage goes away as well  
Creation, decay and death are here  
As is heaven, hell and liberation

During the cosmic dissolution  
Creation is resolved in the Supreme  
This same infinite Supreme Self  
Conceives duality within Itself

As a wave arises in the ocean  
The mind arises in the Supreme  
Mind is not different in quality  
Or independent from the Supreme

As a mirage appears to be real  
So does creation appear too  
If creation was absolutely real  
Its cessation would not be possible

Immutable is the law of truth  
Perfectly rational to understand  
The unreal hath no real existence  
The real never ceases to be

Till one clings on to this notion  
Freedom from bondage cannot be  
Merely denying it verbally  
Only increases one's vanity

Austerity, meditation and practices  
Cannot bring about enlightenment  
As long as the heart sees creation  
As something real and desirable

Samadhi too would not free one  
As returning sorrows would arise  
Thought's movement creating images  
And notions based on its suggestions

As oil exists in sesame seeds  
Essence exists in every thing  
Objective perception exists in  
The mind of the perceiver only

As a dreamer experience in dream  
Myriads of objects and conditions  
So potentiality does manifest  
As the notion of creation arises

## **The Creator**

---

Neither seer nor object of perception  
Exist in the self-created Creator  
As a painting in the mind of an artist  
He shines in cosmic consciousness

No memory of past and no karma  
He does not have a physical body  
Unborn and of spiritual substance  
The physical has no cause in Him

Not created, creator of all beings  
As a gold bracelet is gold only  
All this manifold creation  
Is spiritual without materiality

## Creation

---

A throbbing arose in the Creator  
Spread out as the wide universe  
Subtle bodies of all beings came to be  
Appearing real but made of thought only

Imagining these appearances to be real  
Produced realistic consequences  
Just as the different experiences  
One has while in the dream state

A dual nature has the Creator  
Of consciousness and of thought  
Consciousness which is ever pure  
Thought subject to confusion

All forms are of pure intelligence  
Thought creates self-forgetfulness  
Intelligence freezes as physical forms  
On account of the perceiver's delusion

The Creator is not subject to this  
Of spiritual nature non-material is He  
Causeless therefore is this creation  
Essentially spiritual as the Creator

Materiality of things is an illusion  
Like castles spun in the air  
All projections of one's own mind  
All delusion and imagination only

Pure intelligence is the Creator's body  
Mind is that pure intelligence only  
Thought is inherent in the mind  
Object is inherent in the perceiver

No one has ever discovered  
A distinction between these as real  
All projections of one's own mind  
All delusion and imagination only

## **2. The Mind**

### **What is the Mind?**

---

Like space, mind is empty nothingness  
It apprehends objects of perception  
Thought is mind, mind is thought  
No difference at all between these two

Self clothed in a body is known as mind  
It brings about the material and physical  
Including ignorance, samsara and bondage  
It is experience and all that is perceived

Consciousness indwells in every atom  
Non-different from the visible universe  
Just as gold indwells all ornaments  
Consciousness pervades all creation

Only when the objective notion  
Is rejected and removed from the mind  
There is realization of consciousness  
Ignorance and evils cease in the heart

## Overcoming the Mind

---

Others have overcome the mind  
You too can overcome its limitations  
All objectiveness is in name only  
Reality is cosmic consciousness

Within this cosmic consciousness  
The mind conjures diversity  
Expressing and experiencing differently  
Feeling bondage and need for liberation

After the cosmic dissolution  
The Supreme Lord alone prevailed  
Eternal, unborn and self-effulgent  
Worlds appear and disappear in Him

Omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient  
His every thought materializes instantly  
From Him emerged countless divinities  
Just as rays emanating from the sun

The Supreme Self can be realized  
By direct experience in oneself  
Holy company and self-study  
Help dispel ignorance and illusion

When inner conviction arises within  
Of divine omnipresence as truth  
It is then only that it is possible  
To transcend sorrow and attain liberation

Austerity, penance and practices  
Self-inflicted pain and charity  
Will not remove one's ignorance  
As craving is not eliminated by these

Firm and decisive renunciation  
For all and any sort of craving  
Comes naturally when real wisdom  
Dawns in the heart of the sincere

### **3. The Supreme Lord**

#### **Where does the Lord Dwell?**

---

He who is described as the Lord  
Is the supreme indwelling intelligence  
Spread out as the universe is the Lord  
Though the universe you see is not He

Sentient is the universe and the individual  
Who create the knowable and get bound  
It is only when the knowable ceases to be  
That attention flows towards the unknowable

Intellectual understanding will not do  
One will still be bound by samsara  
The supreme Lord must be known  
For sorrow to end permanently

Him in who the universe ceases to be  
Is the supreme Lord, pure consciousness  
Subject-object relationships do not exist  
In him the universe appears to exist

#### **Realizing the Lord**

---

Only when one is firmly established  
In the unreality of the universe  
As the blueness of the sky appears  
But one knows it is only an illusion

The supreme Lord can be realized  
By direct experience in oneself  
Only when all of this creation  
Is found utterly non-existent

Reality of the world is a notion  
Deep rooted on account of habit  
Due to persistent wrong thinking  
There is a remedy to overturn this

Resort to the company of holy men  
Study sacred scriptures like this one  
Or any other, of your own choice  
Till wrong notions are loosened within

Exposure to the truth weakens notions  
That have taken root in the heart  
When all false notions are dispelled  
One speaks of it and rejoices in it

## **4. Liberated Ones**

### **Liberated While Living**

---

Some liberated ones teach others  
Leading an apparently normal life  
Never affected by pleasure or pain  
These are called jivanmuktas

Awake to the truth while still living  
Never awake to the clatter of the world  
Their wisdom is never clouded at all  
As latent tendencies have been eliminated

They only appear to like and to dislike  
But they're free of these in reality

Free of egotism and volition  
Fearing none, none fear them at all

Their intelligence is always unattached  
Whether in action or inaction  
They attain to the state of videhamukta  
When the body is shed in its due time

### **Liberated Without Body-Consciousness**

---

The videhamuktas are fully liberated  
Like the shining sun, living divinities  
Pure cosmic consciousness in the flesh  
The essence of all, all things is he

All that is past, present or future  
Beyond these and all of eternity  
Are those attaining the highest state  
All reside in them, they are the all

## **5. Reality and Appearance**

### **Reality**

---

Absolute itself is liberation  
Absolute is the only existence  
Perception only seems to exist  
Being never becomes anything

Gold is the substance of ornaments  
Water, the substance of waves  
The substance of all of creation  
Is Brahman, the changeless Absolute

Beginningless ignorance is mere perception  
End this with inquiry into truth

What has come to be must end as well  
What has always been will always be

Creation disappears during dissolution  
The changeless infinite alone remains  
Uncaused, uncreated, cause of all  
The Eternal is indeed the heart of all

Creation appears in the infinite  
It submerges in the infinite as well  
The infinite always remains the same  
With or without creation's appearance

Not realizing this is delusion  
All anxieties vanish realizing this  
The act of seeing—seer, sight, seen  
Realize the Absolute as your Self

As all images exist in an uncarved block  
So does creation exist in the infinite  
Difficult to express how this is so  
As illustrations have their limitations

Nothing emerges, nothing submerges  
The Absolute alone exists unchanged  
Our feelings of the void get in the way  
Of understanding fullness in emptiness

Pure spirit, self-luminous, is the Absolute  
Illuminator of all and every thing  
'Tis not possible for one to realize  
The Absolute can only realize itself

From the infinite, the infinite emerges  
The infinite exists in it as infinity

Nothing has come to be or will cease  
The changeless infinite is the reality

Eliminate objectivity from the mind  
Erase the notion of the self as well  
These are fuel for ideas in the mind  
Which bring confusion and delusion

Neither asleep nor inert is the infinite  
In it knowledge, knower and the known  
Exist as one—pure intelligence  
In the absence of the intellect

## Appearance

---

A barren woman's son does not exist  
Braceletness is an idea seen in gold  
The world you see is inseparable  
From Brahman—existence-absolute

No cause has this creation you see  
No beginning has creation either  
It does not exist now as reality  
How can there be its destruction?

Creation is an appearance in Brahman  
Thus reality as Brahman is real  
But it has not existence of its own  
For Brahman is the only reality

'Tis like a dream in ignorance  
One appears in itself as many  
Staying unchanged as one only  
One alone exists, 'tis the reality

## 6. Creation

### Parable Illustrating Creation

---

Infinite consciousness is the universe  
It generates the knowable within itself  
As an idea concerning its form or space  
And an inquiry concerning itself as well

The idea of space starts to be real  
The cosmic being arises within it  
The infinite abandons, as it were  
The supreme state for individuals

This appearance, however real it seems  
Does not in any way alter Brahman  
As Brahman is the only reality  
Changes appear in the unchanged

In space, sound comes to be  
Then egotism and the time factor  
All this by the creative-thought  
Inherent in the cosmic being

By similar thought does air come to be  
And all other elements as well  
All planes of existence in creation  
All by thought in pure consciousness

Elements act and react on each other  
The entire creation comes to be  
Interwoven, mixed-up, indistinguishable  
Ever changing but still the same reality

Since all of creation is vitally linked  
To reality they appear to be real

Consciousness appears as the universe  
Without undergoing any change at all

As is the seed, so is the fruit  
The seed is Brahman the Absolute  
So must be the fruit of creation  
Pure Brahman the Absolute alone

## Individual Souls

---

Thinking small, the soul became small  
Wishing to experience, organs emerged  
Thus the body gradually took shape  
But all this in its imagination only

Since all this happens in reality  
It appears so real and confusing  
Brahman, the only eternal truth  
Reality and illusion of world-appearance

Neither one nor many souls  
Nor exists there a conglomeration  
Jivas—souls, are but names  
Brahman is the only reality

One reality appearing manifold  
Appearing real due to ignorance  
Which light of inquiry does dispel  
All this is Brahman, the sole reality

All this is imagination or thought  
Nothing has really been created  
When true wisdom arises within  
Unreality vanishes and truth is beheld

## **Becoming Creation**

---

Apprehending the perceived in itself  
Consciousness itself becomes the perceived  
All this appears so when false notions remain  
For there is none other, save Brahman

This mysterious power of consciousness  
Producing diversity while within itself  
Is what is known as egotism  
In it does infinite diversity arise

Give up false notions of 'I' and 'you'  
Renounce notions of the self and its cause  
Realize the truth when all these fall  
Of that which is between real and unreal

## **Knowing Consciousness**

---

When consciousness wishes to be known  
It is known as the universe  
Mind, intellect, egotism and elements  
Are all pure consciousness only

One cannot distinguish between  
A person, his life and his work  
So also with Brahman and creation  
Infinite diversity in unchanging unity

Removing the notion of externality  
Gives rise to knowledge of the Self  
Know the supreme truth directly  
In your heart and be ever free

As is heat to fire, coolness to ice  
As liquidity to water, flow to river

As sweetness to honey, fragrance to flowers  
The universe is to pure consciousness

The world is because consciousness is  
It can be said to be real and unreal  
As consciousness is world's reality  
It has no independent reality

Do not get caught in these words  
Expressions have their limitations  
See what the teachings point to  
Realize this within your heart

Objects appearing in a dream  
Are not found in the waking state  
Though they appeared real in dream  
So too with the world when truth is known

Our knowledge is based on ignorance  
Notions, definitions expressed in word  
Truth is beyond the grasp of all these  
It has to be experienced directly by one

This world is like a dream city  
All within pure consciousness  
World and cosmic consciousness are one  
Now hear a story to illustrate this

## **7. The Story of Lila**

### **Background**

---

Once lived a perfect king and queen  
Both had deep spiritual aspirations too  
They lived a most ideal life  
Dutiful and happy in every way

One day a thought overcame queen Lila  
"What if the king passes away before me?"  
Life would be dull and quite dreary  
I should pray to goddess Sarasvati for this

Lila propitiated goddess Sarasvati  
Who appeared to her and offered boons  
Lila asked the goddess for two boons  
And they were granted instantly

First was that her husband should remain  
In the palace even after death  
Second was that goddess Sarasvati  
May appear to her when remembered

After some time the king passed away  
Sad with grief, she heard a voice  
Cover the king's body with flowers  
It will not decay or leave the palace

'Twas the voice of goddess Sarasvati  
Lila beseeched her: please appear  
And asked where her husband was  
Now that he had died and passed away

### **Goddess Sarasvati Replies**

---

O Lila hear me very attentively  
There are three types of space  
Psychological space, physical space  
And infinite space of consciousness

To see your husband right here  
Meditate intensely on the infinite space  
When the finite mind travels between places  
This is what exists in the middle unseen

Give up all thoughts for this realm  
Realize the universe's utter non-existence  
As oneness with all must be realized  
To experience the realm of infinity

You will not be able to do so at present  
But you can enter this realm by my grace  
Meditate O Lila with all of your being  
Enter the state free of all distractions

### **Lila's First Experience**

---

Lila meditated deeply with all of her heart  
Only by the grace of goddess Sarasvati  
Entered the infinite space of consciousness  
Where she beheld her husband once again

She saw him seated on the throne as king  
Surrounded by ministers and other kings  
She was not seen but beheld all this  
Wondering as the king had passed away

Lila awoke right back in her palace  
And summoned a meeting of the court  
Finding the same ministers present there  
Whom she had seen in her husband's court

The ministers cannot be in two places  
At the same time as just experienced  
Which is real and which is a reflection  
As a mountain is reflected in a mirror

She sought help from goddess Sarasvati  
"This world exists within the undivided  
And outside here as solid matter too  
Which is real and which a reflection?"

Sarasvati asked a question in return  
"What do you consider real and unreal?"  
Lila replied, "You are here, this to me is real  
Where my husband is now seems unreal"

Sarasvati then said to Lila  
"How can the unreal be an effect of the real  
The effect is the cause, there's no difference  
Just as a pot that holds water is clay only."

Material effects are by material causes  
Your husband's birth is without  
An immediate material cause  
Besides the past which is memory

Memory like space is but emptiness  
All creation is an effect of that too  
Your husband's birth is of memory  
An illusion and effect of imagination

The story I am about to narrate  
Illustrates creation's dream-like nature  
Listen carefully with rapt attention  
And see what the story points out to

## **Story in a Story**

---

In the infinite pure consciousness,  
In a corner of the creator's mind  
Was an old dilapidated shrine  
Covered with a blue dome

Fourteen worlds for rooms  
Divisions of space for windows  
Sun the light, cities like anthills  
Earth for mountains, water for oceans

This is creation—'tis the universe  
In a small corner lived a holy one  
Dutiful with wife and children  
In good health and free of fear

Witnessing a royal procession one day  
A wish arose in the holy one's heart  
T'would be nice to experience this  
All the splendor of royalty for once

Death overtook the holy man and wife  
She too had prayed to me just like you  
That her husband's spirit would not leave the room  
A boon which I granted to her as well as to you

The holy man had lived righteously  
His merits earned his wish to experience  
A life as a mighty ruler and king  
This same man is your husband and king

On account of ignorance and delusion  
It seems this takes place in consciousness  
The kingdom appears to exist only  
In the hut of the holy man on the hill

Memory of the past is well hidden  
You both have risen again from a wish  
All in the space of the holy one's hut  
Worlds within worlds in each atom

Space and time have no fixed span  
Both are appearances, both imagination  
All this happens in the wink of an eye  
Death, forgetfulness and reappearance

Unrelated 'tho feeling related somehow  
A habit of ignorance repeating itself  
Memory formed, mistaken for the real  
Though path-crossing is merely coincidence

Liberation is the direct recognition  
Of the utter non-existence of the world  
Intellectual or mere lip denial won't do  
Your heart has to grasp this as real

One infinite consciousness alone is  
'Tis all thought-forms or experiences  
No cause and effect relationship exists  
Infinite conscious is forever in itself

Lila thanked goddess Sarasvati  
For the enlightening words and instruction  
Expressing a wish to see directly  
The original house of the holy man

### **Sarasvati's Deeper Instruction**

---

"Give up this form, attain one of light  
Only Brahman can realize Brahman  
My body is made of pure light—consciousness  
You cannot journey deeper in your form

Body of light you must attain  
To enter subtle fields to the subtlest  
Attaining which you will at once see  
The holy man's house on the hill

Affirm to yourself with all of your being  
I shall leave this body, take one of light  
With a light body, like the scent of incense  
You will unite with the field of consciousness

By persistent practice of such meditation  
Your body will become pure consciousness  
I see my body and world as consciousness  
You see body and world as made of matter

By relentless self-inquiry comes wisdom  
This alone can dispel one's ignorance  
Ignorance in fact does not really exist  
Nor bondage or liberation—only consciousness

Dream body appears real within a dream  
But vanishes completely upon awakening  
Even so will the hold of the physical body  
Dissolve when one's tendencies cease to be

At dream's end the physical body is seen  
When tendencies stop, the ethereal one is seen  
Deep sleep ensues when dream does end  
When seeds of thought end there is liberation

Seeds of thought do not exist in liberation  
Though the sage appears to live and think  
He does not really do anything at all  
He is a portal of pure consciousness

## **Unrelenting Practice**

---

Persistent practice quietens egotism  
This is known as abhyasa  
Thus you will rest in pure consciousness  
Materiality of things will indeed vanish

Thinking of that alone in thinking  
Speaking of that alone in speaking  
Conversing of that alone in conversing  
Utter dedication to that, the wise call abhyasa

The intellect must fill with beauty and bliss  
For broadest vision where all passions cease  
The world's non-existence is then realized  
The wise call this dedicated practice or abhyasa

'This is world', 'This I am', and such  
These thoughts don't arise in the mind  
Thus do attraction and repulsion cease  
Not by force but by wisdom's dawning"

### **Inner Journey 1**

---

Sarasvati and Lila sat in deep meditation  
Giving up all notions of the world  
They rose above body consciousness  
And roamed freely in their wisdom bodies

It seemed they traveled very far  
They were still in the very same room  
But on another plane of consciousness  
Lila beheld what Sarasvati's mind revealed

They saw oceans, mountains and celestials  
Kingdom of the gods, sky and earth's bowel  
Lila beheld her very own house too  
Then entered the house of the holy man

His family was deeply in mourning  
The atmosphere was sad and gloomy  
By yoga practice Lila's thoughts materialized  
She and Sarasvati appeared as normal women

They could not hide their radiance  
Which brightly illumined the room  
Lila asked the eldest son the cause  
Of sorrow that seemed to afflict all there

The son replied "'twas was parents' death  
Both lived exemplary righteous lives  
Both died and departed at the same time"  
Lila relieved his sorrow by her blessing

Lila asked Sarasvati how it could be  
They were seen here by this family  
Not her husband the king earlier  
Ruling a kingdom when they visited

Sarasvati replied to Lila's question  
"Earlier you held on to the notion  
'I am Lila'—this you have now let go  
And overcome body consciousness

Till consciousness of all duality  
Is dispelled from the heart completely  
You cannot act in infinite consciousness  
You cannot even understand it a little

Now that you've abandoned duality  
You'll be able to deal with your husband  
As you did before but without slipping  
Into the snare of worldly thinking

There is no distance in the spiritual plane  
Everything is right here all the time  
But in the physical plane it is not so  
Millions of miles separate the planes

In the majestic infinite consciousness  
Universes come and go in each atom  
Like specks of dust in beams of light  
Shining through a hole in the roof"

## Lila Recollects

---

O Divinity! All glory be to thee  
I remember now all 800 births  
As insects, animals, male and female  
Some rich, poor, evil and others good

## Vasistha's Comments

---

Infinite consciousness has no barriers  
No universe exists nor any galaxies  
Sarasvati and Lila remained within  
The space in Lila's inner apartment

It was there that the holy man  
Became king and ruled his realm  
All happened in pure space itself  
No universe, no distance and no barriers

On account of intense yogic practice  
Lila acquired knowledge of threefold time  
She expressed her recollection to Sarasvati  
In the same space of her inner apartment

## Lila's Observations

---

Here, in the space the size of a thumb  
We imagined my husband's kingdom afar  
Though we are both pure consciousness  
My husband and kingdom seem distant

Truly marvelous this mysterious power  
Maya, a force that deludes the wise too  
I would like to enter the capital  
Where my husband now does rule

## Inner Journey 2

---

Both rose into space, seeing all creation  
Beyond which was pure consciousness  
Essential nature of being consciousness  
Thus all forms arise and return in it

Countless universes exist in creation  
Very different they are in every way  
Different divinities preside over them  
Different too are their inhabitants

Since consciousness exists everywhere  
Creation and dissolution are perpetual  
All held together by a mysterious power  
One consciousness alone exists, in it all is

Lila then saw her palace's inner apartment  
Where the dead king lay buried under flowers  
Intensely wishing to see him once again  
She soared through this realm to where he was

A mighty king from a nearby kingdom  
Was laying siege to her husband's realm  
A fierce battle ensued as they approached  
And beheld her husband with his war council

## Vasistha's Comments

---

It is impossible for one rooted in the idea  
'I am the body' to pass into subtlety  
This innermost conviction is the obstruction  
When this is absent, all limitations are too

As water remains water and flows down  
Fire remains fire and always rises up

So also consciousness always remains  
Pure consciousness always unchanged

As is the understanding so is the mind  
Understanding is what is called mind  
However its direction can be changed  
With great and unrelenting effort

Everyone's consciousness is similar  
In nature and power as consciousness  
Idea of the world and people does differ  
This is called understanding or the mind

All wake up in their understanding  
To a very different mental creation  
Though creation is the same for everyone  
The inner world is what all are looking at

## **Inner Journey 2 (continues)**

---

Both entered the king's apartment  
Goddess Sarasvati blessed the king  
Inspired he recollected previous lives  
And asked Sarasvati about the mystery

"It has been one day since I last died  
How come I've lived in this new body  
A very full life for seventy years  
Pray goddess, kindly enlighten me"

Sarasvati smiled and replied to the king  
"All that you are seeing right here  
Manifested where you last did die  
In the hut of the holy man on the hill

That is his world and in that world  
Is the world of king Padma too  
Where you find yourself living in  
Thinking and relating in one way

These are my relatives, kith and kin  
These are my friends and enemies  
I am ruling and governing this realm  
Now seeing and receiving instruction

All this took no time to happen  
Just as things appear in a dream  
Unborn and imperishable you are  
Your notions are your bondage

The wise see only pure consciousness  
The ignorant see and experience differences  
A long dream is this entire universe  
'Tis the ego that fancies dream as real

O king you shall die in this war  
Then regain your previous kingdom  
Returning to your previous status  
Family, ministers and surroundings

We shall go now as we came  
All must follow their own course  
For the nature of motion does differ  
In a horse, an elephant and a camel

A courtier appeared at that very time  
Bringing the news of impending destruction  
The king bowed and excused himself  
Leaving his wife to attend to both

The king's wife looked exactly like Lila  
Younger as she looked in her youth  
The ministers in the court right there  
Were exactly the same as in her realm

"What is the secret of all of this  
How come they are in both places  
If they be reflections of our fancy  
Are they sentient or conscious beings?"

Sarasvati replied to dispel Lila's doubts  
"The vision arising within oneself  
Is what is immediately experienced  
Both vision and experience are consciousness

'Tis because of all being consciousness  
Everything takes place so instantly  
A mere thought causes worlds to arise  
Time, space and objectivity do not hinder

What is reflected in one's consciousness  
Is what is seen outside as well  
This objective world being experienced  
Is really no more than that in a dream

In both states of waking and dream  
There is no reality to the experienced  
Both are reflections within oneself  
Both worlds exist in oneself too

In life, death does not exist  
In death, life does not exist either  
That which holds together either experience  
Is absent in the other, making it thus

Whether ether is real or not real  
One cannot say with surety  
The substratum from which all emerge  
Is the only sure eternal reality

In Brahman does the universe exist  
As an idea, just as a snake in a rope  
Neither real nor unreal is it  
Just as the individual's existence

Each experience their own desires  
Some old and some new wishes too  
Experiences are sometimes similar  
But sometimes they are dissimilar too

All experiences appear to be real  
As these ministers and the queen  
All exist as reflections in consciousness  
You, me and others—know and rest in peace

The queen's wife too was named Lila  
Let's call her the second Lila here  
She expressed her doubts to Sarasvati  
Hoping for clarification to the mystery

"O divinity, I used to worship Sarasvati  
You look like her, I presume you are her  
Please grant that when my husband dies  
I may accompany him wherever he goes"

Sarasvati then spoke to the second Lila  
"You have indeed worshiped me devoutly  
Therefore I grant this boon you seek  
To accompany your husband after his death"

The first Lila asked goddess Sarasvati  
"Your words always do come true  
Why did you not allow me to travel  
Between planes with the same body?"

Sarasvati replied to the first Lila  
"I do not really do anything at all  
Each earn their state by their deeds  
I preside over the intelligence of all beings

I am the power in consciousness  
Its life-force too I am as well  
Forms taken by each one's energy  
Does fructify in due course of time

You longed for liberation—attained it  
You may consider this as either  
Fruit of austerity or your worship  
Bestowed by pure consciousness

All bestowal is by consciousness  
Just as fruit that falls from above  
It only seems to fall from the sky  
It is the tree that really bestows it"

The battle grew fierce as they talked  
Watching the war from the palace  
The king joined the ranks and the fight  
Missiles and weapons clouded the air

The second Lila then asked Sarasvati  
"How is it that though blessed by you  
The king is unable to win this war  
And death is his fate most certainly?"

Sarasvati replied to the second Lila  
"The king was indeed blessed by me  
His prayer was not for victory in battle  
I grant the deepest prayers of all

I am the indwelling consciousness  
Whatever a person asks of me  
That fruit I do bestow on him  
Just as fire gives heat quite naturally

The attacking king prayed for victory  
Victory he will attain in this battle  
Your husband will be slain in this war  
Rejoin you and soon attain liberation"

Just then the king was slain in battle  
The second Lila fell unconscious at this  
The first Lila said to goddess Sarasvati  
"My husband is about to give up the ghost"

Sarasvati replied to the first Lila  
"There's neither a kingdom nor the earth  
The terrible war is as real as a dream  
All this is only in your own palace

There is the world of king Padma  
There is all of your own world too  
The entire universe is there as well  
In the house of the holy man on the hill

Uncreated, indestructible is Reality  
That is the only Reality there is  
That infinite consciousness is perceived  
As the universe by the ignorant

As a city exists within the dreamer  
Worlds exist in a small atom  
There are atoms in these worlds  
These atoms have worlds in them too

The second Lila who fell unconscious  
Has already reached king Padma's body  
Which lies covered in flowers, as you left him  
You are both dream-objects of the king

We have created each other in our fancy  
All in the undivided pure consciousness  
One who knows this does renounce  
Objects of perception very naturally

The youthful Lila was indeed yourself  
To be with the king was her prayer  
Hence she left before the king did die  
And is with him again as was her prayer

You are individualized consciousness  
Cosmic consciousness am I my dear  
I make all these things happen  
All in undivided pure consciousness"

### **Vasistha's Comments**

---

The second Lila rose into the sky  
Met her daughter and proceeded  
Across the oceans into consciousness  
To where her husband the king was

Countless universes in consciousness  
Unknowing of each other's existence  
The second Lila felt most fortunate  
Blessed to reunite with her husband

## Inner Journey 2 (continues)

---

Sarasvati spoke to the first Lila  
"The king, courtiers and all the rest  
Are in infinite consciousness only  
Reflected as this fanciful creation

When wisdom about ethereal bodies  
Arises within one does not recognize  
The physical body as true body  
And one can enter subtler realms

The second Lila does not possess  
Such wisdom of direct experience  
Her experience of reaching her husband  
Takes place all within her own fancy"

The enlightened Lila asked Sarasvati  
"How do objects acquire characteristics  
Like heat in fire, coolness in ice  
And like the solidity of the earth?"

Sarasvati told the enlightened Lila  
"After dissolution creation disappears  
Only the infinite Brahman remains  
And fancies the existence of creation

What the Infinite fancied earlier  
During the first creation still remains  
Along with all their characteristics  
Into what else could they dissolve?

Something cannot become nothing  
Just as gold appearing as a bracelet  
Cannot become entirely formless  
Such is the universe's order eternally

According to the first creation's order  
Characteristics fell into place for all  
Changes in subsequent creations  
Result from existing purity or impurity

One who adheres to the injunctions  
Of scriptures and the teachings of sages  
Enjoys a long healthy lifespan  
Reaching the end quite normally"

The enlightened Lila asked Sarasvati  
"Kindly do thou enlighten me further  
Is death pleasant or unpleasant  
What happens after death finally?"

Sarasvati replied concerning death  
"Human beings are of three types  
Fools, the wise who meditate  
And also the yogi or intelligent one

The fool lives carelessly and suffers  
The wise and yogi practice meditation  
Abandoning living for the body  
They may depart at their own will

When there is cessation of life-breath  
One ceases to live, death comes to him  
But all this is however imaginary  
Infinite consciousness can never cease to be

Eternal and infinite is pure consciousness  
Never rising, it can never cease to be  
In it does all life appears to rise and to fall  
Consciousness remains pure and unchanged

What is called jiva or the individual  
Is the atomic particle that's stored  
With memories and latent tendencies  
It stays in the space of the dead on death

This they call the departed soul  
This jiva abandons the earlier seen  
And perceives other things once again  
Just as in dreaming or day-dreaming

After a lapse of consciousness  
This jiva begins to fancy another body  
Another world and life-span too  
What the jiva sees, it experiences

In the infinite space of consciousness  
Time and action do not exist at all  
The jiva fancies death, heaven and hell  
And experiences whatever it fancies

This cycle of experience does repeat  
The jiva decides and thus experiences  
This cycle ends when the jiva  
Is enlightened by self-knowledge

Consciousness masquerades as all  
Sentient and seemingly insentient  
There is no distinction between the two  
Due to the substratum of consciousness

'Tis the same infinite consciousness  
Known by all these different names  
Appearing in all these different forms  
Appearing individual and independent

The king who died here now wishes  
To enter the body of king Padma  
Fancying entry into another world  
Let us proceed there on our own paths"

### **Vasistha Commented**

---

When the first Lila became enlightened  
She abandoned the link with the physical form  
As it was ignorance making it appear  
As if she was that physical body

The unreal manifests in the deluded mind  
Creating havoc till it is dispelled  
All nothing but fanciful conviction  
Of the unreal rooted by repetition

One can move to other ethereal bodies  
Just as from one dream to another  
Without abandoning or destroying  
The previous one that was inhabited

Though the yogi's body appears to be  
It is really invisible being pure light  
He appears to live and to die  
Non-different from pure consciousness

The ethereal body is the only body  
Appearing linked to the physical  
The yogi attains this while living  
Due to his inner enlightenment

### **Inner Journey 2 (conclusion)**

---

Sarasvati restrained the king's entry  
Into the body of dead king Padma

The enlightened Lila then asked her  
"How much time has lapsed in meditation?"

Sarasvati replied to enlightened Lila  
One month has passed in meditation  
You abandoned your body in fifteen days  
It was cremated by your ministers

In you now are no memories of past  
Nor are there any latent tendencies  
Intelligence is established in its true nature  
Today is the thirty-first day you are here"

They revealed themselves to the other Lila  
Who worshiped them spontaneously  
Sarasvati asked her how exactly  
She recollected having gotten there

The second Lila replied to Sarasvati  
"I fainted seeing the fierce battle  
My subtle body rose into the sky  
And was brought here by the king

Seeing that he was quite fatigued  
From the battle, I fanned him  
Not wishing to disturb his rest  
You appeared at this very moment"

Sarasvati then allowed the entry  
Of the king into Padma's body  
Instantly awoke king Padma  
As if from deep slumber

The king inquired about both  
Sarasvati and the enlightened Lila

Who proceeded to tell him who  
She and goddess Sarasvati were

The king at once rose to his feet  
Respectfully saluting goddess Sarasvati  
Who blessed him with long life and health  
And the blessing of attaining enlightenment

### **Vasistha Concludes**

---

O Rama, deeply do contemplate  
The story of Lila narrated to you  
It will remove faith in the reality  
Your mind has with what is perceived

## **8. The Mystery of Time**

### **A Limitation in Thought**

---

Thought is real expression  
'Tis also what is experienced  
Suffering seems to linger on  
Joy seems to flee speedily

Indweller of all is intelligence  
The world you see, its appearance  
Infinite consciousness alone exists  
Creation is a word implying just this

Within itself the infinite sees  
Infinity as it were, its own self  
The unreal divisions that are seen  
Are notions, the seeds of space

Because the substratum is real  
Space too appears very real

Giving illusions of separateness  
Between elements within itself

Time too arose as a notion  
The smallest unit that could be  
To epochs extending into infinity  
All within infinite consciousness

This creation so very real you see  
Is itself infinite consciousness  
Spread out as space and as time  
All limbs as it were in eternity

Creation exists as a reflection  
Within pure infinite consciousness  
Brahman is the only reality  
This world's but a notion within itself

Nothing's created, nothing ends  
One alone appears as many  
Brahman is all, all is verily He  
Worlds arise and fall in Him

The notions that we cling to  
Rooted in 'I am this'—the ring leader  
Resolutely turning away from this  
Is movement towards liberation

Direct realization must be had  
For end of suffering in samsara  
Infinite consciousness the substratum  
Omnipresent, the only reality

## World Appearance

---

All epochs of time are penetrated  
By the infinite consciousness  
Time is threaded and animated  
By the power of infinite consciousness

Indivisible consciousness and its power  
Existence and consciousness absolute  
Supreme animator of all you see  
Distinctions are only in communication

Awareness of infinite consciousness  
Of its own infinite power as itself  
Absolute power determining all  
'Tis also known as divine dispensation

Absolute power cannot be set aside  
Even by gods let alone humans  
Self-effort must never be given up  
'Tis what blossoms as fruition

Remaining idle and waiting for fruit  
Has never resulted in anything at all  
Superconscious state or liberation  
Is attained by tremendous effort only

Infinite consciousness appears as all  
Indivisible form it's absolute power  
All differences live in ignorant minds  
Never in sages or men of wisdom

In the mirror of infinite consciousness  
World appearances are reflections  
These are the world and individuals  
Countless reflections in consciousness

Little ripples in the vast ocean  
Rising and falling in the infinite  
Or as a very slight agitation  
Of a candle flame in a windless room

The slightest agitation or movement  
Bursts into universes and galaxies  
When fed by latent impressions  
As flames' contact with the flammable

Egotism and notions quickly arise  
As do the natural elements  
Condensing quickly and taking form  
All vibrations in pure consciousness

The world exists within the mind  
It seems real due to confusion  
'Tis a dream in infinite consciousness  
Creating the illusion of duality

The one has not become many  
Diversity is an appearance in it  
The individual sees diversity as real  
Due to limitations in consciousness

The duality the mind perceives  
Is in the perceiving mind alone  
When the mind drops this perception  
There is neither duality nor unity

When you become firmly established  
In oneness of infinite consciousness  
Lead then an active or quiet life  
You will be at peace within yourself

All objects that one perceives  
Are agitations within the mind  
Consciousness appears as objects  
Delusion based on ignorance

Direct realization of the Self  
Alone can break the delusion  
Of world-appearance as reality  
It is the only way beyond samsara

When self-knowledge arises in one  
Craving for anything cannot arise  
How can one crave anything  
When all things are one's self alone

Till self-knowledge does arise  
Refuse to fulfill all craving  
Let craving rise and let it fall  
What is the difficulty in this

The agitation created by the mind  
When it entertains notions of objects  
Gives rise instantly to appearances  
Which solidify and are experienced

When thought does not see truth  
It entertains notions of separateness  
Feeling 'I am' and 'this is mine'  
Facing the darkness of its ignorance

Beyond waking, dreaming and sleep  
Is a fourth state of uncontradicted truth  
Absolute purity of consciousness  
Establish it here and go beyond sorrow

Brahman is the causeless cause  
Discover this by self-inquiry  
Know directly that world-appearance  
Is nothing but Brahman—the Absolute

## **The Reality of Appearance**

---

Entertaining notions of elements  
The mind transforms into them  
It then acquires sense organs  
Transformations of the mind alone

There are no causal connections  
Between the mind and senses  
They come about by coincidence  
Just thought and manifestation

First cosmic being thus manifests  
And creates the various objects  
Uttering the sacred sound 'Om'  
All by an act of pure willing

Creations appear ever so real  
But nothing has really been created  
All distinctions are only illusions  
Reflections in pure consciousness

Hear now an ancient legend  
In connection with this thought  
Story of the demoness Karkati  
And ponder the message within

## 9. Story of Karkati

### The First Austerity

---

There once lived in the Himalayas  
A huge demoness called Karkati  
She was unable to get enough to eat  
Due to her size and immense appetite

She thought about her situation  
Feeling if only she could consume  
All people in the country at once  
Her appetite may be appeased

She felt need for rigorous penance  
Most arduous and unimaginable  
As most difficult was the attainment  
Equally hard must be the effort made

High on the snow peaks she commenced  
Penance in which time too stood still  
Thousand years passed unknowingly  
Till Brahma the creator appeared to her

The creator offered her any boon  
Karkati expressed her wish respectfully  
She was granted a small subtle status  
To inflict those who lived wrongly

From her huge size and stature  
She shrunk to the size of a pin  
So small, she could hardly be seen  
Her mentality had not changed at all

She continued her work, inflicting those  
Who lived wrongly and unjustly

Thus dependent on the lives of others  
She pondered all this within herself

"A huge demoness I once was  
Never dependent on anyone  
Now I roam in dirt and filth  
Eating a diet most unhealthy"

Deluded ones have no foresight  
Selfish efforts lead to poor results  
Trying to put oneself ahead of all  
Results in being last every time

Disillusioned with her condition  
And her self-inflicted misfortune  
She realized it was her delusion  
That reduced her to this sad state

The mind that is headed to calamity  
First creates delusion and wickedness  
These states themselves expand into  
Conditions and resulting experiences

## **The Second Austerity**

---

At once Karkati firmly resolved  
To correct her ways and her self  
Abandoning her physical appetite  
Returned to the Himalayas for penance

Mistakes are the best teachers  
But learning must be self-correction  
It must result in action and change  
Treading immediately the new course

Karkati resolved to rid delusion  
And not stop till completely purified  
And attain the highest wisdom  
Beyond the reach of all suffering

The energy of her hard penance  
Set the Himalayan peaks on fire  
Gods too trembled with great fear  
At her unprecedented austerity

The wind-god was commissioned  
To end her austerity somehow  
Trying to enter her mouth as breath  
He was thrown out again and again

Karkati had withdrawn her life-force  
To the crown of her head in perfection  
Becoming totally pure by her penance  
Gaining direct knowledge of Reality

Direct inquiry into all movements  
Of thought in one's own consciousness  
Is the very best guru or preceptor  
No one else can quite compare

Brahma the creator appeared again  
Granting Karkati boons of choice  
She pondered on the use of boons  
As she already had attained perfection

Brahma the creator explained to her  
"The world-order cannot be set aside  
Regain your previous huge body  
And appease hunger with wicked ones

This has already been decreed  
There is no harm or loss at all  
Do what needs to be done as duty  
And lead thou an enlightened life"

Karkati regained her previous form  
Taking up residence in a dense forest  
One day she saw two men appear  
And felt to know if they be wise or fools

She appeared to them in her huge form  
Posing to each some questions  
If answered, they'd be considered wise  
If not, they'd be food for her appetite

Both disclosed their identity  
As minister and king of the region  
Patrolling to insure local security  
As dacoits often terrorized the people

### **Karkati's Questions**

---

"What is that one, yet is many  
In which millions of universes merge  
Is pure space but appearing not  
Which is in me, in you and everyone

What appears to move but never moves  
Appears a rock though is fully conscious  
What plays amazing tricks in empty space  
Shining eternally but is not sun or moon

What seems to be far but is very near  
Nature of consciousness but unknowable  
What is the all but none of these  
Self of all but veiled by ignorance

What is regained by many lifetimes  
Of intense and persistent effort  
Atomic in nature though immense  
The atom in which the universe rests

Due to what does the universe function  
Though it does nothing at all  
Of what are seer, sight and seen made  
Veiling and revealing threefold divisions

What is it that comes into being  
Into what does all finally vanish  
Answer each of you these questions  
So I may know if you are wise or fools

### **The Minister Replies**

---

The Self it is that is subtler than space  
Pure consciousness, all dwells in it  
Existence is the experience of all  
Being the self of all—It alone exists

Appearing empty, not nothingness  
The Self of all, beyond mind and senses  
The Self it is reflecting as many  
As appearances though the sole reality

Self is not void or nothing at all  
Self is the self of everything  
Even of those who disbelieve  
Self is their very self as well

It cannot be experienced indirectly  
It alone is the consciousness of all  
The substance of this world-appearance  
It has to be known by each directly

Due to indivisibility of consciousness  
I am you and you are me as well  
Indivisible consciousness stays unchanged  
Becoming neither—it alone is everything

Self is infinite though not moving  
It is everywhere without movement  
Indivisible, all forms appear in it  
Doing nothing to bring this about

Reality in fire, it does not burn  
Nor can it be burnt at all  
The eternal light, it shines in all  
Everything shines by its light alone

Nothing exists independent of Self  
Time and space are reflections in it  
Appearing as moments and eternity  
There is nothing apart from the Self

As long as the appearance is felt real  
The reality is never ever seen  
When this assumption is discarded  
Pure consciousness is experienced

Self is all of what appears to be  
Its power creates terrific illusions  
Of subject and object as different  
All within indivisible consciousness

This diversity from creator to insect  
Is a long-standing illusion like a dream  
As a single seed contains the huge tree  
Self contains diversity in indivisibility

## The King Replies

---

Your questions pertain to Brahman  
Eternal, pure existence-absolute  
Known directly when the mind-stuff  
Is rid of all movement of thought

It is expressed in silence  
When the known comes to an end  
For unknowable and inexpressible  
Is Brahman the absolute

It is the extremely subtle  
In the middle of two extremes  
That middle too has two sides  
As diversity also seems divided

When this Brahman wishes  
Elements and nature appear  
It is all and it is nothing  
All appears by its omnipotence

Many are ways to attain the Self  
Still nothing is really attained  
Upon the supreme attainment  
As it is the self of one and all

One roams in the forest of samsara  
Till wisdom dawns within one's self  
Which is able to dispel root-ignorance  
About the reality of world-appearance

This infinite pure consciousness  
Perceives the universe within itself  
Extremely subtle, pure consciousness  
It pervades the entire universe

This omnipresent existence inspires  
The world-appearance to dance  
To its tune, music and wish  
All due to its omnipresence

The sole illuminator of all  
All shines by its light alone  
Its illumines the effects of ignorance  
Without removing darkness from ignorance

Just as a drop of honey contains  
The essence of all flowers  
So too in it are ever present  
All possible experiences

Experiences rise and fall in it  
It is the sole experiencer  
It alone is all of this you see  
Though extremely subtle it is

Ages pass within itself  
In the twinkling of an eye  
Objects appear and disappear  
All within pure consciousness

Doer and experiencer of all  
There is nothing apart from it  
As doership and the experiencer  
Are inherent in infinite consciousness

Words like inner and outer  
Are used for instruction only  
The seer remaining unseen  
Sees himself—pure sight only

The seer is the sight only  
Realized when impressions end  
Pure being is again realized  
When external objects cease

The subject becomes the object  
Objects must have a subject  
What we call subject then  
Is a word used in relationship

Subject is pure consciousness  
This seer alone is the reality  
Objects are hallucinations  
Notions that create division

Because of consciousness  
In a bracelet made of gold  
Gold realizes its goldness  
Object realizes subjectivity

The subject and object  
Reflections of the other  
Real duality does not exist  
Realize this by direct inquiry

Division does not contradict  
The existing unity at all  
Both words used for instruction  
The supreme self alone exists

### **Vasistha's Concludes**

---

Hearing the minister and king  
Karkati became tranquil  
Her demoniacal nature left her  
She praised both for their wisdom

One who is blessed to experience  
The company of enlightened ones  
Does not suffer in this world at all  
As one holding a candle in the dark

I have told you this story of Karkati  
Because I remembered her questions  
And the wise answers of both  
The minister and the noble king

Just as a leaf, flower and fruit  
All extend from one seed  
In which there cannot be diversity  
Universe extends from consciousness

By listening to my words, O Rama  
You will attain enlightenment  
The universe has arisen from Brahman  
The universe is Brahman alone

Words have their limitations  
They are used in instruction  
They are not what they indicate  
As all division is illusionary

I once asked Brahma to teach me  
How this universe was created  
His reply I will narrate to you  
Listen attentively to this story

## **10. The Story of Indu's Sons**

### **Universes Within the Mind**

---

After my morning prayers one day  
I beheld within the infinite void

Seemingly independent universes  
In each my counterpart—creators

Puzzled at seeing this in my mind  
I asked the sun in one universe  
About what was beheld in my mind  
Universes each with their own creator

## **The Sun Replied**

---

Salutations to you, O creator  
The mind alone appears as all this  
Ceaseless creation is its activity  
Nescience makes it appear as real

In your creation once existed  
A holy man named Indu and his wife  
Who by the grace of Lord Siva  
Was blessed with ten dutiful sons

Indu and his wife died of old age  
Distressed, their sons did ponder  
What to do, what is most desirable  
What can get rid of our unhappiness

They saw creatorship as a solution  
To suffering and anguish experienced  
For it goes on as does creation  
Free of suffering as it was their creation

All ten of them commenced deep meditation  
On themselves as creators of their creation  
After long immersion in intense meditation  
They became creators of their creations

The ten creators beheld in your mind  
Each with their own created universe  
Are the ten sons of the holy man  
And I—one sun in their creation

### **Brahma Asks the Sun**

---

Ten creators have ten creations  
What am I to do now, what is left  
As others are doing the needful  
In these acts of creating universes

### **The Sun Replies**

---

No personal wishes or motives  
Or desires do you have my lord  
Creating is as natural to you as light is to sun  
What will you gain by abandoning duty

The wise desire nothing  
Nor abandon action either  
They do what is felt to be natural duty  
Firmly established in the eternal truth

Mind alone creates all this  
Mind alone is the supreme person  
What the mind does is real action  
Not what seems to be done physically

When one feels 'I am the body'  
He feels he is mortal and thus bound  
The wise do not entertain these ideas  
Eternal vigilance is avoidance of pain

## 11. The Story of Ahalya

### Mind is the Doer

---

Once there lived a king and his queen  
Named Indrayuma and Ahalya  
Also a young man named Indra  
Handsome but with loose morals

Queen Ahalya and Indra began an affair  
Meeting and seeing each other often  
Their relationship became public knowledge  
The king was infuriated on hearing this

The king tried to punish them in many ways  
Immersing them in cold and boiling water  
Subjecting them to wild animals and whipping  
Indra simply laughed and told the king

"O king, punishing the body is useless  
As we have united in the mind  
Both being mind alone, not bodies  
How can your rage punish our mind?"

If the mind is saturated with something  
What happens to the body does not affect it  
'Tis the mind that creates the body  
Not the body that gives rise to the mind"

The infuriated king still persisted  
Exhausting all methods to punish them  
Even asking some to curse and punish  
But nothing could affect the couple's minds

## The Sun's Advice

---

The creations of the ten sons of Indu  
Cannot be interfered with similarly  
Besides, what do you lose to let it be  
As their creations exist in their minds only

In your own consciousness create freely  
Creation as you would wish it to be  
As individual and infinite consciousness  
Is made of the very same substance

Let the creations of these young men  
Exist as it does within their minds  
What harm is there at all in this  
Create freely all the worlds you please

## 12. Brahma and Vasistha's Dialogue

### Brahma to Vasistha

---

After hearing the sun's good advice  
I began creating as was natural to me  
The sun helped in my work on request  
Playing a dual role most efficiently

Whatever appears in one's consciousness  
That seems to come into being  
It soon gets established and bears fruits  
Such is the power of the mind

Creatorship too is a result of the mind  
Mind alone manifests everything  
Bringing about bodily appearances too  
Naught else is aware of the body

Individualized consciousness is the mind  
Also known as the individual or jiva  
Appearing as physical or material bodies  
Non-different from infinite consciousness

The intention of the ten young men  
Made them feel they were creators  
Even so do I feel and experience  
And manifest—all based on intention

All this takes place in pure consciousness  
Which thinks of itself as an individual  
As the mind and as body too  
But all these are based on consciousness

The mind is sentient and inert  
As its basis is pure consciousness  
It takes on the role of objects—unaware  
As the substance is pure consciousness

Apprehension requires similarity  
Like alone does contact like  
Subject and object must be similar  
The deluded mind is unaware of this

The individual mind somehow believes  
Itself to be subject as the sentient  
All objects to be inert and insentient  
And is bound by delusion of duality

When this illusion is seen as reality  
False egotism arises instantly  
But on unrelenting self-inquiry  
The division disappears—one attains bliss

## **Vasistha asks Brahma**

---

Regarding the earlier story of Ahalya  
How did their bodies suffer—not their minds  
If the body is non-different from the mind  
The punishments should have affected both

## **Brahma's Reply to Vasistha**

---

From Brahma down to a little hill  
All embodied have twofold bodies  
Mind which is restless and acts quickly  
A body of flesh which does nothing

The body is what is overpowered  
By punishments as it is dependent  
The mind only seems dependent  
Though it is really independent

When the mind exerts in self-effort  
It is beyond the reach of sorrow  
The mind alone experiences  
Fruit of self-effort not the body

Dwelling constantly on what is pure  
The mind attains to purity  
Immune to onslaught of every kind  
Experiencing what it contemplates

The ten youth attained creatorship  
By mental effort none could prevent  
A mind devoted to the Self  
Cannot be touched by any calamity

With the mind—make the mind  
Take to the path of purity

With the self—make the self  
Tread on the highway of purity

What the mind does contemplate  
Materializes and is experienced  
By intense contemplation bring about  
Total change free of all delusion

### **13. Vasistha's Instruction Continues**

#### **The Appearance of Diversity**

---

All that you see emerges from Brahman  
Just as waves manifest in the ocean  
Existing in the mind of Brahma  
The creator and the cosmic mind

Diversity is but an appearance  
Events happen quite accidentally  
Just as when a crow sits on a tree  
And a coconut drops at the same time

Expression leads to experience  
Thus cause and effect do come about  
By desire—the cause of all this  
Bringing rise and fall in evolution

Such is this forest as world appearance  
Cut its very root completely, O Rama  
With the axe of inquiry, persistently  
Till total freedom is attained

Some arrive at the understanding sooner  
Some longer—depends on one alone  
Inner quality is most important  
Now hear of this a little further

## **Different Types of Being**

---

The foremost of all are naturally good  
Devoted to being good in every way  
Full of purity and light called sattva  
They reach liberation in a few lifetimes

The middling are full of dynamism  
Desires or rajas and some sattva  
Exhausting rajas and increasing sattva  
They move slowly towards liberation

The third are sunk in darkness or tamas  
Rising and falling in the cycle of samsara  
Thousand births do not much change  
They take very long towards liberation

## **Individual Action and Cosmic Action**

---

Diverse beings arose with the cosmic mind  
Rising from and within the cosmic mind  
Which arose in pure consciousness  
But beings somehow feel separateness

Since action is movement of energy  
Energy is movement in consciousness  
Action must inevitably bears its fruit  
As action is movement in consciousness

When action motivated by separateness  
Comes to end—so does the mind  
As cosmic action does not require  
The individual mind of separateness

## Same Thing Acting Different

---

Mind is the only perception  
Perception is movement in consciousness  
Therefore what the mind doth think  
Materializes instantly as experience

What is called illusion or maya  
Is a word without any substance  
Infinite consciousness is the only reality  
In which all concepts are conceived to exist

By accidental coincidence did concepts arise  
So too diversity arose quite the same way  
Veiled by nescience diversity appears real  
This is what is known as the mind

That which has firm conviction  
Of certain perception is called intelligence  
Which when it imagines separateness  
Becomes what is known as egotism

When egotism abandons consistent inquiry  
It allows itself to get entangled by many thoughts  
That come and go like the winds in space  
And is known as individualized consciousness

Action without an independent doer  
Is pure action—movement in consciousness  
But when fruition is pursued  
It is called karma—one is then bound

Memory of past enjoyments  
Become triggers for action  
As latent tendencies that await  
Conditions for their enactment

Recalling memory constantly  
Breathes life into them powerfully  
Once opportunity for action is seen  
They burst forth in ignorance

When the same mind turns round  
Looking within to inquire  
As to this seeming inner division  
It is what is known as knowledge

When it moves the wrong way  
Getting involved deeply in false fancies  
Greater is the self-forgetfulness  
It is what is known as impurity

When it entertains with sensations  
It is known as senses or indriyas  
When unmanifest in consciousness  
It is what is known as nature

When it creates confusion  
Between what appears to be  
And what is the only reality  
It is known as illusion or maya

When it dissolves in the infinite  
There is freedom—liberation  
When it thinks 'I am bound'  
There is what is called bondage

### **Threefold Space**

---

Threefold is space, O Rama  
Infinite space of consciousness  
Finite divided space of the individual  
And physical space of the material world

Undivided consciousness is infinite space  
'Tis that which exists in all and everything  
Inside, outside—'tis the pure witness  
Of the real and all that appears to be

The finite space of individual consciousness  
Is what creates the divisions in time  
It pervades all beings and is interested  
In the welfare of all beings as well

The physical space does contain  
All elements like air and such  
All exist in infinite space  
Without existence of their own

Whatever be the mind's origin  
Free it from all latent tendencies  
Direct it towards liberation instead  
And self-knowledge through self-effort

Pure mind is free of latent tendencies  
It can therefore attain self-knowledge  
Since the universe is within the mind  
Bondage and liberation are within it too

Listen carefully to an ancient legend  
In this connection—most insightful  
I heard this from the creator himself  
'Tis called 'Story of the Great Forest'

## **14. The Story of the Great Forest**

There was a great forest—millions of miles  
Just like the space within a single atom  
In it lived one person with thousands of limbs  
Forever restless was his nature

He beat himself with his own mace  
And ran away in panic immediately  
Afraid of the beating he gave himself  
And jumped into a blind well in fear

He repeated this act again and again  
Now beating himself with his own mace  
Then running into a banana grove  
Weeping and crying aloud in fear

Witnessing this I restrained him  
With the power of my own will  
Asking him about his identity  
Sorely distressed was he in return

Calling me enemy he wept aloud  
After crying he then laughed  
Next he did the strangest thing  
He abandoned his body limb by limb

Immediately I saw another like him  
Doing the same thing in the forest  
On inquiry I was abused by some  
Others held me in great contempt

Some refused to talk to me at all  
Some refused to come out of the well  
Others went deeper into the forest  
Few listened and were enlightened

This great forest is not far away  
Nor is the strange man we talked about  
The world itself is the great forest  
Seen as a void in the light of inquiry

The light of inquiry in the story  
Is the 'I' who attempted to reason  
Those accepting attain enlightenment  
Those rejecting continue to suffer

The thousand-limbed person is the mind  
With all its countless manifestations  
Punishing its own self constantly  
By its very own latent tendencies

In the world it wanders restlessly  
The blind well is the hell it endures  
The banana grove is the heaven  
The dense forest is its worldly life

Mind's attachments are its thorns  
Which hurt him all the time  
Still it wanders experiencing  
Hell and heaven within itself

When wisdom somehow shines on him  
He rejects it considering it enemy  
While still wailing and weeping for help  
Drifting without proper understanding

Sometimes he does experience  
An improper awakening of sorts  
He renounces without understanding  
Increasing the sorrow he already endures

Renunciation must be based on  
Wisdom born of inquiry  
And fullness of understanding  
So it will lead to supreme bliss

The limbs he seemed to abandon  
Were tendencies attempted to abandon  
Which when there is no real understanding  
Ever remain—never really getting abandoned

Great is the hurt in ignorance's play  
Great panic darting from shore to sea  
When wisdom dawns based on inquiry  
Understanding calms the mind's passion

The absolute Brahman is omnipresent  
His energy pervades and sustains all  
Instruments of action, doer and deed  
Birth, death, existence—all is Brahman

Duality and its resulting offspring  
Such as delusion, craving and attachment  
All these have no real existence  
All notions the mind experiences

Listen attentively to this legend  
It illustrates this point best  
Don't get wrapped up in the story  
Look at what it points to

## **15. The Story of the Three Non-Existent Princes**

### **The Story**

---

A nanny once narrated this story  
To a young boy who listened attentively  
Of a city of yore which did not exist  
In which there were three brave princes

Of three princes two were unborn  
The third had not been conceived

Since all their relatives died somehow  
They left the city to go elsewhere

The heat of the sun was unbearable  
Hot sands burnt their feet severely  
They hastened to the shade of three trees  
Two did not exist, the third was unplanted

In the cool shade they rested awhile  
Eating the fruits they felt refreshed  
Then proceeded to the bank of three rivers  
Two were dry, third had no water

The princes had a most refreshing bath  
Quenched their thirst and continued on  
Towards a huge city yet to be built  
Entering, they beheld three palaces

Two palaces has not been built  
No walls did the third one have  
They found all three most beautiful  
And joyfully entered them

Gold plates they found in the palaces  
Two broken, the third had been pulverized  
Using the third pulverized plate  
They cooked 99 minus 100 grains of rice

Three holy men they invited to dine  
Two were bodiless, the third had no mouth  
After they ate, the princes ate the rest  
Greatly pleased by the experience

They lived there for a long time  
In peace and joy in the palaces

Two of which had not been built  
The third was without any walls

"Remember this well and you will be wise"  
Said the nanny to the little boy  
Who was thrilled to hear such story  
Really creation is no more than this

### **Vasistha's Insight**

---

The world we see is a notion too  
Not different at all from the story  
In consciousness once did it arise  
An idea of creation—this is what it is

This world is nothing but an idea  
All that you see are ideas too  
Reject the errors—dirt in the mind  
Be free of ideas—abide in truth peacefully

### **The Fire of Self-Inquiry**

---

The wise are not deluded by ideas  
Fools succumb to ideas—get deluded  
Egotism is an idea based on association  
Of the self with bodies and physical elements

When infinite consciousness alone exists  
Egotism is just like water in a mirage  
Abandon your baseless imperfect vision  
Rest in perfect vision grounded in truth

Inquire directly into the nature of truth  
Abandon falsehood knowing for yourself  
You are free just now—why for do you grieve  
Who can bind the infinite and just how?

Brahman is divisionless existence  
What is bondage or liberation?  
Confusion of appearance with reality  
Sorrow and pain is based on this ignorance

Let the body fall, rise or go somewhere  
How are you affected by any of this?  
Know the relationship of self and body  
To be like that of the wind and clouds

Wind is one with space when clouds disperse  
Self is not destroyed when the body falls  
Mind too remains until it is burnt  
In the fire of self-knowledge by realization

Death is a veiling by time and space  
Of the ever present deathless self  
Abandon all your latent tendencies  
And come out of this cage and be free

Hard to destroy latent tendencies  
Though they give endless sorrow and grief  
Though born of deep-rooted ignorance  
The fire of self-inquiry can bring their end

All effort at self-inquiry does purify  
The mind's dirt born of ignorance  
Seek the Self in order to dissolve the self  
'Tis the supreme goal—strive for this

## **The Mind Spread Out**

---

Manifesting in infinite consciousness  
Mind by its nature has spread itself out  
It distorts all that appears to be  
And lies claim to everything too

Mind creates and destroys the world  
All in the blink of an eye  
Playing the part of one and all  
As an actor playing different roles

It makes the unreal appear as real  
Causing confusion, joy and suffering  
Asserting its claim on all it sees  
And suffering when this is untenable

Just as time with its changing seasons  
Is able to bring about change in nature  
So also the mind by its power of thought  
Makes things appear different though they are not

Time, space and all things the mind controls  
Regardless of whether it is big or small  
The intensity or dullness of the influenced  
'Tis not incapable of doing anything at all

O Rama listen most attentively  
To another ancient legend I will narrate  
To illustrate further this very point  
Listen carefully to the Story of Lavana

## **16. The Story of Lavana**

### **The Juggler**

---

Long ago lived a king called Lavana  
Who ruled a small kingdom righteously  
One day during a session of open court  
A juggler appeared and spoke to the king

"Homage to you, O righteous king  
May I show you something wonderful?"

Waving some feathers a horse appeared  
Which he offered to the king as a gift

"Take a ride on this fine horse, O king  
Roam freely to your heart's desire"  
The king closed his eyes—sat quietly  
All in the court sat silently too

### **The King Awakens**

---

After some time the king awakened  
Trembling in fear and confusion  
The ministers tried to calm the king  
Who seemed to have had a bad dream

After regaining his composure  
The king narrated to his ministers  
The experience he just underwent  
What he felt the juggler had caused

### **The King Recounts**

---

"As soon as the juggler waved his feathers  
I jumped on the horse as suggested  
And rode far beyond the desert  
Into a place which was very cold

When I sat to rest my weary self  
The horse ran away—leaving me alone  
The night was spent in fear and hunger  
It seemed a very long journey was undergone

Starving I begged for some food to eat  
From a dark girl dressed in black who had some  
After much begging she replied  
"Only if you promise to marry me"

What to do, survival was at stake  
I agreed—and was given food to eat  
She then took me to her village  
And introduced me to all as her husband

Hideous were all of the tribesmen  
Barely appearing human at all  
But they welcomed me with respect  
Being the husband of one of them

We were married in a hideous ceremony  
A member of the primitive tribe I became  
My wife gave birth to four children  
Each more dreadful than the other one

Years were spent in great agony  
I forgot the past and lost my way  
Hunting for food and cutting wood  
To feed my family each and every day

Things got difficult as time rolled on  
I traded in meat to try and survive  
Often fighting with others for a share  
My body too became black as coal

The mind had also become sinful  
The heart had lost all compassion  
With nets and traps I caught my prey  
Causing untold hardship to animals

Eating rotten food, living in filth  
Anger and abusiveness became natural  
I felt bound by my own evil tendencies  
And wept at my bondage and agony

Thus I lived for a very long time  
Things got so difficult for all  
People ate anything they could find  
Corpses—decaying flesh and dirt as well

I took my family away from there  
In hopes that we may find better  
Sitting one evening after much travel  
My youngest son cried in hunger

Helpless to give him anything at all  
I offered him my own flesh to eat  
Innocently he consented—asking for some  
My world had tumbled within itself

I thought it best to end this suffering  
And to end this life itself  
Making a fire I entered the flames  
I shuddered—found myself here again

### **The Ministers Speak**

---

O king, the juggler was not a thief  
He asked for no money, nothing he took  
He must have come to teach a lesson  
About this delusive world-appearance

World-appearance is mind's jugglery  
Mind itself is a play of consciousness  
It deludes the wisest of persons too  
There is nothing this mind cannot do

### **Vasistha's Insight**

---

I know firsthand—I was there in that court  
How the mind veils the nature of self

Creating its web of illusory appearances  
For peace—the illusion must be destroyed

The impure mind sees a ghost  
Where there is nothing but a post  
All relationships exist in the mind  
Havoc and distress are mind's play too

A mind laden with tendencies  
Is called an impure mind  
Tendencies are springs for wrong action  
Increasing delusion—strengthening tendencies

Mind is the whole world, O Rama  
Atmosphere, sky, earth and wind  
Mind is great and powerful too  
It decided the time of the king's experience

Greatest mystery of all is this, Rama  
How the omnipresent is veiled by the mind  
Making one confuse it with reality  
And be seen as reality—unquestionable

There's no experience—if mind is elsewhere  
Food eaten too is not experienced  
Though the most tasty food be eaten as well  
Senses are born of the mind—not the other way

Fools think body and mind differ  
Body is non-different from mind  
In truth it is mind externalized  
Salutations to sages who've realized this

Those who've realized this great truth  
Are never perturbed by physical conditions

For the switch to convert pleasant to unpleasant  
He has discovered—lies within his mind

Just as an actor plays different roles  
Mind creates different states in consciousness  
Like the waking and dreaming states  
Just as the experiences of king Lavana

## **Conquest of Mind**

---

Mind experiences what it constructs  
Mind is a bundle of thoughts only  
Know this by your direct inquiry  
Be free of its clutches—then do as you please

He who does not let mind roam about  
In objects of pleasure attains mastery  
Just as something is tied to a post  
The mind too can be tied to reality

With a quiet mind one can meditate  
Constantly and without any break  
Meditate ceaselessly—'tis your duty  
And attain to the supreme being

Victory over the goblin mind  
Is had by sincere self-effort  
Knowledge is attained by self-inquiry  
And abandonment of all desires

If there is sincere proper attitude  
This can be attained without struggle  
Like a child's attention can be easily diverted  
If there be real interest in something new

Abandoning cravings is the sole means  
To break the grip of the mind's torment  
Woe unto him—unable and unwilling  
To do what is for his own highest good

By intense effort is it possible  
To gain victory over the mind  
When individuality is broken through  
There is absorption in infinite consciousness

Abandon reliance on fate or gods  
All mental creations of the dull-witted  
With self-effort and self-knowledge  
Make the mind the no-mind

Let infinite consciousness swallow the mind  
Soar high—beyond all and everything  
With intelligence united with the supreme  
Hold onto the self—which is imperishable

Unagitated is the conquered mind  
The world's treasures cannot compare  
Self-knowledge by direct self-inquiry  
Is what is needed—why is this difficult?

How do you live in daily turmoil  
Afraid of death and separation  
The feeling of 'I' and 'mine' will dissolve  
Only when the mind ceases to be

If you do not attain fearlessness  
The mind's cravings will create havoc  
Like rapids they will carry you forth  
In their restlessness with great intensity

Deprive the mind of its restlessness  
It will become 'dead mind' so to say  
This is highest penance or tapas  
Verification of scriptures and liberation

Like a pendulum the mind oscillates  
Between reality and appearance  
After it thinks of inert objects repeatedly  
It assumes their characteristics—becomes them

The same mind devoted to self-inquiry  
Becomes wise—shakes off conditioning  
Returns once again to its original nature  
Pure indivisible infinite consciousness

Mental conditioning has no reality  
Still it arises somehow in the mind  
Ignorance is the cause—abandon it  
Be wise—renounce mental conditioning

You are not the doer of any action here  
Why then do you assume doership?  
One alone exists and ever will  
What then is this doership and agency?

Inactivity is the other extreme  
It does not accomplish a thing  
What has to be done—has to be done  
Act without doership—abide in the self

Do the actions that are natural to you  
Unattached—you will become non-doer  
But doing nothing—attached to doing nothing  
You become the doer of that nothing

This world is like a jugglery show  
Nothing to be gained or given up  
Ignorance of self's nature is the seed  
Abandon this grief-giver ruthlessly

It creates delusion, hides self-knowledge  
Like it did for the king Lavana  
In less than an hour he experienced  
Several years of sorrow and much grief

Ignorance lacks any real continuity  
Like a river—it flows in rapid succession  
Veiling reality again and again  
And giving the appearance of reality

When you try to grasp it—nothing is held  
Because it has no real substance at all  
It acquires strength and firmness  
From your constant blind dwelling on it

A rope made of strands gains strength  
Blueness of the sky is never challenged  
Dream objects seem real in a dream  
All due to ignorance or mental conditioning

Ignorance creates great confusion  
Between appearance and reality  
By becoming aware of its unreality  
It is mastered—the mind ceases to be

As darkness disappears with the light  
Ignorance disappears with self-knowledge  
Without natural urge for self-knowledge  
Ignorance will subject you to its tyranny

Natural must be your inner quest  
You have to want to know above all  
What is reality and what is appearance  
How to go beyond this bondage

Mind is self-veiled consciousness  
Presenting subject-object in indivisibility  
The veil is an idea—an intention too  
The mind is a thought born of that

The firm conviction of self-limitation  
Blinds the mind and binds it too  
Reverse this by unwavering conviction  
That everything is the absolute Brahman

Ideas and thoughts are bondage themselves  
Their abandonment and absence is liberation  
Be free of them—do what is natural to you  
Let appearances be—what does it matter?

What was in the beginning—exists now still  
The absolute is still the absolute  
Contemplate on this deep in your heart  
And shake off this ignorance completely

Uproot hopes and all expectations  
Using inner strength and intelligence  
Hopes, expectations and attachments  
Bind you slavishly to mental conditioning

People forget the truth—a great wonder  
How do they live in such utter ignorance  
Their lives are an invitation to suffering  
The hell they weep about is self-created

Give up all mental conditioning, O Rama  
Which alone is responsible for sorrow  
This ignorance is duality perception's seed  
Abandoned—you will attain supreme peace

### **Rama Speaks After Contemplation**

---

Holy Sage—'tis incredible that non-existence  
Creates such havoc—appearing so very real  
Pray, kindly explain how this is possible  
Why did king Lavana undergo such suffering

### **Vasistha's Reply**

---

That consciousness is related to the body  
Is not really true at all in any way  
As in dream—body is the fancy of consciousness  
Its own energy gives it the appearance of reality

Consciousness limits itself as it were  
The limitation considers itself limited  
This is the individual—the jiva  
Restless amidst the world appearance

This embodied being, egotism or jiva  
Enjoys and suffers the fruits as well  
The body or enlightened ones never suffer  
The mind alone experiences all suffering

Ignorance, heedlessness and unwisdom  
All are nescience—it only does suffer  
It is the mind that does everything  
It is the mind that suffers all agony

Let me answer your question of king Lavana  
And why he underwent such suffering

He was a descendant of Harischandra  
He too aspired to be great like him

### **Lavana's Aspiration**

---

His grandfather did great religious rites  
Lavana too aspired to do so in some way  
Gathering all that was needed for one  
He performed the rite mentally in his garden

Though the rite was done mentally  
He was entitled to its fullest fruit  
The same mind thinks and also does  
The same mind experiences pain and joy

Therefore guide your mind to salvation  
Mind alone is the doer of all actions  
I was witness in king Lavana's court  
And saw the real effects he underwent

I saw through the eye of intuition  
The juggler was a messenger of the gods  
Out to test the mettle of king Lavana  
As he had undertaken a particular rite

Lavana too was performing a rite mentally  
The hallucinations he had were the result  
Both the rite and the hallucinations  
Were experienced by the very same mind

When the same mind is thoroughly purified  
All duality will be disposed of completely  
Diversity will vanish along with it  
As will false notions of 'I' and 'mine'

Equipped with wisdom to ascend  
The seven steps to inner perfection  
Attain liberation from all bondage  
Listen carefully to more on these states

## **17. Steps of Ignorance and States of Wisdom**

### **Seven Descending Steps of Ignorance**

---

Abidance in self-knowledge is liberation  
In self-knowledge there is no agitation  
Self-knowledge disturbed raises egotism  
Distraction, dullness, bondage and suffering

The delusion that veils is sevenfold  
First is when mind and jiva exist in name only  
Second, when notion of 'I' and 'this' appear as real  
Third, when strengthened, they are experienced

Fourth is when the mind is filled with desires  
Fifth is when the unreal appears as real  
Sixth is living in the past as though the present  
Seventh is when one is trapped in dullness

### **Seven Ascending States of Wisdom**

---

Hear now the seven states of wisdom  
First is when pure wish or intention arise  
Second is the spirit of inquiry into truth  
Third is when the mind becomes subtle

Fourth is the mind established in truth  
Fifth is total freedom from bondage  
Sixth is cessation from objectivity  
Seventh is beyond these—liberation

First is when one begins self-inquiry  
"Why do I continue to live unwisely?"

One seeks holy men and teaching  
Having cultivated dispassion and wisdom

Second is when direct observation begins  
To see the mixture of the real with unreal  
Looking within oneself thins the unreal  
One discovers abidance in the substratum

Third is when non-attachment arises  
Based on one's own direct observation  
Of what is unreal and what is real  
The mind becomes subtle and transparent

Fourth comes about on practicing these three  
The seeker turns from pursuit of sense-pleasure  
This happens naturally—without suppression  
As one has seen pursuit of pleasure to be pain

Fifth is when non-attachment arises  
As does conviction in the nature of truth  
One rejoices in one's own self  
One's direct experience is light on the path

Sixth is when there is rootedness  
In experience of unity as the truth  
Ideas of objectivity that lingered earlier  
Have been abandoned completely

Seventh is when self-knowledge  
Is spontaneous and unbroken  
One is liberated while living here  
This is the transcendental state

There is another state beyond these  
The abandonment of body-consciousness  
Rare indeed is this most high state  
Holy are all who ascend these seven

Those attaining to the states of wisdom  
Go beyond the grip of sorrow  
They may lead an active or passive life  
Rejoicing in the self—fully satisfied

All can attain to these states, O Rama  
Unlearned people and animals too  
For it involves the rise of wisdom  
Great are they who have attained to them

In ignorance does the self imagine  
Separate existence as the ego  
But gold remains gold in a bracelet too  
So too the self can never be non-self

### **The Rise of Ignorance in the Self**

---

Best to ask questions about reality  
Not unreality as it hath no existence  
As gold remains gold—regardless of form  
So infinite consciousness remains unchanged

Existence of unreality arises in consciousness  
And vanishes when inquired into  
As long as the truth is not directly seen  
One suffers in bondage of ignorance

This world appearance is a delusion  
Based on egotism's utter ignorance  
Egotism has no existence in the self  
The infinite self is the only existence

Whatever is seen, all that is known  
All is that supreme pure consciousness  
No beginning, no middle and no end  
Divisionless, self-luminous—Brahman only

Space and diversity are notions in the mind  
Just as distance between objects in a mirror  
The king visited the places he dreamt earlier  
Saw them to exist and the people too

I explained the mystery to the king  
Delusion created by power of nescience  
Confusion between the real and unreal  
Based on ignorance and resulting notions

When a notion arises in the mind  
Delusion will very soon follow  
As notions are not based on reality  
Experience of the notion comes quickly

If one thinks repeatedly in some way  
Division is made firm in the mind  
The thinker and what is thought of  
What was thought is soon experienced

If you see a crow alight on a coconut tree  
And see a coconut fall at the same time  
You feel and affirm these events are linked  
You experience one event—not two separate ones

Just this way by pure coincidence  
Ignorance arose and was affirmed  
A feeling about it gave it reality  
This reality of ignorance is bondage

The king experienced within himself  
What was reflected in his consciousness  
Though events happened in earlier births  
The energy invested led to experience again

Nescience is unreal—unconnected with self  
Like connects with like—a common fact  
Is how everything becomes knowable finally  
Since everything exists in infinite consciousness

Since consciousness alone is all this  
Everything appears ever so real  
Not only the link between all things  
But the substance of things as well

Different things just do not exist  
Or it would be impossible to know anything  
If they were not vitally connected somehow  
Then how can you call them different?

Relationship is realization of existing unity  
Called relationship in ignorance  
Based upon false notions and delusion  
Of division between subject and object

In between the seer and the seen  
Is the relationship known as the seer  
When the division between these three  
Is abolished—that alone is supreme

Be that pure undivided consciousness  
Do not let imagination create a future  
Do not get tangled in moods of the mind  
Stay established in truth peacefully

I have investigated the truth concerning  
The mind—does it exist or does it not?  
Have found only pure consciousness exists  
Be established in this realization, O Rama

When all mental conditioning is overcome  
The mind is made perfectly tranquil  
Delusion and ignorance come to an end  
The illusion or maya is clearly understood

As long as the illusion is not understood  
By one's direct observation  
Most inevitable is great delusion  
The source of endless sorrow and grief

Do not get wrapped up in the words  
Theory or descriptions used to instruct  
One alone is—all pure consciousness  
Know this by your direct experience

The self is ever untouched by sorrow  
Self is the self of all—therefore desireless  
My precepts have dispelled your ignorance  
Your consciousness is pure now, O Rama

End of Chapter Three

# CHAPTER IV: DEALING WITH EXISTENCE

## 1. Dealing with Existence

### After Cosmic Dissolution

---

Only those with firm faith in the universe's reality  
Can posit the universe exists in a seed-state  
After the cosmic dissolution, O Rama  
These theories are pure ignorance only

The seed of the plant contains the future tree  
Both material—perceivable by mind and senses  
How can that which is beyond the reach of both  
Be the seed for the worlds we see?

That which remains is subtler than space  
How can the universe's seed exist in it?  
Just how can this universe emerge  
From that most subtle supreme being?

Something cannot exist in nothing  
Even if it did—why it is not seen?  
A tree does not spring from an empty jar  
Which is filled with nothing but pure space

Brahman and the universe cannot coexist  
As darkness cannot exist with the sun  
The tree exists in the seed—both have forms  
But how can form exist in formlessness?

Brahman and the world have no relationship  
All that appears is Brahman alone  
'Tis real just as a dream-vision  
For it is produced without substance

A cooperative clause would be needed  
For manifestation from the seed-state  
But no such clause exists at all  
'Tis ignorance to think about this

The creator arose as a memory  
In infinite pure consciousness  
From and in memory did all this arise  
The world-appearance that only looks real

Like specks of dust in a light beam  
Millions of universes do appear  
This world and all its components  
Are all in one small atom only

Other atoms have world-appearances too  
Like figures in an uncarved marble slab  
Though the slab does not have any form  
The figures in it all appear so very real

## **The Way Beyond**

---

Successful mastery of the senses  
Is the only way across this samsara  
Formidable ocean or world-appearance  
No other effort is of much use

Wisdom gained by study of scriptures  
Company of sages and holy ones  
Successful mastery of the senses  
Will help transcend world-appearance

The mind alone is world-appearance  
All this is jugglery of the mind only  
Mind conjures and experiences itself  
When mind is healed—appearance is healed

Though unseen—by its own thinking  
The mind conjures this body  
Generating ideas of birth and death  
Delusion results from its own thoughts

Relentless errors in perception  
Worsen one's psychological condition  
By direct observation and inquiry  
End the cycle of the mind's tyranny

The enormous universe exists in the mind  
Like the universes created by the brahmana boys  
Like the hallucinations suffered by king Lavana  
The story of Sukra will illustrate this well

## **2. The Story of Sukra**

Sage Brighu once undertook intense penance  
Sukra his son tended to his father's needs  
Seeing a beautiful nymph in the sky one day  
The young man was totally distracted

Overcome with desire, he closed his eyes  
Mentally, he pursued the beautiful nymph  
They entered the realm of gods and celestials  
And consented to stay there at their behest

He completely forgot his old identity  
Spending all his time in pleasure's pursuits  
Eight cycles of time came and passed by  
Merit exhausted—he fell back to the earth

Both he and the nymph were reborn again  
In various related and unrelated conditions  
Sukra passed through many different ones  
Different conditions and different species too

Passing through various embodiments  
And enduring very many fates  
He felt the need to find a way out  
Sukra practiced intense austerities

His old body sat near his father  
Suffering the effects of weather and time  
It had been reduced to skin and bone  
And was most frightening to even look at

### **Brighu Rises from Meditation**

---

Sage Brighu arose from his meditation  
Many long cycles of time had lapsed  
He did not see his youthful son nearby  
Only the dried up body—looking hideous

Filled with rage he wished to curse time  
For causing Sukra's untimely death  
Time appeared before him instantly  
In physical form with sword and noose

Six arms and faces—wearing impenetrable armor  
Surrounded by servants and messengers  
Radiant with the flames of destruction  
And the weapons he held in his hands

### **Time Addressed Birghu**

---

How is it that such a wise sage as you  
Contemplates such unworthy conduct  
Offended though none has offended you  
Though worthy of salutations of one and all

Do not waste your merit in this useless show  
You know your curses cannot affect me

Even the fires of dissolution do not burn me  
Why do you contemplate cursing me?

I am Time—countless beings I've destroyed  
Even gods who preside over this universe  
I am the consumer—you are the food  
Such has been ordained by nature

Fire by its very nature flames upward  
Water by its very nature flows down  
Foods by their nature seek consumers  
Created objects by their nature seek their end

Thus is ordained by the supreme Lord  
Self of all, self in all—pure consciousness  
The only doer and enjoyer—divisionless  
Knowers of truth have experienced this

Do not give way to anger, O sage  
It will only lead to disasters' paths  
What is to be—will surely be  
The wise are not swayed by vanity

What has to be done—has to be done  
The wise do the needful egolessly  
Unselfish as if in deep sleep  
Walk this path of the wise sages

Mental actions are real actions  
Your mind is disturbed by emotions  
Sever mind's identification with body  
Turn it to truth and attain the supreme

While you were in deep meditation  
Sukra your son got mentally distracted

Pursuing a nymph out of desire  
He underwent births of experience

He is now engaged in penance wisely  
Well-read in scriptures and learned  
See this whole series in intuition  
Behold all this with the eye of wisdom

### **Bhrigu Speaks to Time**

---

Lord, everything you say is absolute truth  
You are indeed the knower of all  
We are so feeble in understanding  
All this is verily within you only

Out of attachment I became agitated  
Moved to sorrow by natural events  
Clinging to what inevitably changes  
Succumbing to anger and delusion

By your grace I have seen the truth  
I realize mind alone is the body  
The mind conjures this world-vision  
And then endures its own havoc

### **Time Speaks to Bhrigu**

---

Mind is the body—well said, O sage  
Mind creates the body by thoughts alone  
Just as a potter fashions a pot  
Mind creates new bodies—destroys the old

In mind exists irrational thought and delusion  
Dream, imagination, whims and fancies  
It creates the body within itself only  
The ignorant see differences between them both

States of waking, dream and deep sleep  
Are expressions of mind's faculties  
The conditioned mind sees diversity  
The enlightened mind beholds unity

Mind gets involved in its own projections  
Entertaining false notions and feels bound  
When all false notions have been dispelled  
Peace of the supreme is experienced

The mind can be seen as a vast ocean  
Within it are a variety of creatures too  
On which waves and ripples rise and fall  
Its own smaller waves fear larger ones

Warmer waves fear colder ones  
Choppy waves feel the wind breaking them  
All waves are waters of the same ocean  
Ocean alone exists—still there are waves

Even so, absolute Brahman alone exists  
Infinite diversity appears in the infinite  
Diversity is an appearance—imagination  
All this is Brahman—abide in this truth

A silkworm weaving somehow gets bound  
The infinite fancies and gets caught in it  
As an elephant breaks the chains that bind  
Self liberates itself from shackles of bondage

The self is what it considers itself to be  
There's no bondage or liberation for the Lord  
The infinite being alone exists  
Bondage and liberation are great wonders

Come out of ignorance's revolving wheel  
Leave delusion's chaos behind  
Step onto wisdom concerning the truth  
Freedom and redemption are yours instantly

### **Vasistha's Insight**

---

Time took Bhrigu to see his son  
Who was in another body but most tranquil  
He greeted them as divinities  
Bhrigu asked him to recollect himself

The young man instantly recalled all  
He recounted his procession of many births  
Then they all travelled to the location  
Where lay his first decaying body as Sukra

Whether one is wise or ignorant  
The body lasts and functions—as is its nature  
Functioning appropriately in the world  
Either attached or unattached

As long as one is embodied  
Pleasure and pain do come along  
The wise are unattached to either  
Living an enlightened life in harmony

Time asked him to enter that body  
As though going into a different room  
The entry of self would be enlivening  
Reversing the decay that appeared

Time vanished—Sukra entered his first body  
The one abandoned fell to the ground  
He rose and greeted his father lovingly  
Both shone as the radiance of sun and moon

Sukra's wishes to ascend to heaven  
Materialized because his mind was pure  
Free of cravings since it was his first birth  
What the pure mind wishes—materializes

When the mind regains its utter purity  
That pure mind is itself liberation  
Diversity is seen as an appearance  
The totality is the absolute Brahman

Each see what is rooted in their mind  
Succession of births follow changes in mind  
To suit the new psychological changes  
Till self-realization ends embodiment

The tree grows after destroying the seed  
Brahman creates the world—stays unchanged  
In the nameless and formless these do appear  
Though Brahman remains eternal and changeless

When the self is seen as an object  
The seer is not realized or seen  
Till the universe is perceived objectively  
Self-realization remains unattainable

When the water in a mirage is seen  
One does not see the rising hot air  
When hot air is seen the water is not  
When one is truth—other is not

Give up the division between seer and sight  
The two must be seen as one substance  
There's no division between subject and object  
Only then is realization of truth possible

Every potential exists in every atom  
Therefore abandon notions of diversity  
All are aspects of infinite consciousness  
Rare indeed are those who have realized this

The illusion occurs in infinite consciousness  
Experience this directly and be free  
Absence of all craving—of every kind  
Is the only proof that wisdom has dawned

A painting of a pot is not the pot  
A painting of fire is not fire at all  
A painting of a woman is not a woman  
Wise words too are words—not wisdom

As you contemplate deeply so you become  
Hence contemplate on the unconditioned  
Contemplating desires Sukra was bound  
Contemplating the infinite he attained freedom

The state which endures is the waking state  
That which is transient is the dream state  
Dream state builds from the waking state  
Both share characteristics—they are the same

The consciousness awake in deep sleep  
Is the same that enlivens the waking state  
The very same that enlivens dreams as well  
Is transcendental consciousness called turiya

When ignorance and delusion do expand  
The 'I am' thought generates various notions  
Senses and the body come to be  
For experiences in the different states

All who strive for liberation  
Experience the impurity of the mind  
Created by notions entertained  
And its resulting moods and experiences

Mind's conviction determines action  
Action in turn strengthens conviction  
This is why all see the same thing differently  
Each convinced their view is the truth

Notions of object are called bondage  
Notions are called maya or ignorance too  
Perversion is in the perceiver's mind  
Leading to perverted perception

When the mind is free of all attachments  
When it not swayed by any opposites  
When attractions and supports are abandoned  
Doubt comes to rest—mind is enlightened

When the mind's impurities cease to be  
Auspiciousness arises within the heart  
Equal vision enters daily living  
Ignorance vanishes due to inner expansion

Confusion vanishes from the mind  
It functions naturally as it should  
Just as waves rise and fall in the ocean  
Rise and fall in the mind will not delude it

He who sees all strung in the self  
As beads are strung in a necklace  
Who knows clearly he is not the mind  
He sees without division—firm in the truth

Salutations to that abode of auspiciousness  
Filled with the supreme realization  
That Brahman alone exists—ever unchanged  
During creation, existence and dissolution

He who treads the superior path  
Dwells in the body without confusion  
Knowing the river of past momentum continues  
Events come and go with its flow only

The body is a source of suffering to the ignorant  
But a source of delight to the enlightened man  
Who sees it as a means to roam about  
With no loss at all when it is abandoned

The body does not subject the wise man  
To lust, greed, ignorance or fear  
Light is his contact with the body  
Unaffected is he when it is gone

The wise reign supreme in the body  
Without self-image, free of all craving  
A disciplined mind is itself happiness  
Hence strive to conquer senses and mind

In the great empire known as dreadful hell  
Evil actions roam like elephants in rut  
Insatiable cravings fuel the senses  
Which destroy the body—their own support

A self-controlled one is a wise one  
The bliss he experiences is incomparable  
Much more than the wealthiest can know  
He lives without confusion or any sorrow

Only after the supreme truth has been seen  
Does craving disappear completely  
The mind is most useful to the wise  
It impels in them the very best actions

### **3. The Story of The Three Demons**

#### **First Batch: Dama, Vyala and Kata**

---

A powerful demon Sambara once existed  
Master of magic, he invaded heaven  
Afraid of his powers, gods hid themselves  
And continued to fight—though invisibly

He created three demons for protection  
Dama, Vyala and Kata were their names  
They were totally fearless and bold  
As they did not have any mental conditioning

Unafraid of death, they fought fiercely  
But unable to find the gods at all  
The gods sought relief from Brahma  
Who advised them to lie low for a while

#### **Brahma's Advice to the Gods**

---

Sambara cannot be killed right now  
Best for you to retreat a while  
His three demons are invincible  
As they have no mental conditioning

The ego-sense 'me' binds the mind  
Conditions it positively or negatively  
Abodes of suffering and sorrow are they  
But the unconditioned mind is unbeatable

Do what you can to arouse in them  
Feelings of ego: 'I' and 'mine'  
Since they are ignorant by nature  
They will easily fall for this bait

### **Rise of Ego is Self-Defeat**

---

The gods fought the demons and their army  
In such a way to arouse thoughts in them  
Of victory—they felt they were winning  
Of fear—when they saw others die

The idea of 'I' and 'mine' began to seed  
Notions gave rise to much confusion  
Jubilee at winning but fearful of loss  
Their armor of courage began to rust

As a mirror reflects objects close to it  
One's behavior reflects inner content  
So too ego-sense reflects in consciousness  
But if held distant would not do so

With the ego-sense arose desires  
To prolong life and acquire more  
This weakened their will-power  
Generating confusion in their minds

Feelings of possessiveness and greed  
Result in inefficiency and inability  
As uncertainty generates fear  
Based on attachment to notions

With fear comes loss of heart  
The demons lost their courage  
Demoralized they fled the scene  
To find refuge in the netherworld

Though free of birth and death's grip  
The rise of ego-sense reversed their fate  
Thus they underwent many life cycles  
And live now as fish in a deep lake

In time they will hear their story  
And recollect their true nature  
They will then abandon their ego-sense  
And attain the state of liberation

The rise of ego-sense was their fall  
Cravings resulted in loss of will-power  
Notions of 'I' and 'mine' are the ropes  
Which bind one to ignorance and delusion

Pure consciousness entertains impure notions  
It experiences its distortion within itself  
Without renouncing its essential nature  
Experiences delusion without being deluded

## **The Wise**

---

The wise do not get caught in polemics  
They exert relentlessly—but are patient  
They know all craving and desires  
Will instantly lead to their downfall

They study but are light on their own path  
Direct experience is their inner flame  
Self-led—they do not lead others either  
As each must awaken and exert individually

Wealth and comfort bring a host of ills  
Complacency and ideas of dependency  
Misfortune is the very best fortune  
Rejection by all is the greatest victory

When cravings' pull is abandoned  
Goodness glows within the heart  
One's life is a reflection of this light  
Shining from the lamp of contentment

Sincere zealous efforts must fructify  
Hence never abandon right effort  
Direct all energy towards self-discovery  
'Tis the only remedy for every condition

Natural restraint is wisdom in life  
The idea of suppression never arises  
Energies are channeled to what is best  
Like autumn leaves fall to their rest

There is no use crying for liberation  
If the mind has not been well purified  
The purified mind is liberation itself  
The unpurified mind is itself sorrow

The feeling of 'I' as a separate entity  
Is the root, branch and stem of grief  
All cravings are its many thorns  
Self-knowledge alone is the remedy

Get rid of the feeling of 'I-ness' ruthlessly  
'Tis ignorance itself—harbinger of pain  
Gradually expand the idea of 'I'  
Till you abide in the divisionless state

## **Second Batch: Bhima, Bhasa and Dridha**

---

After Sambara experienced defeat  
When the first batch of demons deserted  
He realized they had entertained egoism  
With self-knowledge things would be different

He created three demons most fierce  
Bhima, Bhasa and Dridha were their names  
Endowed with self-knowledge were they  
Full of dispassion and without previous birth

Fiercely they fought with the gods  
The idea of death did not exist for them  
Though they caused and saw many deaths  
As they were fearless due to self-knowledge

Lord Vishnu intervened at the gods' behest  
After a long battle the three were slain  
But instantly were granted liberation by the Lord  
As they were enlightened—without ego-sense

### **Vasistha's Insight**

---

The conditioned mind is bondage itself  
The unconditioned mind is liberation  
The truth must be seen—directly by oneself  
For inner clarity which is liberation

The first batch of demons fled battle  
Their minds were conditioned by ego-sense  
The second batch required divine intervention  
As their minds were free of all conditioning

True heroes are they who've conquered mind  
Freed it from the shackles of ignorance  
'Tis the only remedy for all suffering  
In the vicious cycle of birth and death

Listen attentively to the highest wisdom  
Let your whole life be perfumed by it  
Bondage is craving for pleasure  
Its abandonment is liberation

## The Universe in Infinite Consciousness

---

As future waves exist in a calm sea  
This universe exists in consciousness  
As reflections seen appear very real  
So does the universe in consciousness

As space is unaffected by floating clouds  
Consciousness is unaffected by the universe  
As refracting mediums reveal light's presence  
Consciousness is revealed through the universe

The universe is consciousness reflecting in itself  
Essentially nameless and formless 'tho visible  
These appear very real to the ignorant  
In spite of all their study and learning

Uncreated, imperishable is consciousness  
Eternity with reflections within itself  
As waves dance playfully on the ocean  
All forms are the play of consciousness

Since the substratum of forms is reality  
Pure eternal infinite consciousness  
Forms' appearances generate confusion  
As to their reality or seeming appearance

A mutual causal relationship exists  
Between forms and their substratum  
But just as waves on oceans' bosom  
Forms and source are non-different

The deep ocean is not agitated  
Waves make it appear to be so  
Consciousness conscious of itself  
Somehow considers itself as another

Brahman permeates all and everything  
'Tis what enables all experience  
Notions of agency and enjoyment  
Are two phases of experiencing

Interest in action but impersonal  
Is the hallmark of one with wisdom  
Mental action is real action  
The wise do the needful but remain free

The vast universe that you see  
Is the supreme being made visible  
Diversity is only an appearance  
Brahman is the only reality

The accidental intention of consciousness  
Solidifies into substance in appearance  
The mind instantly objectifies what appears  
Though its only an appearance within itself

Conscious-energy manifests space  
In which diverse appearances are seen  
All creation has manifested this way  
All this takes place in the supreme Lord

Creation as such is a mere word  
The supreme Lord alone exists  
As dirt removed reveals the substance  
Remove darkness and behold the Light

Do not get caught up in the words  
Look at what they point to instead  
Infinite consciousness alone exists  
Remove ignorance and know directly

Maya is another name for ignorance  
Become aware of ignorance's play  
Your duty is to attain self-knowledge  
Which alone can destroy ignorance

Worry not about how ignorance exists  
Concern yourself instead with its removal  
When ignorance has ceased to be  
You will know its unreality

The forms that exist are the field  
Witnessing consciousness their knower  
It only seems to become involved somehow  
In the field which is really its own self

If one abandons inquiry into truth  
Ignorance embraces him immediately  
Caught in the grip of appearances  
The vise of conditioning tightens its teeth

Countless species are seen in creation  
Some caught more deeply than others  
Some strive hard to free themselves  
Some succeed—blessed indeed are they

Those who break ignorance's fetters  
And attain to the natural state  
Do not return to the vicious cycle  
Of birth, death, suffering and pain

That which did not exist in the beginning  
Cannot exist in the end either  
Yet somehow experienced in the middle  
Only because of lack of investigation

All that you see is mind's jugglery  
Let appearances rise—let them fall  
Attachment to these appearances  
Will bind one to pain as they change

Wean the mind from all craving  
'Tis the way to avoid suffering  
Be established in the unconditioned  
Move joyfully on the raft of self-knowledge

With intelligence sharp as a razors' edge  
Sift appearances from mixing with reality  
You are endowed with what's needed  
To break free of ignorance's citadel

Live as sages of self-knowledge do  
Established firmly in reality  
No need to renounce activity at all  
You are free abiding in self-knowledge

Work in the world without getting lost  
Pursuit of pleasure is a downward road  
Rejection of appearances is the upward path  
To cross the birth and death cycle and be free

## **4. The Story of Dashura**

### **From Orphan to Sage**

---

Dashura was the son of a great sage  
Both parents died when he was young  
The forest he lived in nurtured him well  
Teaching him wisdom—he became a sage

His earlier rigorous austerities were physical  
Hemmed in by rules—dos and don'ts

Immersed in rituals, injunctions and prohibitions  
Hoping to realize the truth he was taught

In a huge tree he took up abode  
Which seemed to bridge earth to sky  
He felt creation to be the Lord's cosmic form  
Sun and moon as eyes—nature sounds as hymns

He sat on the topmost branch of this tree  
His vision traversing far and wide  
Immersed in this—cosmic being appeared  
On that very spot he commenced his austerities

His later austerities were performed through the mind  
The mind is a magazine of tremendous power  
Heart and mind were thoroughly purified  
He shone as a sage with the highest wisdom

A most beautiful lady came by one day  
As deity of forest she greeted him  
Expressing her sadness at being childless  
Asking the sage's blessing for a son

The sage handed her a nearby creeper  
And assured her she would soon have a son  
Just as the creeper would have flowers  
The grateful forest deity departed gracefully

She came again after twelve years had passed  
With a young lad about that age—sage's son  
She had instructed the boy in branches of learning  
And asked the sage to teach him self-knowledge

Without self-knowledge one is only a fool  
No matter what might be his accomplishments

So she implored the sage to care for him  
The sage consented—she departed gracefully

### Story in a Story

---

Listen attentively to this inspiring story  
It gives great insight concerning this world  
Once lived a mighty king called Khotta  
Capable of conquering all the worlds

His every command was honored by all  
His deeds—too innumerable to list  
Productive of both—happiness and sorrow  
He reigned supreme—challenged by none

His three bodies engulfed the worlds  
Best, middling and least they were  
Established in space—a city he built  
With fourteen roads and three sectors

High peaks, gardens and seven lakes he built  
Adorning all with beautiful things  
Two lights—one hot and the other one cold  
Undiminished were they in their brilliance

Several types of beings he created too  
Arranged with different appearances  
Different life-spans to each he assigned  
Each had nine gates and were well ventilated

Five lamps and three pillars had each  
Whitish wood-like poles supported them  
Soft outer coverings offered protection  
Creations of maya—the king's illusory power

Here the king besports himself  
In the company of ghosts and goblins  
Fearful of inquiry or investigation  
Protectors of the mansions—different bodies

Thinking to move to another land  
And envisioning this place he migrated  
With his entourage of ghosts and goblins  
Occupying the new but similar mansion

Just like this does the cycle repeat  
Construction, destruction and migration  
Wailing aloud—helpless and ignorant  
Sometimes in joy but mostly sunk in misery

### **Vasistha's Insight**

---

Thus does he live—comes, goes and flourishes  
Tossed in the ocean of world-appearance  
This illustration is creation, universe and man  
The king in the story is but a notion or wish

Arising in the great void of its own accord  
'Twill dissolve in the great void of its own accord too  
All that you see and know are similar notions  
The intention alone is responsible for creation

The city built by the king is the entity  
The ghosts guarding the city are ego-principle  
The king roams this world in waking and dream  
From one city, body and realm to another

After tireless walking about here and there  
Exhausting desires—wisdom develops within  
He reaches the end of his wandering  
By the cessation of notions and experiences

He still drifts between wisdom and pleasure-seeking  
As all notions have not yet been abandoned  
This causes even more suffering and torment  
Till he renounces all notions for liberation

No amount of religious activity  
Even the best of teachers will not do  
Unless all notions are completely abandoned  
For only then can the mind go beyond itself

When infinite consciousness is somehow aware  
Of consciousness itself as an object  
This consciousness now perceived as an object  
Becomes gross and seemingly fills much space

Engrossed in ideation about this object  
It imagines itself distinct from itself  
Then ideation grows and multiplies rapidly  
This becoming is the cause of all sorrow

Hold on to existence—abandon all ideas  
By ideas does future come into being  
Abandon thought—'tis the seed of ideas  
Without thought-seed—ideas and notions cease

Abandoning thought and ideas is easier  
Than dealing with the sorrow they bring about  
Far easier than crumbling a flower in your palm  
As this takes effort—abandoning thought does not

As notions weaken—great joy is experienced  
One feels freer from earlier turmoil  
The ropes that bind are thought constructions  
Abandoning thought is abandoning bondage

This story illustrates the nature of world-appearance  
Therefore it is as true as the world itself  
Whether you believe creation to be real or not  
Rest firmly in your own self—existence is truth

Infinite consciousness is itself pure existence  
Do not let ideas or thought cloud your vision  
Rest established in the self—in consciousness  
'Tis what the best of holy men ever dwell in

When one's house is on fire is not the time  
To inquire about the world's existence  
All in its own time—what is important now  
Is abandoning thoughts and notions as poison

Gird up your loins for this task on hand  
With the self—seek the self of all  
Fuel for the journey is self-effort  
Clarity will be had as you tread along

Bondage is bondage to thoughts and notions  
Freedom is freedom from both of these  
Cultivate the good in every way  
Abandon all that results from notions

All notions including that of ego-sense  
Must be ruthlessly abandoned—let go  
The heart will be flooded by infinite space  
'Tis verily the presence of the supreme Lord

Live then an active life or a quieter one  
There is no detriment in either choice  
But renunciation of notions is requisite  
'Tis the seed of all sorrow and suffering

These forms you consider so desirable  
All these things that seem worth striving for  
Are all formations of the very same substance  
That you yourself are also composed of

Pursuit of these forms is self-destruction  
Trying to preserve the ever-changing too  
Shame on those who still pursue them  
They themselves relinquish their real heritage

The wise are not enamored by these forms  
They ever abide in the truth—substance of all  
Hear now the most inspiring song of Kaca  
Son of the preceptor of the gods

## **5. Kaca's Song**

### **I am the Fullness**

---

What shall I do? Where shall I go?  
What to hold? What to renounce?  
The entire universe is permeated  
By the one self—the self is the all

Unhappiness and happiness are self  
Desires are empty voids that appear  
Having known all this by direct experience  
I'm free of sorrow's grip while still living

Everywhere I go I move within self  
Everything that exists is self alone  
I myself exist as this universe  
I am the cosmic ocean's fullness

## Vasistha's Insight

---

As Kaca sang he intoned the holy OM  
Which resounded like a bell everywhere  
Inside and outside did not exist for him  
Remaining fully absorbed in the self right there

Living beings are natural in world-appearance  
But all of this is in infinite consciousness only  
As ripples and waves in the great ocean  
Non-different though they are seen to exist

Some beings are born with a purer nature  
Having turned away from impurity earlier  
Others have degrees of impurity  
As they still continue to function impurely

Purity is firm rootedness in the truth  
Infinite consciousness is the only reality  
Impurity is total forgetfulness of truth  
Pursuing pleasures with different excuses

The pure have abandoned thoughts and desires  
The impure still seem them worth pursuing  
They continue to live in delusion by choice  
Abandon all thoughts and notions and be free

Let there be unbroken self-inquiry  
Who am I? How has all this arisen?  
Abandon egoism and all attraction  
Realize the truth as divisionless

The same consciousness illumining the sun  
Dwells in the little worm that crawls around  
Relentlessly inquire into the nature of truth  
The holy ones and scriptures are great help

Approach the teacher—wise and capable  
He must be free of all pleasure craving  
Study the self with the aid of scriptures  
Practice the great yoga and realize the self

Only a person intelligent like you, O Rama  
Good natured and with equal vision  
Is entitled to behold the wisdom unfolded here  
You are already liberated—live like one!

End of Chapter Four

# CHAPTER V: DEALING WITH DISSOLUTION

## 1. Section Dealing with Dissolution

### Rama's Reflections

---

To the dialogue all listened most attentively  
Retiring at the conclusion of yet another day  
But Rama could not sleep at all though 'twas late  
He pondered deeply on conquest of mind

Seeing clearly the mind as the source of all sorrow  
Impossible to abandon enjoyment of pleasure  
Being unable to be rid of this sorrow  
Seemed tied to enjoyment of pleasure

Mind however is the crucial factor  
As pursuit of pleasure arises in it  
Pursuit is sorrow itself, not enjoyment  
Of pleasures that come along naturally

The mind has to once taste supreme peace  
This alone can end mind's relentless pursuits  
In perfect fulfillment the mind too is fulfilled  
Then alone will the mind abandon all craving

Pondering thus Rama fell asleep late  
But awoke early contemplating again  
He prayed for inner spiritual strength  
To cross the ocean of worldly existence

### Rama Addresses Vasistha

---

Lord, deeply I have been meditating  
On what your teachings may point to

Enshrining them within my heart  
Pray, kindly do further enlighten me

### **Vasistha Continues**

---

Listen attentively on universe's dissolution  
Supreme peace you will surely attain  
The seeming world-appearance is sustained  
By desires or rajas and dullness or tamas

It is easily abandoned like a snake's slough  
By those who possess a pure nature  
As the spirit of inquiry threads through their life  
Throwing light and clarity on all conditions

This spirit of inquiry must be cultivated  
Study and wise company are indispensable  
Light on the path is the lamp lit within  
This light of clarity dispels all confusion

The truth must be directly perceived  
Within oneself and by oneself too  
Then alone will mind's turmoil end  
You have a pure nature—be devoted to this

### **On Dissolution**

---

What did not exist then cannot exist now  
What appears to be will soon cease to be  
That alone can be regarded as truth  
Which has always been and will always be

Birth and growth are in the mind only  
This has to be seen directly by oneself  
The mind has to see it's ignorance as the cause  
Of all sorrow and suffering it begs relief from

Hence, tread the path of righteousness always  
Study and company of the wise are most vital  
But you will have to exert by your very own self  
To rid passion's flames and ignorance's weight

The perfected ones will point the way  
Out of the prison that is self-sustained  
Learn most diligently how to cultivate  
The spirit of inquiry without remission

Absolute requisite is total purity  
It alone becomes spirit of inquiry  
Beset with dangers is life without this  
Inner stillness gives vision wisdom

One cannot be rid of inner confusion  
Without direct knowledge of truth  
Ignorance of self is cause of all sorrow  
Self-knowledge is itself tranquility

You will attain peace immediately  
On resolving the conflict between body and self  
The self is one thing—body is another  
Unaffected and untainted by body is self

As long as the mind pursues pleasures  
Darkness of world-illusion will continue  
But on awakening and self-inquiry  
Darkness is dispelled instantly

Dust particles do not affect the sky  
The body too does not affect self  
Pleasure and pain are not of body or self  
They belong to ignorance—their loss is no loss

Neither identical nor apart are self and body  
All these are but *reflections* of truth  
Abandon these notions of differences  
Rest in the truth—Brahman alone exists

The one self perceives itself within itself  
Infinite consciousness alone exists  
Not sorrow, delusion, anyone or anything  
Abandon duality and be established in this

The steady mind is an abode of peace  
Rest peacefully in this inner silence  
Remain alone inwardly without self-willed thoughts  
Doing what needs to be done—naturally

Be content with what comes unsought  
This is the way to be desireless  
Live without grabbing or pushing away  
This is the way to effortless living

Be free of all mental conditioning  
This is the way out of inner blindness  
Rest always content in your true self  
This is the way to be free of distress

Remain fully expanded within like the ocean  
This is the way beyond all limitation  
Rejoice in the self by the self  
Nothing that happens will perturb you

Just as a crystal reflects things naturally  
So also do activities reflect in consciousness  
Do what needs to be done non-volitionally  
Universal activity is entry into universality

Choosing not to act is utter foolishness  
Those suppressing natural action do suffer  
Acting volitionally is the other extreme  
Self-centered action brings sorrow too

There is another way of pure action  
Doing what needs to be done as a part of things  
Big difference between being a part and apart  
Pure action remedies self-centeredness

Those living life with the spirit of inquiry  
Are blessed—they do conquer the mind  
Going on to higher planes of consciousness  
They attain liberation and end all suffering

Through constant effort one does evolve  
Entering this birth with qualities conducive  
To increasing their existing pure qualities  
And attain to the utterly pure state

Each has to earn everything by themselves  
Every step towards the light has to be tread  
As one marches on—darkness is abandoned  
One gradually reaches the goal of liberation

A master can help and point the way  
One will have to tread each step on his own  
Most rare when self-knowledge happens instantly  
I shall narrate an ancient legend that illustrates this

## **2. The Story of King Janaka**

### **Song of the Perfected Ones**

---

Janaka is a great monarch with unlimited vision  
A righteous king and benefactor to good people

One day as he roamed in a garden  
He heard an inspiring song of the perfected ones

They sang a song of their contemplation  
On that pure divisionless experience  
Of seer or experiencer in contact with the seen  
Without any division or conceptualization

They sang about the self they contemplate  
In which creation is inherently reflected  
When the subject-object division has ceased  
The pure self, in which all is, is reflected naturally

They sang about the light that illumines all  
Shining as subject and object as well  
Shining within all, within the middle too  
Divisionless—only appearing divided

They sang of the reality that encompasses all  
To which all belongs, from which all emerges  
Which is the only cause of all and everything  
The reality which is verily everything indeed

They sang of the self—the basis of all  
The entire field of language and expression  
Indicated by the word 'I' or aham  
Pure existence—the supreme reality

They sang beautiful words of compassion  
For those who pursue shadows—not truth  
Pursuing pleasures abandoning the Lord  
Ever they dwell in their own hearts as self

They sang about the worthlessness of objects  
The pursuit of which is bondage itself

Resulting in sorrow most unimaginable  
Never bringing the joys that they promise

They sang about ending sorrow completely  
By striking down craving with wisdom's rod  
Whether the craving has surfaced or not  
Urgent it is—abandon craving ruthlessly

They sang about the delight that peace brings  
To one self-controlled—established in peace  
The joys and pure bliss that do arise  
Without any delay in the well-controlled

### **Vasistha's Comments**

---

Hearing the words of the sage's song  
King Janaka became terribly depressed  
He immediately repaired to his chamber  
And contemplated the words in intense anguish

### **King Janaka to Himself**

---

I am helplessly swinging like a stone in life  
I am in love with this life though short it is  
I feel I cannot do without life, foolishly  
All the while it is amidst eternity itself

How is it that I've become so deluded?  
Knowing all differences exist in the mind alone  
The business of the world never decreases  
Business is in and of the mind—not of the world

All that is seen and experienced changes and ends  
The wise never rely on things that change  
What is cherished today is despised tomorrow  
Into what shall we lay trust, O foolish mind?

I feel tethered firmly without a cord  
I feel tainted too without impurity  
Fallen am I while remaining on top  
What mystery is this, O my self?

Strange is this delusion that has gripped me  
Who are these friends and so-called relatives?  
I'm deluded by relationships thoroughly  
My clinging to them is my bondage

So many have come, so many have gone  
Why am I anchored to what must go too  
Even powerful kings and gods come and go  
Fie on me for snaring myself so pitifully

Like an ignorant fool I live—completely deluded  
Feeling 'I am so-and-so'—full of vain cravings  
From sorrow to greater sorrow have I fallen  
Yet, dispassion has not arisen in me!

The world and people are just as they are  
In every life the story is exactly the same  
Why have I not arisen above this delusion?  
Knowing full well the flames I roast in

Religious rites bring better conditions at best  
But all conditions have the same sorrows  
Sorrow and happiness chase each other  
Till one wears out and is consumed by death

Life-span is nothing in time's grand scale  
Time is opportunity for trials to come  
Mind alone is the seed of this delusion  
Sense of 'I' and 'mine'—is seed of the mind

Accidental coincidence is the sole designer  
In delusion we see connection with all that occurs  
A coconut falls when a crow alights on the tree  
The connection between these is imagination

Far better to spend time in seclusion  
Than to suffer the pains of delusion  
Intention or motivation gives rise to all  
I shall now dry up this motivation!

I have suffered enough—now I shall rest  
I have grieved enough—no more shall I  
I will slay the mind—thief of wisdom  
Instructed well—I will seek self-knowledge

### **Vasistha's Comments**

---

Thus sat the king in deep contemplation  
Not noticing attendants who came to awaken  
Fully engrossed and absorbed was the king  
Finding a way was his only urgency

### **King Janaka to Himself Again**

---

Short-lived are royal life and duties  
No use to me—what to do with them?  
I shall renounce all activities and pleasures  
And stay ever immersed in the self

Abandon craving for sense-pleasures, O mind!  
Be free of these repetitive cycles of bondage  
Enough of vain living in pleasure-seeking  
Seek ye now the bliss inherent in the self

What is worth gaining—nothing ever stays  
On what in this world can I place confidence

Whether active or idle—all things must go  
Be established in equanimity—else great is the loss

Not longing for what is mine or what is not mine  
Let what comes naturally come—what is the harm?  
Nothing to work for but inactivity does no good  
Let me be established in equanimity and act naturally

With the mind established in desirelessness  
The body can do what needs to be done  
Inactivity is not good for body or mind  
Let me do my duties without sense of 'I'

### **Vasistha Comments**

---

Reflecting thus, Janaka engaged in his duties  
Freed of desires, aversion and conditioning  
Doing the needful with full attention  
And retiring to seclusion for meditation

### **King Janaka to his Mind**

---

Worldly happiness is not happiness, O mind!  
Reach now the state of perfect equanimity  
There alone will peace and bliss be attained  
Experience of Truth alone will satisfy

Abandon all notions, hopes and expectations  
Seek that which you determine to be the truth  
To all and anything you are unrelated  
Any relationship felt is due to delusion

Abandon sorrow, resort to deep contemplation  
Nothing in this world can give you fullness  
Take refuge in courage and endurance  
Overcome your waywardness—you can do this

### 3. On the Inner Intelligence

#### Ignite the Wisdom's Inner Light

---

Janaka reached perfect understanding and peace  
He functioned as king but without delusion  
The light of self-knowledge shone bright in his heart  
He beheld all existence within cosmic-power

By his very own inquiry he attained supreme peace  
All can attain the blessed state as well  
Exert, inquire to the furthest limits  
Stop not till the final goal is reached

Guru, study and good works are helpful  
But cannot give you self-knowledge  
Self-inquiry and company of holy ones  
Are sure means to knowledge of self

Be alert—the inner light must be kept alive  
You have to be the light on your own path  
With this blazing inner light or wisdom  
All difficulties and trials can be overcome

Those devoid of wisdom's inner light  
Are overcome by smallest difficulties too  
They react to every little change helplessly  
Like straw that is knocked about by winds

So attain first wisdom's inner light  
Company of holy ones will surely aid  
Pursue at the same time self-inquiry  
Both these will rub and ignite the flame

Thinking and living in a worldly way  
Douses and soaks the logs that must ignite

Avoid the company of dull-witted ones  
Remove all traces of dullness from within

This inner light of wisdom is most precious  
Through it the world is seen as it really is  
Neither good fortune nor bad can touch one  
Who has the flame of wisdom's inner light within

The inner intelligence is one's best friend  
Best guide on the path is the inner light too  
Difficulties and even storms can be overcome  
By the blazing flame of wisdom's inner light

Defects, desires and evils cannot touch  
One who ignites and fans this inner light  
Things like good fortune and misfortune  
Do not exist for those with inner light

Darkness, gloom and veils are burnt  
By the flame of wisdom's inner light  
Purify your mind by cultivating wisdom  
By kindling the flame of wisdom's inner light

Inquire into the self just as Janaka did  
Gods, rituals and wealth are of no use  
Self-knowledge alone can dispel darkness  
World-appearance will then never delude

Firmly establish in supreme wisdom  
See the self by the self alone  
Ignite wisdom's bright inner flame  
And leave delusion's diversion behind

It seems Janaka's lofty attainment  
Of self knowledge was an act of grace

Self-effort of past lives is never seen  
Making it appear to have fallen in his lap

Abandon feelings of 'I am so-and-so'  
Inner intelligence cannot awaken with this  
As wisdom's inner wisdom is indivisible  
And feelings of *i-dent-ity* are a fragment

The mind's activity must come a standstill  
Anxiety and worry are darkness not light  
For this all cravings for acquisition must end  
Rejection of its opposite—must be set aside too

The twin urges of acquisition and rejection  
Are the storms that disturbs the mind  
How can peace and tranquility prevail?  
When storms are being stirred within

Again and again bring to the mind  
Brahman alone exists—oneness is Truth  
All expectations must be abandoned  
They are contrary to unity's truth

Fearlessness, steadfastness, equanimity  
Non-attachment, non-action and goodness  
Wisdom, courage, endurance, friendliness  
Contentment and gentleness are good friends

Restrain the mind's downward flow  
By the mind itself that knows better  
Having reached purity, abide in it  
Doing what needs to be done without volition

Equanimity is the root for the tree of life  
From it do ensure that all life's actions grow

Realize you are the knower of all—the self  
Unborn, non-different from pure existence

See objects of perception within the self  
And go beyond the defects of joy and grief  
Be firmly rooted in infinite consciousness  
Self-control is itself peace and tranquility

Be a yogi—free of all concepts  
Deal with reality—that which is  
Concepts are the veil that hide the truth  
Without them truth is ever revealed

Identifying with body and then with concepts  
You have forgotten your true nature over time  
Thinking and acting on notions and ignorance  
Ignite wisdom's lamp within and know the self

Without awakening the inner intelligence  
You live without knowing self or reality  
Though the mind appears intelligent  
It is but borrowed light that is very fragmented

This mind cannot point the way to peace  
It is ignorance—itsself not peaceful, you see  
A lost person cannot be helped on the way  
Awaken the indivisible wisdom that lies within

The movement of life-force is not the mind  
'Tis intelligence that has become identified  
With notions of 'this I am' and the like  
And is apparently caught up in its own web

In truth there is no mind nor intelligence  
Self alone exists at all times—it is the all

Most subtle is self so it is always hidden  
Within it reflections seem to be real

The individual is a thought in consciousness  
Consciousness does not change due to thoughts  
When consciousness is free of all identification  
Consciousness rests in itself—called liberation

## **On Life-Force**

---

Control of life-force restrains the mind  
As a shadow ceases without the object  
The movement of life force springs memory forth  
Which surge as thoughts—most eager to act

Life-force can be restrained in many ways  
By dispassion and the practice of pranayama  
By direct inquiry into its movement's cause  
Or by direct experience of the supreme truth

Though the mind appears quite intelligent  
It is ignorant—intelligence belongs to consciousness  
Though the mind appears to have movement  
It is inert—movement belongs to life-force

Presenting itself as intelligent and alive  
The mind's claim is a dance of ignorance  
It is all imagination only like a ghost story  
The infinite can never be affected by the finite

This truth has to be seen in direct experience  
Then false imaginations will come to an end  
When perfect understanding arises within  
All misunderstandings are set at naught

## On the Mind

---

The mind has no existence—it is not real  
Yet, all the havoc is caused by it  
The mind itself has no body  
Yet, it consumes so many bodies

Living beings strengthen this non-entity  
Defending it and destroying others by it  
If one is unable to conquer the mind  
He is unworthy of hearing this teaching

There is no point in instructing one  
Who continues to be befuddled by the mind  
Unable or unwilling to persevere  
Conquest of mind with sincerity

Just as millions of insects come and go  
In a twinkling of a moment in time  
Dull witted fools come and go too  
On life's stage without self-knowledge

The foolish cannot be instructed  
They've chosen to be tethered to the mind  
Unwilling to loosen ignorance's ropes  
Living miserably though they think they're fine

The wise endeavor to remove sorrow  
Of those who have conquered lower instincts  
Well underway to mind's conquest  
Ripe to undertake self-inquiry

When objectivity arises in consciousness  
Conditioning and bondage inevitably result  
Abandon all objectivity ruthlessly  
Being mindless is indeed liberation

Between the self as the seer  
And the world as the seen  
You are the seeing—pure sight  
Remain in this realization firmly

When the inner intelligence identifies  
With anything other than the self  
That is indeed the root of all sorrow  
Face the inner light and experience bliss

Craving for objects or experience has to cease  
For divine qualities and virtues to enter the heart  
When craving of any sort flows within  
It flows downstream always to lower depths

Abandon craving, notions and concepts  
The mind cannot exist without these  
The ego-sense is the source of all sin  
Cut at the very root and be ever free

### **Abandoning Notions, Not Life**

---

There are two types of abandonment  
First is based on perception of truth  
Second is based on contemplation  
Listen attentively to more on these

When there is direct experience of non-duality  
One abandons ego-sense quite naturally  
Notions of 'I' and 'mine' dissolve instantly  
This is the first type of abandonment

When one feels he somehow belongs  
To people, groups of any sort or objects  
Intense investigation by a tranquil mind  
Will lead to the second type of abandonment

Some attain by direct self-inquiry  
As it requires a mind free of impurity  
One has to rise above body-consciousness  
Becoming liberated—one with Brahman

Janaka and others followed the second path  
Contemplating to uproot seeds of duality  
But intense and relentless has to be effort  
Everything must pass scrutiny's flame

## **A Sage**

---

He is a sage who is never swayed  
By all that is desirable or undesirable  
Living and functioning untouched inwardly  
Seeming to function in the world normally

Natural desires may arise in the sage  
But these are free of any and all craving  
Hence he is never bound—remaining free  
Craving for contact of any sort is bondage

Craving's impurity never enters the sage  
He is ever still like the deep ocean  
Knowing the self is beyond any change  
Established in this truth by direct experience

## **Feelings that Arise in the Heart**

---

First: I am this body, born of my parents  
Second: Minute and subtle am I—different from body  
Third: Eternal principle am I in all diversity  
Fourth: All that I see including myself is illusory

The first of these four leads to bondage  
The other three—lead to freedom

Best of all is when the feeling arises  
'I am the self of all'—there is naught else

Not emotional or intellectual are these feelings  
But something unmistakable in the heart  
These feelings must respond to life—not the mind  
With its shrewd calculations to suit its convenience

Resort to the understanding of non-duality  
Plant this seed deep within your heart  
Let all actions sprout from this seed  
Water it well with unremitting vigilance

You will realize consciousness as the sole reality  
And be a liberated sage—while still living  
Leave behind those that choose to be bound  
Reaping pain and sorrow is their own choice

#### **4. The Story of Punya and Pavana**

##### **Background**

---

Once lived a holy man with his family  
Wife and two very dutiful sons  
Punya, the first son reached enlightenment  
Pavana the second only had semi-wisdom

In time the old man and his wife died  
The unenlightened son was sunk in grief  
While the enlightened remained unmoved  
Performing last rites without bereavement

##### **Punya's Advice to his Brother**

---

Why do you bring sorrow upon yourself  
Our parents have attained liberation

'Tis the high exalted state—difficult to attain  
This is natural to holy ones like them

Your suffering is self-inflicted  
Caused by notions of father and mother  
You grieve for those who are liberated  
Why do you suffer unnecessarily?

Inquire into the nature of self  
See it as different from the body  
There is nothing called 'you' or 'I'  
These are but unexamined notions

Even if the notion of 'I' seems real  
You have had many relatives in the past  
You have had countless births before  
You do not grieve for earlier ones

I too have had many embodiments  
Being enlightened, I see them all clearly  
I too have had countless relatives  
Considering this—I do not grieve

Abandon all arising notions of 'I'  
Realize you are the self—directly  
You've no unhappiness, father or mother  
You are the self and naught else

Sages know well this middle path  
They've firmly established themselves in it  
They're always at peace within and without  
Established always in witness-consciousness

## Vasistha's Insight

---

Thus instructed by his brother Punya  
Pavana was awakened—enlightened  
Both lived as enlightened beings  
Endowed with wisdom of direct realization

Craving is the root of all sorrow  
Renounce all cravings completely  
Never sow these seeds of sorrow  
Lead a pure life—free of all ills

Utter dispassion is the only way  
For the mind to attain fulfillment  
Never by appeasing its desires and hopes  
Which are fuel for its wild raging fires

Now listen attentively to this story  
About bringing about complete change  
Complete transmutation of the mind  
Just as King Bali of yore did

## 5. The Story of King Bali

### Background

---

Bali was a powerful demon king  
He ruled for a long time unchallenged  
Dispassion arose in him in due time  
He began to inquire within as such

### King Bali's Inquiry

---

How long will I continue to rule this way  
What shall I gain in continuing to rule  
Everything is subject to destruction after all  
How can all this give me real happiness?

Again and again the same pleasures  
They seem disgusting after a while  
The same shameless acts are repeated  
How is it that I am not ashamed of this?

Doing the same thing day-in and day-out  
How can one ever reach the exalted state  
Cessation of the cycle of birth and death  
What is the use in revolving like this?

I remember well now my father's advice  
When I asked him about ending samsara  
The tyranny caused by the deluded mind  
And the means for gaining total satisfaction

### **Bali's Father's Advice in a Story**

---

There's a vast realm of endless expanse  
In it are no lakes, oceans or mountains  
No forests, sky, winds or moon  
No high, no low, not even you or I

Only One is there—the supreme Light  
Omnipotent, omnipresent—he is the all  
Remaining silent as if inactive is he  
Prompted by him, his minister does all

This minister is incapable of enjoying anything  
Ignorant—he knows nothing at all  
He does everything for his master's sake  
The king remains alone established in peace

All the gods and demons are no match  
They can never challenge this minister  
Love and anger too derive power from him  
His wish is the reason for all conflicts here

The king alone can defeat this minister  
Quite easily whenever he wishes to  
All creation is this ministers handiwork  
You are a true hero if you can conquer him

When the minister arises—worlds arise  
When he retires—worlds subside as well  
You must be free of all delusion and ignorance  
Have an utterly one-pointed mind—to conquer him

If he is not conquered—nothing can be attained  
If he is conquered—everything is had at once  
Hence strive with all your might in every way  
Overcome any obstacle and conquer him

Most invincible is he—but, hear, there's a means  
He can be overcome by intelligent action  
The absence of which is indeed travesty  
As he burns everything if one is not vigilant

One has to approach him most intelligently  
And subdue him as one plays with a child  
When the king is seen—the minister is controlled  
When the minister is controlled—the king is seen

Great havoc he creates if the king is not seen  
Till you conquer the minister—the king is unseen  
It requires intense effort—steady intelligent practice  
To subdue the minister and to behold the king

Intense effort and steady intelligent practice  
Both are needed to go beyond all sorrow  
To the region inhabited by holy ones  
Those who are forever established in peace

This region is the state of liberation  
Sorrow and grief never enter here  
The supreme king is the absolute Self  
The minister to conquer is the mind

All that you see is fashioned by the mind  
Mind conquered—everything is conquered  
Almost invincible is this powerful mind  
But it can be overcome by intelligent practice

Now listen to the most intelligent means  
Of conquering this mind of great power  
Free yourself of hope, desires and expectations  
In regards to all and everything at all times

Very easy yet most difficult is conquest  
Difficult for those who are not serious  
But easy for the one who is most earnest  
Ready and eager to renounce *all* impediments

Until you turn away from every sense pleasure  
You will continue to roam in this world in grief  
Total dispassion takes persistent practice  
It can be attained by relentless right exertion

No other means exists to conquer the mind  
Talks about fate and destiny are mere talk  
What brings equanimity is also called grace  
Right exertion is the way to equanimity

What the mind conceives of through right exertion  
Mind conceives, creates and brings to fruition  
Either counter to or with the natural order  
You can call it the prompter of natural order

Though certain actions appear to be selfish  
Each act in accordance with their own nature  
But as long as there is mind—God is not known  
When the mind ceases—let be whatever is!

Self-knowledge alone can yield the fruit  
Of cessation of all cravings permanently  
Dispassion is natural when the self is seen  
Intelligent self-inquiry ends all craving

When the intelligence is still unawakened  
Spend half your time in your normal duties  
Quarter in self-study through scriptures  
Quarter in service of the teacher

When the intelligence is partially awakened  
Spend half your time in service of the teacher  
Quarter in self-study through scriptures  
Quarter in tending to normal duties

When the intelligence is fully awakened  
Spend half your time in service of the teacher  
The other half in self-study through scriptures  
All with dispassion as your constant companion

Only when one is filled with natural goodness  
Is one qualified to listen to the highest wisdom  
Hence educate, purify and nourish the mind  
Transforming it by your sincere study

The transformed mind will see clearly  
Hence strive to see the self sincerely  
Self-realization and cessation of craving  
Go hand in hand simultaneously

True dispassion does not come  
By austerities, charity or pilgrimage  
Right self-exertion is the only way  
Hence exert rightly to rid all craving

When dispassion matures within one  
The spirit of inquiry arises as well  
Dispassion and the spirit of inquiry  
Are interdependent—best friends to have

Abandon dependency on external factors  
Grind your teeth, gird up your loins  
Set your whole being to exert relentlessly  
Inquiring and studying till you reach the Truth

Support yourself financially by your work  
Work to support your basic needs  
Utilize wealth to have the company  
Of the good and holy with noble qualities

Company of the holy generates dispassion  
Their company helps the spirit of self-inquiry  
Company of the worldly increases passion  
They help destroy all higher aspirations

When you turn away resolutely  
From the pursuit of all pleasures  
You can then attain to the highest state  
Through the means of self-inquiry

When the self has been thoroughly purified  
It is then that you have the foundation  
To begin ongoing relentless self-inquiry  
And be established in the supreme peace

The purified self is your only best friend  
It will keep you from falling into delusion again  
It will keep you from sorrow and suffering  
It will give you a life of joy and auspiciousness

Acquire a little wealth while you are young  
Utilize this wealth to have holy company  
Adore and serve the holy ones sincerely  
Tremendous will be your gain in their company

### **Bali Continues to Recollect**

---

Luckily I remember my father's teachings  
Now that craving for pleasure has ceased in me  
I shall renounce all—withdraw from pleasures' pursuits  
And stay happily established in the self

This universe is a creation of the mind  
Nothing is lost by abandoning it  
Bali thus sat and remembered his teacher  
Sukra materialized before him instantly

### **Bali Asks his Teacher Sukra**

---

No desire for pleasure have I  
I wish to learn the truth is all  
Who am I and who are you  
What is this world?—kindly instruct me

### **Sukra's Reply**

---

Consciousness alone exists—it is all  
You, I, the world—all of this  
If you are humble and sincere—see directly  
There is no need for any further explanation

## **Bali Reflects Again**

---

My teacher's instructions were most correct  
All this is indeed consciousness—naught else  
If consciousness did not recognize the mountain  
Would this exist as a mountain at all?

Contact is possible due to consciousness  
Bodies and objects always stay apart  
Who is my friend and who is my enemy  
Since consciousness alone exists as all

Hate and attachment are modifications  
Of consciousness only—apparently modified  
Consciousness being infinite in nature  
How can perversions arise in it?

Consciousness is just a word—it has no name  
I am that pure infinite consciousness  
All craving has ceased in me completely  
I shall continue till I reach absolute quiescence

## **Bali Enters Deep Meditation**

---

Thus contemplating he uttered 'Om'  
And became quiet and contemplated  
Its meaning and real significance  
And entered into the supreme state

All divisions melted in king Bali  
Thinker, thought and thinking too  
Meditator, meditation and the object  
He existed in stillness for a very long time

All his subjects were greatly perturbed  
As their king sat showing no let up

They finally cried out to his teacher  
Who once again appeared instantly

Sukra told them about Bali's condition  
He had entered the perfect state  
He asked to let him remain undisturbed  
He would emerge from meditation on his own

### **Bali Emerges from Meditation**

---

It was indeed a most wondrous state  
Though it seems to be just one moment  
I am pure consciousness without perversion  
What to acquire, what to abandon?

I long for liberation but who has bound me  
What shall I gain by continuing meditation  
Salutations to myself—the infinite being  
I will do what is needed as king

There is absolutely nothing to be done  
By that entity which is known as 'me'  
Let me do what seems natural to me now  
And rule this kingdom spontaneously

### **Vasistha's Insight**

---

Bali ruled the kingdom without premeditation  
Worshipping gods and the holy ones  
Treating his relatives with deference  
Rewarding servants and giving in charity

Gain the wisdom that king Bali had  
You are the light of consciousness  
In you are all the worlds rooted  
Who is your friend and who is enemy?

Know this by your direct realization  
All worlds are strung in you as a rosary  
Unborn art thou, deathless thou art  
The self is real—all else is imagination

Inquire into the nature of craving  
The root virus of all illnesses  
See directly that it is wrong notion  
Give up all notions and be free

In whatever the mind tends to sink  
Retrieve and reorientate it to truth  
This will tame the wild elephant mind  
Now listen to another illustration

## 6. The Story of Prahlada

### Background

---

Though Prahalada was a demon's son  
His love for God was an inborn trait  
In spite of his surroundings and conditions  
The flames of his devotion blazed ever high

His wicked father was slain by the Lord  
Due to his reign of evil and tyranny  
Rulership was bestowed on Prahlada  
Who discharged his duties as worship

Even the gods were perplexed at this  
Demons seemed to be transfigured to good  
Jealously they inquired of the Lord  
How was such a phenomena possible

The Lord told them about Prahalada  
Lineage and appearances mean nothing

Each earns every cent of his inner growth  
Prahlada was at the doorway of liberation

### **Prahlada's Prayer to the Lord**

---

I take refuge in the supreme Lord  
Supreme light in whom creation abides  
Refuge of those who do sincerely seek  
Radiant, unborn—the only security there is

### **Lord's Blessings**

---

With a spirit of inquiry may you be endowed  
Till the absolute is realized directly  
May all your delusions end once and for all  
May you attain the highest blessedness

### **Prahlada Contemplates**

---

The Lord protects and upholds every thing  
He alone is the refuge of one and all  
I should take complete refuge in Him  
I will live as if filled by His presence

To worship the Lord, one must verily be Him  
I must realize that I am none other than Him  
Thus did Prahlad contemplate deeply within  
Till he proclaimed, "I am Him, salutations to Him"

### **Vasistha's Insight**

---

Prahlada transfigured himself into the Lord  
Worshipping the Lord mentally within himself  
Once he attained direct self-realization  
He saw the whole world pervaded by the Lord

The gods were puzzled by his attainment  
A demon member had attained enlightenment  
Becoming the foremost devotee as well  
They took this difficulty to the Lord

The Lord explained it was Prahlada's last birth  
By his own efforts he burnt his ignorance  
Purifying himself in every way  
His change would be for the good of all

Prahlad continued his prayer and meditation  
Taking complete refuge in the supreme Lord  
Praising the Lord within himself gloriously  
Intense was his prayer and meditation

The Lord appeared before Prahlada again  
Granting him any boon of his choice  
Prahlada asked the Lord to bestow on him  
That which the Lord considered limitless

The Lord bestowed on Prahlada  
The unceasing spirit of inquiry  
Which would continue till final liberation  
Till all limitations and bondage were exceeded

### **Prahlada's Realization**

---

I shall engage myself in self-inquiry  
I am not things I see or this body  
Nor am I the air that is breathed  
Nor the senses or the sense-principles

I now recollect that I am the self  
Omnipresent—without concepts  
I am that peace beyond all thought  
Everything shines because of me

I salute the self—my own light  
In it do all things and all worlds exist  
Infinite objects appear in me only  
Rising and falling like water drops

Pure experiencing—is the one self  
Therefore I am the experiencer in all  
I am the wise, the child and the foolish  
I pervade this entire creation

This world exists in me—the self of all  
I exist in all as pure existence  
Past, present and future exist in me  
Without division or any distinction

How has this infinity limited itself  
How has the ego-sense arisen at all  
What has given rise to this delusion  
What is it that says, 'This I am'?

What is the body and bodilessness  
What is it that seems to live and to die  
Why do people not experience the truth  
That nothing whatever is outside pure consciousness?

Everything everywhere is pure consciousness alone  
The light of the sun, moon and all stars  
All gods, the elements and the vast space  
All this is consciousness—my own self

I see now that transformation never was  
Realizing this—I know I was never bound  
Movement of thought was the only wickedness  
Thought's abandonment is the lifting of the veil

Salutations to the Lord—myself, self of all  
Pure, undivided infinite consciousness  
This truth has been reached directly  
All things are seen as my own self

Death of the body does not affect self  
Neither does happiness or unhappiness  
These are but notions which have ceased  
No longer am I enslaved by ignorance

The Lord who is the self of all has been seen  
By total dedication and pure devotion  
By unceasing prayer and meditation  
By simple and disciplined living

The forest of ignorance has deadly inhabitants  
Most deadly of all is the ego-sense  
By grace of God and my own self-effort  
The inner intelligence is fully awakened

Where now is there room for delusion  
Heaven and hell have now fallen away  
When the intelligence is freed of ego-sense  
It shines with the light of self-knowledge

O self, free of ignorance—salutations to you  
The raging senses and mind find quiet in you  
O dispeller of darkness and supreme love  
Sustainer of all creation—salutations to you

As tempered steel cuts beams of steel  
I have subdued the mind with the tempered mind  
The body functions naturally now—without ego  
All past tendencies have been destroyed completely

For such a long time I was so caught  
In the powerful trap of the ego-sense  
I now see that bondage was only delusion  
The mind has reached utter quiescence

Beyond all modes of consciousness is the self  
Real parent, only friend and trusted guide  
Realizing the self is the only gain  
It collapses the wall of endless suffering

Salutations to the self—sole experiencer  
Hereafter you will not be deluded  
Sense pleasures are unworthy of attention  
Now that you have been realized—salutations

The former self has found its true place  
Dwelling within in perfect equilibrium  
I realize now it was mind's agitation  
That stirred the senses and caused expansion

It was desire that empowered the mind  
Which created division within itself  
Giving the illusion of people and things  
A great delusion in the divisionless

Salutations to you, O supreme Self  
You yourself appear as this creation  
As cosmic space and infinite beings  
You yourself are what we called objects

Abandon vanity, anger and impurity  
These do not overpower great souls  
Inquire without remission 'Who am I?'  
Inquire persistently how this has come about

Only self-inquiry is the surest way out  
Of this trap of bondage and suffering  
Purify the mind first to make it fit  
Know by direct experience you are the self

O self, you are the string that strings all  
All worlds are in you in a potential state  
All worlds are made manifest by you  
Nothing has existence without you

In a flash do things come and go  
All opposites owe their existence to you  
They are born in you, they lose their identity  
When their dependence on you is realized

Hail to you, O self of one and all  
Manifested as this limitless universe  
Beyond the reach of all scriptures  
Self-knowledge have I reached—hail to Thee

### **Vasistha's Insight**

---

Thus contemplating his realization  
Pahlada again entered deep meditation  
The Lord saw that he still had work to do  
And roused him from his deep meditation

He explained that embodied he would remain  
Till the world-cycle had completed  
So best to do his duty naturally  
As he was liberated and without delusion

When one is freed of likes and dislikes  
One reaches the state called 'no-mind'  
He experiences great joy while living  
This he said was Pahlada's attainment

Since Prahlada had attained enlightenment  
Body and embodiment meant nothing  
There was nothing to gain or abandon  
Best to be engaged in useful activity

The enlightened really do nothing at all  
As doership is completely absent in them  
Firmly grounded in peace—they're liberated  
Nothing to acquire or renounce for them

Prahlada confessed he was just fatigued  
And took a rest for a few moments  
But he would happily discharge his duties  
As worship of the divine omnipresence

Prahlada was crowned king by the Lord  
He ruled wisely and justly for a very long time  
Peace and prosperity he brought to all  
'Tis extraordinary to have an enlightened king

O Rama, you too should reach the vision  
Prahlada attained by ceaseless inquiry  
Reach the supreme state of enlightenment  
Be liberated while living right here and now

Self-inquiry is indeed the foremost means  
To attain self-knowledge and be free  
If the guru can uplift one without self-effort  
Why does he not uplift a bull or camel?

Hence, adore the self by the self  
Worship the self by the self  
Behold the self by the self  
Be established in the self by the self

## 7. The Story of Gadhi

### First Austerity

---

Gadhi was a wise and learned person  
He lived a simple and righteous life

Once he went to the forest for austerity  
In order to have the vision of the Lord

After eight long months of austerity  
Pleased with his one-pointed dedication  
The Lord graced him with an appearance  
Granting Gadhi a boon of his choice

Gadhi wanted to understand by experience  
Maya—the illusory power of the Lord  
And then how he could overcome it  
And traverse the waters of samsara

The Lord granted the boon and vanished  
Gadhi continued his simple life of prayer  
One day while praying at water's edge  
He felt he had died and was lifeless

### Gadhi's Experience

---

He saw his relatives standing around  
Weeping as he lay silent and still  
As if in a deep long meditation  
And pondered what relationships were

He experienced being carried away  
And being cremated on the funeral pyre  
Soon born again to a tribal woman  
All this while praying at the water's edge

There in his tribal village home  
He grew up with the name Katanja  
Times became very difficult; he grew older  
And decided to find opportunities elsewhere

While passing through a town one day  
He joined a large crowd in the town square  
The ruling king had died without an heir  
The royal elephant would pick the new ruler

Gadhi joined the crowd to witness this event  
The elephant garlanded him—the choice was made  
All hailed the newly selected king  
He was named Gavala—king of Kira

Ruling came to him quite naturally  
He was well-respected by one and all  
One day he wandered out of the palace  
Unadorned, without regalia and alone

Walking the streets he heard a song  
A familiar tune being sung by a few villagers  
He joined them silently and started singing  
As somehow he knew the tune instinctively

One of the villagers recognized him  
As Katanja of the old tribal village  
King Gavala ignored this completely  
But some passersby picked up on this

The king's identity spread immediately  
A low-caste tribal was king of Kira  
Instantly he was shunned and despised  
The subjects and ministers held council

They felt that king Gavala had betrayed them  
Though he had done no such thing  
He was selected king by a local custom  
He ruled wisely and was loved by all

Anyway, they felt they were now impure  
And burning themselves was the only way  
They made a large fire and entered  
King Gavala decided to end his life too

### **Back to the Water's Edge**

---

The raging fire awakened him instantly  
He found himself praying at water's edge  
As Gadhi—a most strange experience  
While standing and praying at the water's edge

He wondered who he was in truth  
How such a real experience could be had  
While standing at the water's edge  
But dismissed it as an illusion

### **The Visiting Guest**

---

One day a guest came by to visit  
Gadhi welcomed him as he looked tired  
He looked thin and quite hungry too  
Gadhi offered him food and inquired  
"How is it you look so worn out?"  
The guest narrated his tale of woe  
He had passed through Kira kingdom  
Where a low-caste tribal ruled somehow  
He recounted very clearly vivid details  
So astonished was Gadhi to hear this

Anyway, he offered the guest hospitality  
And decided to try and reconcile this

### **Gadhi's Verification**

---

Finding out by his own inquiry  
That Kira kingdom did exist nearby  
He travelled to the place he dismissed  
As an earlier illusion at the water's edge

He finally reached the place called Kira  
And inquired of the citizens there  
About the place and its background  
What they said confirmed his earlier experience

### **Second Austerity**

---

To a mountain cave nearby he went  
There he performed intense austerity  
The Lord appeared before him again  
And offered him a boon of his choice

Gadhi respectfully sought understanding  
How the experience at water's edge came to be  
Deemed by him to be an hallucination  
Which was also seen in the wakeful state

### **The Lord's Reply**

---

That which you see now is an illusion  
'Tis the self but perceived differently by the mind  
It appears in the mind unpurified  
In one who has not realized the truth

'Tis the mind alone that is experienced  
As dreams, illusions, illness and flowers

Countless thought forms does mind contain  
Including the tribesman and visiting guest

Your being born in the tribal village  
And going to the Kira kingdom too  
All are forms of illusion and hallucination  
All incidents reflected within your mind

Though life's incidents that you encounter  
Seem related to each other and yourself  
They are purely accidental coincidence  
Like a coconut falling when a bird sits on a tree

Sometimes the very same illusion  
Is experienced by many at the same time  
Like many drunks feeling the revolving world  
Like many children playing the same game

What you saw in the towns was possibly true  
Katanja was indeed born some time ago  
He truly became king of Kira  
All this was reflected in your consciousness

The mind sometimes forgets what was seen  
Sometimes it remembers what was not  
Experiencing hallucinations in the waking state  
Kira's life is reflected in your present consciousness

Because you are not fully enlightened  
Your mind clings to objective perception  
Plunge yourself into intense meditation  
Right now for ten years and realize truth

## Vasistha's Insight

---

Maya's cosmic illusion creates great delusion  
Time's not a factor in resulting hallucinations  
Lifetimes can be experienced in moments  
Leading the unwary mind into much turmoil

Mind is the hub around which revolves  
The delusion creating the vicious cycle  
Restrain the hub by intense self-effort  
With keen intelligence make it stand still

When the hub is stopped—the wheel is stopped  
When the mind is still—illusion ceases  
One who knows and is able to practice this  
Sees the truth directly and all sorrow ceases

Mastery of mind is the only way  
To cure the disease of world-illusion  
Hence, abandon other futile activities  
And control the mind for your highest good

This world-illusion abides in the mind  
It is like an imaginary pot that divides  
Though there is no division at all  
Between outer and inner space

This pot of the mind must be broken  
For the space to be felt as one  
As the imaginary division vanishes  
So does the imaginary world-concept

Live in the present but without struggle  
Externalizing consciousness momentarily  
Till the mind stops linking to past and future  
And becomes what is called 'no-mind'

Externalized consciousness is objective  
Internalized consciousness is subjective  
Pure consciousness is beyond both these  
All abide in it—it abides in itself

This mind dwells from moment to moment  
Doing what needs to be done and dropping it  
It will not hold water like dark clouds  
The 'no-mind' is light, bright and full of purity

When inner consciousness limits itself  
Agitation and much turmoil do result  
Expanding viciously within limitation  
Struggling to feel limitless while limited

When consciousness ceases to be finite  
And gives up its cloak of apparent limitation  
This cyclic world-illusion will be destroyed  
As consciousness realizes its perfection

Consciousness free of all limitation  
Is known as the inner intelligence  
Essential nature of no-mind it is  
Untainted by concepts and percepts

That is reality—the supreme self  
That is omniscience—the supreme truth  
Infinite vision—it is free of all sorrow  
Only when the wicked mind ceases to be

Those who have awakened by self-effort  
Have studied the scriptures and exerted  
They've resorted to holy company too  
To discover the truth for their own selves

Their lives have been a journey in truth  
Having lived with unceasing vigilance  
Each moment, each step, a practice of truth  
Their consciousness has reached the pure state

Discover the state of non-objectiveness  
What others have done—you can do too  
Hence, gird up your loins and be diligent  
Benefit from study and holy company

The self alone is the sole aid on the path  
There's no other light but your own aspiration  
'Tis one's own self that seeks the beyond  
Seeks the way out of sorrow and freedom

You have to raise the self by the self  
Live expertly—journeying to freedom  
Ruthlessly abandon notions of 'I' and 'mine'  
Be established in undivided consciousness

Appearances will still be while the body lasts  
But you will not be fooled by any illusion  
Being established in equanimous consciousness  
You will abide in the self through all the states

Abandon this defective sense-perception  
Most impure—full of hopes and desires  
Be established in self-knowledge  
You must know this by direct experience

All notions and desires must be abandoned  
To know that you are pure consciousness  
The subject-object drama will continue  
Without being the least bit disturbed by it

Attain equilibrium—know you are the all  
Live naturally—doing what needs to be done  
Free of duality and non-duality as well  
Unshakeable as cosmic consciousness

Cut off all fetters of desire and hope  
Solely with the inner undivided intelligence  
Endowed with patience and perseverance  
Go beyond unrighteousness and righteousness too

When you are firmly rooted in self-knowledge  
The worst attacks of delusion are powerless  
Only when self-knowledge is overpowered  
Does delusion dance to ignorance's tune

Ignorance gave rise to world-appearance  
All suffering will end when ignorance ends  
The darkness of ignorance cannot exist  
When wisdom's fire blazes ever brightly

Eagerly seek company of the wise  
Those who have attained self-knowledge  
Avoid deluded ones who continue to live  
Like pack animals though in human garb

The company of sages is a priceless treasure  
They are the sun that illumines the path  
They've been a light unto their own selves  
They've had no external help at all

Self-knowledge is the only light there is  
Sages who've attained shine among all  
Brighter are they than the sun, moon and stars  
They are beyond the reach of delusion

What good is your life without self-knowledge  
All that you do will soon be wiped out  
All that you own—others will make claim to  
Crying you came and crying you will leave

The ghost of illusion affects the deluded  
Hence exert—awaken to self-knowledge  
The deluded walk around like animated corpses  
You are intelligent—lay claim to your heritage

Hence, abandon craving for all pleasures  
Those of the past and of the future too  
Cravings and desires contaminate the mind  
Strengthen the mind by abandoning them

Rise above all these false relationships  
They are all rooted in 'I am this body'  
Then come relatives: wife, son and family  
These are the ways the mind becomes gross

The gross mind is itself ignorance  
Its efforts, ambitions and attachments  
Are the results of its ignorant nature  
Experienced as sorrow and delusion

Like a tree this mind is rooted in the body-field  
Worries its blossoms, old age and disease its fruits  
Desires its flowers, hopes and longings its leaves  
Cut down this tree with the sharp axe of inquiry

Like an elephant which roams the body-forest  
Its vision clouded by delusion, most restless  
Most violent and burning with fiery lust  
Tear this elephant with your sharp intelligence

Like a crow dwelling in the body-nest  
It revels in filth, consuming any flesh found  
Ever dark and stupid, most conceited it is  
Drive this burden far away from yourself

Like a ghost severed by the goblin of craving  
It rests in the forest of ignorance in delusion  
With the help of wisdom and dispassion  
Put this ghost to rest by arduous self-effort

Like the most venomous serpent of all  
It has killed many, hurt countless people  
With the help of instruction and contemplation  
Destroy this vicious serpent like an eagle

Like a monkey, it roams from place to place  
Seeking the fruits of reward and pleasure  
Bound to the world-cycle, it dances for attention  
Restrain this from all sides and attain perfection

Like a dark cloud of ignorance in the bright sky  
It obscures the ever-present light of the sun  
Dispel this darkness by repeated renunciation  
Of its waters—all concepts and precepts

As a missile is destroyed by a deadlier one  
Tranquilize this mind with the mind itself  
Forever abandon mental agitation—be calm  
Free of any disturbance it can possibly cause

Take not a stand on concepts and precepts  
They're put together and strengthened by time  
Like a creeper these vines will strangle you soon  
Fell them ruthlessly by wisdom's sharp axe

## 8. The Story of Uddalaka

### The Dawn of Wisdom

---

On a peak of a mountain lived sage Uddalaka  
From his very youth he aspired to attain  
Supreme wisdom by his own effort  
But lacked understanding and was restless

He had a pure heart—a great asset  
Which can level the field over time  
So he engaged himself in austerities  
Study and meditation till wisdom arose

Wisdom is not knowledge about things  
It is what is gained by direct insight  
When one gains this—one does not delay  
To act immediately and totally in its direction

If there is any delay or hesitation in action  
Know that the understanding is theoretical  
Intellectual, insincere—hence without energy  
It cannot help you till real insight is gained

Introspection is not thinking about something  
Or trying to figure it out with the ignorant mind  
It is direct observation devoid of any thought  
Where the flame of attention burns untruth

Real introspection must give the energy  
As its clarity hath shone light on the path  
Just as when real and present danger is seen  
There is immediate energy right then and there

There is no need to muster sufficient resolve  
Or to gather strength or support from others

Light is clarity, energy and tremendous power  
If you have really seen—there is no struggle

### **Uddalaka's Introspection**

---

In introspection everything is examined afresh  
Uddalaka immediately began his introspection  
"What is this great stage called liberation  
When shall I rest permanently in that state

When will I be free of desires' agitations  
When will I be of self-centered thoughts  
When will I be of possessive notions  
When will I see the truth of relationships

Relationships may be or may not be  
Why should I feel bound by any of them  
They are habits of the mind's thinking  
When will wisdom dawn on darkness within

When will the subject-object tangle resolve  
When will I be able to see time as a concept  
When will my mind be tranquil as a rock  
In a state with no movement of thought"

### **Resolving the External**

---

Thus Uddalaka resumed deep meditation  
But his mind continued to be agitated  
The thoughts of objects and those of people  
Troubled him often—sometimes a little less

Greatly disturbed by his changing moods  
He roamed the forest till he found a spot  
A cave that looked nearly unvisited  
In which he entered with unyielding resolve

"O mind, what has this world-appearance  
To do with you in any way at all  
The wise refrain from contact with pleasure  
Knowing it turns into pain soon enough

Why abandon peace already within  
And search in vain for peace outside  
Knowing things and relationships change  
And are invitations to delusion and suffering

The best of things, places and people  
Cannot quench the thirst for peace  
As searching is itself exhaustive fatigue  
Best to settle into inner quiescence

Abandon all hopes and desires completely  
Objects and beings are not for happiness  
Why run outside pulled by five senses  
Even one can disrupt inner peace

When you become a victim of the five senses  
You submit to being pulled in five directions  
How then can you ever know true happiness  
When you yourself constantly generate unrest

Like a silkworm trapped in its own cocoon  
You're trapped in a web of your concepts  
If you can get rid of all notions and concepts  
You will discover true peace already abides

If you persist in clinging to what is not good  
You will surely perish in your own sorrow  
Why do I even instruct you thus, O mind  
My investigation shows you do not exist

O mind, you are a product of ignorance  
When ignorance ceases—you cease as well  
You are in the process of being worn out  
Why should I waste time instructing you

O mind, I am egoless pure consciousness  
You're ego's cause—I've nothing to do with you  
'Tis foolish to instruct one disintegrating  
You're already falling apart—I abandon you

### **Uddalaka's Self-Inquiry Begins**

---

The infinite self cannot be squeezed into the mind  
Any more than can an elephant into a wood-apple  
Consciousness burdened with concepts and precepts  
Takes on limitation and is known as the mind

I've carefully examined the entire body  
Nothing and no part says 'This I am'  
All-pervading unconditioned consciousness  
Completely of selfhood—is the real 'I'

Indivisible, nameless and changeless  
Beyond unity, diversity and all measure  
Hence, I abandon you, O mind  
You are the source of endless sorrow

This body consists of flesh, blood and bones  
There is nothing in this that says 'This I am'  
Motion is energy inherent in consciousness  
The body undergoes change but says not 'This I am'

I've examined this body carefully  
Nothing at all says 'This I am'  
I've examined you too, O mind  
I am in none of you nor am I you

For long have I been ignorance's victim  
Lucky now I've discovered the thief  
That robbed me of self-knowledge  
Never again will I ignorance's victim be

Just as clouds sitting above a hill  
Do not belong to the hill at all  
Though I seem to be linked to sorrow  
I am completely independent of it as well

Ignorance arose in self-knowledge's absence  
But free am I of this dreadful ego-sense  
Let the body and senses live or perish  
What have I to do with them at all

The senses and objects interact naturally  
For their own sake, not for me at all  
It was a delusion to think 'I see' and such  
The eyes see based on prior conditioning

Hence if actions were performed spontaneously  
Without interference of mental conditioning  
Free of memory, hopes and expectations  
I would experience freedom while still acting

This is indeed what is called pure action  
Doing what needs to be done—letting go  
Conditioning strengthens on being revived  
It can be dispelled by not reviving it at all

Hence, abandon perception of diversity, O mind  
Realize the unreality of your own existence  
Infinite consciousness is the only existence  
Realize this and be liberated as well

Consciousness cannot be conditioned really  
It is unlimited—beyond conditioning's influence  
Conditioning reflecting within consciousness  
Gives rise to the illusion of self-limitation

When the illusion of self-limitation is repeated  
It only seems to acquire false validity  
But I know now by my own experience  
I am consciousness—untouched by any of these

Let the body live—doing what needs to be done  
Being consciousness, I remain unaffected by it  
Infinite, all-pervading, undecaying and unborn  
Deathless and cannot be possessed at all

I've nothing to gain by living separately  
Since I've discovered my all-pervasiveness  
When notions of ego-sense are abandoned  
The self is free—beyond being and non-being

Like a mirage is the ego-sense an illusion  
So are all objects in this world-appearance  
The body is but an aggregate of components  
The mind vanishes on being inquired into

Concepts and notions are the limitations  
We bind our own selves with ignorance's chain  
Defending the ego that itself becomes the links  
And cry for relief—prisoners of our own making

The senses exist to satisfy themselves  
All objects in the world are their food  
Nature and its qualities interacting  
Where is the ego in any of these

The self is consciousness—everywhere  
At all times and in all bodies as well  
There is nothing called 'I' in the changing  
How can relationships have substance at all

When this is realized—deep within oneself  
Duality vanishes at once—self alone is  
I am that reality, why do I suffer at all  
When one alone exists as omnipresence

Even if one assumes objects to be real  
How can things be related to the self  
The senses, body and mind would exist  
In their nature—what have I to do with them

Just what is this thing called relationship  
With senses, body, mind or others  
If a stone and iron rod lay side by side  
They stay unrelated to each other always

## **Mastery Over Thoughts of Mind and Body**

---

With the ego-sense rises perverse notions  
Such as 'this is mine' and 'this is his'  
All unreal notions as one alone is  
What appears is an illusion like the blue sky

This ego-sense is the cause of all sorrow  
All anxieties too are caused by it alone  
'I've got this now, this I must have next...'  
Such cravings it constantly generates

One cannot posit a cause for this creation  
All has ever been inherent in the absolute  
Just as various pots are inherent in clay  
And waves always exist in the vast ocean

'This I am' is a notion one assumes  
Based on a relationship that is not real  
With the temporary appearance known as body  
And consciousness which is existence eternal

Consciousness was when this body was not  
Consciousness will remain on dropping this body  
Why then this connection in the middle  
It is an illusion that has never been examined

You have conferred reality on illusions, O mind  
And made me suffer based on separation  
But it is not your fault as I cling to you  
While you, yourself—are a non-entity

I now see the illusion in appearances  
Soon, O mind, you will become no-mind  
All memories and experience will come to end  
When all mental conditioning is abandoned

Gathering all rays that have been scattered  
Soon I'll be free of all mental coloring  
The mind will be offered as an oblation  
To the fire of consciousness—freedom attained

Perceiving the body as unrelated to self  
Is the key to abandoning all conditioning  
Mind and body are each other's foes  
Each bent on the other's destruction

Supreme happiness follows abandoning  
The relationship of mind and body with self  
A host of suffering both have imposed  
Due to the mutual conflict beyond resolve

Mind's thought-force gives birth to this body  
And continually feeds it with great sorrow  
Thus tortured the body seeks to destroy  
The mind—its own parent and bitter enemy

The mind and body are constantly engaged  
In the timeless battle of mutual destruction  
How can I ever know peace or happiness  
Till both have been thoroughly abandoned

By sleep the body destroys the mind each day  
The mind then awakens the body to suffer  
Until self-knowledge is finally attained  
I remain caught in the heavy crossfire

If the mind ceases to be—the body will too  
As what is the body without thought-force  
Hence you, O mind, must now be destroyed  
Without you the body can never cause suffering

Concepts, precepts and conditioning cease  
When self-knowledge is had by experience  
I have attained that state of 'no mind' now  
All relationships have now been abandoned

Rising above notions of all relationships  
Of mind and body too—I am indeed free  
Of ignorance's heavy influence earlier  
All virtues flourish within naturally

The absence of desires is their fulfillment  
Purity, truthfulness and friendship to all  
Supreme magnanimity and kind speech  
Such are my constant companions now

Everything in its natural order and time  
Knowing this, desire and aversion have left  
With the mind's demise, delusion has died  
Wickedness gone—I now rest in my own self

## Renewing the Body

---

Sage Uddalaka then sat in meditation  
In the lotus posture with half-closed eyes  
Intoning the holy 'Om' so its vibrations  
Filled his being to the crown of his head

Exhaling the breath completely  
As if life force was being abandoned  
Into the space of pure consciousness  
The body generated much heat by this

He felt the fire from the generated heat  
Burning the whole of his body  
With breath retained he intoned 'Om' again  
The life force stood still in equilibrium

The body was reduced to ashes  
White like camphor it was  
While inhaling he intoned 'Om' again  
And drew fresh life force towards himself

The fresh life force was cool and pure  
Like the silvery rays of the moon  
They rained on the white ashes  
That remained of his earlier body

From the cooling of the white ashes  
A new body arose—most resplendent  
The life force filled the inner kundalini  
Spread out like a spiral—it ascended

## Renewing the Mind

---

With body thus thoroughly purified  
Continuing in the seated lotus pose  
He firmed his posture, with senses tied  
And began to extricate consciousness from thought

With senses restrained from all distractions  
Eyes half-closed, still and motionless  
Mind established in the inner silence  
The twin life-forces he equalized

Withdrawing the inner senses  
From contact with their objects  
He became aware of all past conditioning  
And purified it with the unconditioned

With rectum and other outlets closed  
Life-force and awareness were internalized  
This most perfect discipline enabled him  
To hold his mind within his heart

## Vasistha's Insight

---

With mind thus thoroughly purified  
Made tranquil and without distraction  
He beheld the inner darkness of ignorance  
And dispelled it with the light within

Sleep and dullness tried to overpower  
The mind threw up brilliant forms  
Intoxicating inertia tried to subvert  
He overcame all with the light within

In a different state he rested a while  
And then awoke to something grand

Experiencing the totality of existence  
He realized to be pure awareness

Earlier pure awareness was unexperienced  
As other factors seemed to influence it  
Now regaining its purity and independence  
Uddalaka enjoyed the bliss of enlightenment

Just as waves merge into the ocean  
Just as the pot merges into mud  
Uddalaka merged into pure consciousness  
He was liberated while still living

He beheld the gods and sages  
And went far beyond those states  
He was transmuted into bliss itself  
He became pure consciousness

One who experiences this supreme state  
For even a mere moment in time  
Is never pulled by even heaven's delights  
This is indeed the eternal abode

All delusion is transcended completely  
The subject-object tangle lose their hold  
Fully awakened and enlightened is he  
Who has reached this supreme abode

This is not an attainment as such  
As there is no attainer or the attained  
Words are useless—they get in the way  
*That* is known only by direct realization

Uddalaka shunned all psychic powers  
These are traps for the careless one

He even declined the invitation of gods  
And all the temptations they offered him

Uddalaka transformed himself  
Into a liberated sage while still living  
He reached the state of perfect equilibrium  
Looking upon all with equal vision

Fully established in pure being was he  
Duality and its perils were put to rest  
The inner sun shone bright at all times  
Never rising and never setting

He lived devoid of body-consciousness  
Fully established in pure consciousness  
With the complete absence of all notions  
The mind becoming no-mind—ceased to be

### **Dropping Physical Disembodiment**

---

In time a wish arose in the sage Uddalaka  
To drop the present physical embodiment  
Sitting in a nearby cave in the lotus pose  
With eyes half-closed he plunged deep within

He closed off the nine body apertures  
And withdrew the senses into the heart  
Restraining prana or the life-force  
The body was held in perfect equilibrium

With the tip of tongue against pallets' roof  
Jaws slightly parted from each other  
His inner vision was neither inner nor outer  
Nor in substantiality, nor in the void

He was established in pure consciousness  
Pure being—beyond the state of bliss  
Absolutely pure—with no movement at all  
Day by day he gradually attained quiescence

He remained fully established in pure being  
He had risen above the cycle of samsara  
Thoughts and notions had completely ceased  
All heart's impurities had been washed away

Uddalaka had attained the supreme state  
Bliss-absolute—beyond any description  
Even heaven's pleasures do not compare  
To the pinnacle of perfection he experienced

For six months he sat in that perfect state  
Gradually his body withered away  
Take shelter in the shade of Uddlaka's way  
'Twill awaken the highest wisdom within

### **Vasistha's Insight Continues**

---

Live a life of relentless self-inquiry  
This is the way to attain supreme peace  
Four things are most helpful on the journey  
Though a fully awakened intelligence can suffice

Cultivate dispassion—end all craving  
Through scripture—study your self  
Teachings of the enlightened ones are invaluable  
As is relentless, unceasing self-inquiry

In the state of tranquility called samadhi  
One realizes objects as 'not-self'  
Thus does inner calmness flow unbroken  
As one is not disturbed by reaction

One realizes objects are related to mind  
One rests in the self—pure existence  
Some live in this state in isolation  
Others prefer to be engaged in action

If the mind of the yogi is distracted  
He has not attained inner quiescence  
If the yogi however rests in equilibrium  
Isolation or action make no difference

The mind of all conditioning  
Is untainted in the midst of activity  
As this is non-action of the mind  
Samadhana or total freedom it's called

Movement of thought in the mind  
Is the way to know its true state  
There is no movement in the unconditioned  
The conditioned mind continues to oscillate

The unconditioned mind is firm and awake  
That is meditation, freedom—peace eternal  
This mind is a non-actor though actions happen  
Attain this stage of supreme enlightenment

The conditioned mind is sorrow's source  
Hence remove all traces of conditioning  
In real contemplation—desires cease  
There is freedom from sorrow completely

Mentally renounce all false identifications  
Whether you live in a cave or at home  
A householder too can attain this state  
And experience the forest within himself

One can physically renounce everything  
And live in isolation trying to meditate  
Yet carry the whole world within his mind  
And experience the city in the forest cave

Consciousness is the indwelling omnipresence  
It becomes aware of different reflections  
Seeming so real, for real is the substance  
Duality seems to arise within infinite unity

Consciousness becoming aware of differences  
Gives rise to the ego-sense, time and space  
In deep sleep all distractions subside  
Enter this state while awake consciously

## Multiple Reflections

---

Each particle, atom and molecule is indwelt  
By infinite consciousness—there is naught else  
These atoms and molecules appear as walls  
That seem to divide 'I', 'you' and 'others'

What seems to appear divided  
Does so in infinite consciousness  
Multiple reflections of consciousness  
All within itself—appearing very real

Consciousness experiences itself only  
Reflecting its own light in forms that appear  
These then gain apparent self-consciousness  
And think they exist independently somehow

This world-appearance which appears so real  
Does so because the substratum is non-different  
Infinite consciousness is without relationship  
These delusions have sprung due to ignorance

Infinite consciousness never undergoes change  
How can it—it is infinite and omnipresent  
All that I have said is but a play of words  
Just for instruction—there is no 'you' or 'I'

Neither is there mind, nor objects to know  
Nor is there this tangible of world-illusion  
All mere appearances within consciousness  
It alone thinks itself to be this and that

Diversity is the child of ignorance  
What one imagines—that he sees  
What is regarded as life appears so  
This life too is but infinite consciousness

The individual is non-different  
From pure infinite consciousness  
Know all this to be undivided  
Indivisible infinite consciousness

## **9. The Story of Suraghu**

### **Background**

---

Suraghu was a Himalayan tribal chief  
He ruled his kingdom justly and wisely  
Rewarding those who did good  
And punishing those who did wrong

This constant activity made him feel  
That his spiritual vision had been obscured  
When one is not lodged firmly in wisdom  
One second-guesses and doubts arise

One day sage Mandavya happened to visit  
Suraghu placed his doubts before the sage

Telling him plainly of his inner torment  
As he rewarded some and some he punished

He humbly requested the sage to instruct him  
So equal vision might somehow arise  
Which would free him from anxiety and doubt  
And from prejudice and partiality experienced

### **Sage Mandavya's Instruction**

---

All mental weaknesses come to an end  
By self-effort based on wisdom  
Which arises in one well established  
In self-knowledge by direct experience

Distress in the mind is eliminated  
By inquiry into the nature of self  
When consciousness expands infinitely  
The pull of self-centeredness snaps

Only when one renounces everything  
Is the supreme gain of self-knowledge had  
When all points of view are abandoned  
What remains—is the self alone

Just as in that which is called worldly life  
Obstacles must be removed for any gain  
Even so is it with self-knowledge  
There must complete renunciation

### **Suraghu Contemplates**

---

Immediately did Suraghu contemplate  
"What is it that is known as 'I'  
I'm not the hill tribe nor is it mine  
This is merely called 'my kingdom'

This capital city too is not mine  
Neither is family or relationships  
How have I come to regard these as 'mine'  
I abandon all these notions this moment

This body contains inert substances  
Flesh, blood, bones and organs  
Mind is the cause of all sorrow  
Neither is mind nor ego-sense mine

What is this feeling of individuality  
That is involved in myriad relationships  
How can an object of knowledge  
Be the self which alone is pure subject

I abandon all that is knowable  
I am distinct—the knower of all  
Pure consciousness—of doubt  
I am indeed the infinite self"

### **Vasistha's Insight**

---

By direct inquiry into the nature of self  
Suraghu attained to the supreme state  
All sorrow and anxiety left him completely  
He ruled the kingdom with a balanced mind

He realized diversity was but an appearance  
Of and in pure infinite consciousness  
Not intellectually which is utterly useless  
But by unmistakable direct experience

The mind is indeed fickle and unsteady  
Equanimity seems difficult to reach  
Kindly listen to an earlier incident  
Which will throw light on just this

## Suraghu and Parigaha

---

Parigaha was a friend of Suraghu  
He too was a chief of a kingdom  
A great famine came to his land  
Fruitless were all attempts at relief

Sorely distressed he went away  
To the forest to perform austerities  
After a very long time of hard penance  
He attained self-knowledge and quiescence

Thereafter he roamed the land freely  
One day he met up with his old friend  
Most happy were both on meeting again  
As now both had attained self-knowledge

Parigha asked Suraghu about his state  
If he was established in perfect equanimity  
If all his subjects and kingdom were at peace  
And if he was firmly established in dispassion

Suraghu most humbly replied to Parigha  
Attributing all success to the divine  
Grateful for the chance to see his friend  
As he felt the holy company was a treasure

Parigha inquired about duties performed  
Of their being a possible hindrance  
To being established in peace and equanimity  
And disrupting the state of samadhi

Suraghu's enlightened reply was inspiring  
"Why should only that mind without thoughts  
Be called samadhi for a knower of truth  
As constant contemplation is what is samadhi

The enlightened ones are always in samadhi  
Whether they be active in work or not  
Though one could sit for hours in lotus' pose  
One's mind may not be at peace at all

Merely sitting in the lotus pose is not samadhi  
All desires must be burnt by self-knowledge  
What results is the real state of samadhi  
Not just sitting and remaining silent

In samadhi there is eternal satisfaction  
Clear perception of what really is  
Egolessness, freedom from the opposites  
Freedom from anxiety and the wish to possess

When self-knowledge dawns truly in one  
He is established in unbroken samadhi  
He neither loses it nor is it ever interrupted  
The state of samadhi becomes permanent

Just as time never forgets to move on  
One in self-knowledge never forgets the self  
Just as material objects stay material  
The sage of self-knowledge is always one

I am fully awakened, pure and at peace  
Unbroken is the state of samadhi  
I behold the self as all—at all times  
There is no other state but samadhi"

Parigraha saluted Suraghu, his friend  
"Surely you've attained total enlightenment  
You shine radiant, resplendent and pure  
In you there is no ego-sense or opposites"

Suraghu replied to the sage—his friend  
"There is nothing worth desiring or renouncing  
When objects are recognized as concepts  
It is notions that masquerade as objects

There is nothing worth acquiring either  
Following the understanding of renouncing  
Good, evil, great, small and the like  
Are all notions based on desirability

When desirability itself has no meaning  
Renouncing and acquiring are meaningless  
Objects and things that we see before us  
Have not the real substance they appear to have

If this is known by direct experience  
How can any desire arise for them  
In the absence of any and all desire  
Supreme peace reigns in the heart"

### **Vasistha's Insight Continues**

---

Thus continuing appearance's illusion  
And enjoying each other's good company  
They both continued to engage themselves  
In their respective duties with enthusiasm

Be firmly established in this wisdom, O Rama  
Discard impure ego-sense from the heart  
Engage yourself in your own duties  
Unattached—therefore untrained by them

Just as the eyes of fish in sea-water  
Are never affected by its salinity  
Befriend scriptures, generate dispassion  
Make each day a march towards self-knowledge

## 10. The Story of Bhasa and Vilasa

### Background

---

Bhasa and Vilasa, both sons of sages  
Lost their parents at the same time  
Neither interested in wealth nor in fame  
They both sought to attain self-knowledge

In different directions each set out  
Leading a simple austere life  
Then one day after a long time  
They happened to meet—just by chance

### Vilasa to Bhasa

---

Most fortunate I consider meeting you  
Have your efforts been fruitful yet  
Has the mind been rid of worldliness  
Have you attained self-knowledge now

### Bhasa Replies

---

Without self-knowledge one is stuck  
In the cycle of suffering—birth and death  
Repeating experiences of earlier times  
In this very life and the lives before

Unless one crosses samsara's flow  
Until hopes and desires completely end  
Until self-knowledge is directly had  
One cannot be either well or happy

Without self-knowledge one must return  
To this same stage for another drama  
In different conditions and circumstances  
Still engaging in the same inane actions

Craving is the rat that gnaws away wisdom  
One's appetite depletes life's energy  
The mind is sunk in desire's well  
'Tis a wonder how this is repeated

The mind assumes gigantic proportions  
A wisp of a thought becomes a whip  
Man suffers foolishly though in truth he does not  
Though untouched by suffering he is miserable

### **Vasistha's Insight**

---

Thus conversing on the nature of things  
They shared the deepest insight gained  
Both shared truths from direct experience  
Both soon attained the supreme wisdom

Attaining self-knowledge is the only way  
To sever the bondage of this samsara  
The enlightened view the world as if from afar  
Knowing things are not as they do appear

Just as a swan is not related to water  
Just as a rock is not related to ground  
The self too has not real relationship  
To what we see as world-appearance

Things may lay in close proximity  
Things may fall upon each other as well  
A rock that falls on the water  
Does not injure the water at all

Even so the body comes in contact  
With other bodies and substances  
Be it wife, children or so-called things  
There is no real pain and injury to anyone

Reflections in the mirror are not real or unreal  
So also with reflections of the self  
The ignorant accept appearances as real  
Not the wise who see not relationships

Relationships need duality to exist  
But consciousness alone exists—divisionless  
Subject and object division is imagination  
The root of all suffering and sorrow

Just like seeing a ghost in a post  
Or a snake in the rope in low light  
One sees division where none exists  
Due to conditioning and imagination

The abandonment of ignorance is liberation  
Shedding of false identification ends sorrow  
Ascetics can be bound by the conditioned mind  
Householders can attain to the unconditioned

The conditioned mind is itself bondage  
Freedom from conditioning is liberation  
The inner contact presupposing division  
Is the cause of bondage and liberation

Actions by the unconditioned mind are non-action  
The conditioned mind acts even while refraining  
Action or non-action is in the mind not the body  
Hence one should refrain from false inner division

### **Vasistha: Conditioning is a Choice**

---

Conviction in the reality of the body  
In one who identifies body with self  
Therefore seeking pleasure and getting bound  
Is what is known as conditioning

Self-inquiry alone dispels clouds of ignorance  
And establishes one in the unconditioned state  
Whether pleasures come or do not come  
One's balance is steady—equanimity attained

Neither addicted to action's fruit or inaction  
Exultation and depression do not touch one  
Rejecting conditioning one rejects bondage also  
Conditioning being the cause of sorrow and suffering

Conditioning can be illustrated thus  
The donkey obeys its master out of fear  
The tree bears all, rooted to the ground  
The worm bides its time in a small hole

The fearful bird remains hungry on the tree  
The tame deer falls prey to the clever hunter  
People are born as worms and insects  
All creatures rise and fall like the ocean's waves

The human endowed with faculties for liberation  
Still persists in subscribing to life's magazine  
Again and again he comes, suffers and goes  
But still does not feel to go beyond sorrow

Shrubs and creepers are deeply rooted  
Fear of starvation ties them to the earth  
World-illusion is like a mighty river  
Carrying all in its stream of suffering

Conditioning is inner contact or limitation  
Existing as sterile and adorable  
Unnatural conditioning is seen in fools  
Natural conditioning is seen in the wise

The fools are conditioned—they do not know  
The wise know conditioning and are untouched  
As they have directly attained self-knowledge  
The fire of wisdom keeps conditioning at bay

The liberated sages have natural conditioning  
All are but limitations of which they're aware  
They do not fall prey to desires and such  
They never experience delusion and its effects

The foolish have unnatural conditioning  
They fall prey to desires again and again  
As they feel joy is had by desires' fulfillment  
Though earlier attempts have brought sorrow

As big fish eat smaller ones in the ocean  
Countless beings ever feed on each other  
The planets and moons stay their course  
Due to some form of conditioning or limitation

### **Vasistha: Conditioning to Craving**

---

Craving for pleasure is the worst cancer  
It gnaws at one's vital energy from within  
Creating attachment and great delusion  
Destroying wisdom and sorrow's relief

Creation is a response to mental conditioning  
Held firm in the hearts of countless beings  
Ignorance pervades this whole universe  
Bringing suffering to subscribers of ignorance

Fools are fuel for ignorance's' flames  
The world is hell itself with burning fires  
As the river rushes speedily to the ocean  
Suffering rushes to all conditioned beings

If craving for pleasure is cut at its root  
Mental conditioning stops its expansion  
One can then tackle existing conditioning  
And destroy the seeds so they'll never rise again

Mental conditioning is attachment to the finite  
'Tis burning pain—all that appears must change  
Inner infinite expansion is the way out  
As desires cease when one experiences self as all

The unattached mind rests always in peace  
Great joy born of infinite inner expansion  
Rooted in self-knowledge one is ever free  
And unperturbed by any events or calamities

Only the wise live truly normal lives  
They do what needs to be done naturally  
Without motive or inner calculation  
Or thought of fruit based on expectation

Their minds are never attached to action  
Nor to objects of desire or inaction  
Heavens above and external relations  
Do not influence one who abides in wisdom

Desires fill the mind with insatiable hunger  
The mind then resides in this appetite  
Blind, thirsty, hungry for what must be had  
No matter the great sorrow and untold suffering

Wisdom does not attach to anything at all  
An attached mind is very blind you see  
Wisdom is the eyes to its own self—untainted  
Fully awake—the best protection to be had

## Vasistha: Abandoning Conditioning

---

The mind should rest in pure consciousness  
With just enough externalization of thought  
Aware of non-division though division appears  
The individual thus becomes the universal

One experiences peace on abandoning thought  
This is known as deep sleep in wakefulness  
This soon matures into the fourth state  
In which reality is experienced directly

Ignorance is the cause of world-appearance  
Non-investigation into the nature of reality  
As a lamp dispels darkness instantly  
So does self-knowledge dispel ignorance

Hence, inquire into what this individual is  
Also called mind or the inner psyche  
Between the inert and intelligent is the truth  
This truth alone creates diversity within itself

Just as a nanny takes a child here and there  
Conditioning takes fools here and there too  
Self-tied by conditioning's ropes one does suffer  
Enduring much sorrow repeatedly

Ignorance is self-limitation on the mind  
Which becomes tainted objectively  
When the same self is subjectively turned  
It abandons self-limitation and awakens

The awakened self sheds ignorance  
Recognizing the body as elements too  
It thus transcends body consciousness  
And becomes fully enlightened and free

All that appears to be is but expansion  
Between pure experiencing and its experience  
The experience is the delight of self-bliss  
Pure experiencing itself—the absolute

Pure experiencing is *the* greatest delight  
All is seen within the infinite self  
The bent towards objects is bondage itself  
Liberation is freedom from objectivity

Freed of subject-object relationship  
The world-appearance ceases entirely  
Then rises deep sleep in wakefulness  
Gained by being established in self-knowledge

You will realize by this grand experience  
I and space, the sun and all directions  
Gods and demons too are but my own self  
I'm in all beings, in the earth and ocean too

I am the dust and wind, fire and world  
Omnipresent am I—I alone exist  
Joys and sorrows are left far behind  
You rest in your self—infinite consciousness

Bondage and liberation are only concepts  
Abandon them both and live an enlightened life  
Liberation does not exist in some heaven elsewhere  
Liberation is had right here by self-knowledge

If the mind ceases so does the ego-sense  
Waste not your time in vain theory  
Abandon craving—awaken the intelligence  
The mind weakens when dispassion arises

Even the wish to be free must be abandoned  
As it revives the mind and other notions  
All notions are concepts—they are unreal  
Just like mirages in hot desert sands

The absence of hopes and all desires  
Is necessary to deflate false values  
That have been ascribed to people and things  
They are not part of things as they are

Hopes and desires are in our minds  
And do not allow us to see clearly  
We look at objects but see assigned values  
And react to these—never to things as they are

As long as one harbors hopes and desires  
One will protect these snakes in the mind  
That hiss memory or situations that appear  
And compel us to react to them instead

Unrelenting vigilance without compromise  
Is the only way to loosen false values  
And see things just as they are  
And respond wisely with what is best

When hopes and desires exist in the heart  
It does not matter how subtle they be  
One can never see the truth of things  
Only the coloring that is self-added

The wise see the truth by facing the light  
And never desires which fade in the shade  
Inquiry and self-effort will point the way  
To see things as they are—free of coloring

Equanimity cannot coexist with hopes  
Or desires of any kind—however subtle  
Hence give up all hopes and desires  
See sorrow and grief abandoned

Liberation is at hand—right here all the time  
Many have attained while still living  
You too can be liberated here and now  
Utter non-attachment is itself freedom

One free of attachment is liberated  
Therefore strive earnestly and sincerely  
Right exertion and relentless self-inquiry  
Are spiritual heroism leading to self-knowledge

Non-wisdom hides the light of the absolute  
Self-sustained dark clouds of ignorance  
When one is awake and facing the light  
Wisdom burns the moisture of ignorance

Erroneous perception gives rise to ignorance  
Binding one with self-created chains  
Right perception, right attitude and wisdom  
Enable one to see—bondage was an illusion

The spirit of inquiry must lodge in the heart  
'Twill enable you to see things as they are  
A harvest of strength, intelligence and radiance  
You will soon realize the truth behind appearances

### **Vasistha: On Sages**

---

A sage is one who has realized the truth  
While still living—right here in this world  
The secret's to see all without any craving  
Without hopes and expectations of any kind

He does not seek things or conditions at all  
For his heart has withdrawn into itself  
Hopes and memory have no grip on him  
He lives in the present in perfect equilibrium

His actions are natural—non-volitional  
He is unattached to anyone or anything  
His behavior may appear childish or even harsh  
The attitude of others determines this

He appears devout to the devout  
Harsh to the harsh he does appear  
He appears as a child among children  
Sorrowing he appears among the suffering

Never elated when efforts bear fruit  
Never dejected when they do not  
He knows infinite consciousness does everything  
He is never surprised by turns of events

He knows beings are born and they will die  
He never gives way to grief over this  
He knows the world arises in his own vision  
Even as dreams appear in one's own mind

Justification, pity and joy he's abandoned  
Concepts of pleasure and pain he has dropped  
In him the desirable and undesirable don't exist  
When all notions cease—mind's errors cease too

When a firebrand swings, a circle of light appears  
An illusion just like the world appearance  
Appearing due to a vibration of consciousness  
Vibration and consciousness being inseparable

## Vasistha: Many Ways

---

Mind and movement of thought are inseparable  
The cessation of one is cessation of both  
This can be achieved by the yoga path  
Or by direct realization—wisdom's path

The body has energy channels or nadis  
In which circulate energy known as prana  
Indistinguishably united with the mind it is  
Consciousness tends to think due to prana

Movement of prana gives rise to thought  
Movement of thought moves the prana  
A mutually dependent cycle they form  
Like waves and currents in the water

Some say mind is caused by pranic movement  
And prana restrained is mind restrained  
When thought moves not within the mind  
World-appearance, its effect, ceases to be

## Vasistha: The Yoga Way

---

The movement of prana is also arrested  
By effortless breathing without any strain  
Or repetition of the sacred mantra Om  
And experience of its true meaning

Or by exhaling the breath, gently and slowly  
It must leave the body quite effortlessly  
Then retain, just as bringing to a standstill  
You will notice thought too is arrested

Or by closing the posterior nares by tongue's tip  
And moving prana to the crown of the head

Or by holding consciousness just outside  
Twelve inches away from the tip of the nose

Or directing prana into the forehead  
Through the palate and the upper aperture  
Fixing the prana at eyebrow's center  
Eyes turned towards the middle—this arrests thought

Control prana by any of these practices  
Gradually it will come under control  
Prana controlled—the mind is controlled  
It will become quiet and stable for meditation

### **Vasistha: The Wisdom Way**

---

The movement of prana can be arrested  
When hopes and desires come to an end  
Through earnest practice of the teachings  
From the scriptures, sages and masters

Dispassion arises when one is sincere  
And sincerely practices wisdom-teachings  
Insight gained by others' realization  
Practice makes the experience their own

Dedication to truth is dispassion's dawn  
Requisite for meditation and inquiry  
The discipline throws light on the path  
The way is seen as one treads vigilantly

By regular meditation one discovers  
Cosmic energy or shakti's wonder  
One sees all forms that do appear  
Are but her play only within consciousness

Only when cosmic energy or shakti  
Merges again with consciousness  
That meditation can take one deeper within  
And the fullness of Brahman be realized

### **Vasistha: The Heart-Center**

---

Mental conditioning can completely cease  
If the prana is held in the heart-center  
For a long time with protracted practice  
As this leads to pranic and mental arrest

The physical heart is just an organ  
Its concern is with the physical body  
The heart we are referring to in heart-center  
Is of the nature of pure consciousness

This heart is not just in the body  
It is inside, outside, neither in nor out  
In it the entire universe is reflected  
It is the treasure house of all wealth

Consciousness alone is the heart of all  
It is the substratum, source and sustainer  
With the mind free of conditioning  
It gathers in the heart—prana is restrained

### **Vasistha: Using a Focus Point**

---

Any focus point can be used as an aid  
To restrain prana by centering attention  
Eyebrow center, palate or crown of head  
Or twelve inches from the tip of the nose

Concentration may appear to be distracting  
It is helpful in going beyond distractions

An undistracted mind is free of sorrow  
It becomes the source of joy and happiness

Restraining attention—restrains prana  
Then seeking self-knowledge alone remains  
World-appearance does not oppose liberation  
Liberation is to be had while living here

### **Vasistha: Practice is Essential**

---

The peace resulting from true yoga practice  
Allows one the right vision of the truth  
To see the supreme self as the self of all  
To see the infinite self in all and as all

Our erroneous vision is the root of sorrow  
It brings rebirth, more suffering and grief  
We still cling to and nourish this deadly serpent  
And cry for relief when it spews its venom

Subject-object relationships don't exist  
Pure, undivided consciousness alone is  
All relationships presuppose division  
Melting in non-division is liberation

The sage is firmly established in the self  
Desires and pleasures do not bind him  
He sees all people, things and conditions  
As his very self and rests in perfect equilibrium

One who engages in unrelenting self-inquiry  
Is not tempted or swayed by distractions  
Though his senses function quite normally  
They are not wrongly wired to conditioning

## Vasistha Closing Thoughts

---

O eyes, let all objects rise and fall  
They are but changing appearances  
Don't gaze long or linger on them  
As this gives false value and brings grief

O mind, be the onlooker that you truly are  
Countless scenes are seen by the eyes  
Why do you get involved in them, O mind  
The senses and objects have their own dance

Repeated thinking on imagined relationships  
Has enlivened such imagination into reality  
These clouds of ignorance must be destroyed  
Through unbroken vigilance and self-inquiry

All suffering and grief experienced  
Are products of the undisciplined mind  
Slay this ghost that does not even exist  
By realizing self as the only existence

Earlier I too was tormented by the mind  
But have laid this ghost to final rest  
I laugh now at my earlier foolishness  
The mind is dead—all anxieties are dead as well

The ego-sense is dead beyond resurrection  
Brought about through direct inquiry  
I am free now and most happy too  
You can also attain this very same state

The clouds of doubt and agitation have cleared  
I am what I am without any craving at all  
When the mind ceases—craving ceases too  
You awaken to the grand state of wakefulness

You have to discover this for your own self  
That one truth alone exists—not diversity  
Only then will you know true happiness  
There will be no further need for inquiry

I am the subtle eternal self—omnipresent  
I have reached the state unreflected in anything  
Beginningless, endless and utterly pure  
The mind has merged into infinite consciousness

Knowing by direct experience that I am the all  
There is supreme peace beyond comprehension  
Let the senses function with objects naturally  
I remain unmoved in utter equanimity

I remained in foolishness for a long time  
Then inquired for a long time and realized  
I am the unconditioned being—through inquiry  
Now inquiry is useless—inner silence reigns

I remain in the self—in this inner silence  
Unending abode of eternal peace  
You too can attain this very state  
If only you are sincere and make every effort

## **11. The Story of Veetahavya**

### **Background**

---

In sage Veetahavya arose burning dispassion  
He became disenchanted with worldliness  
He saw perverse notions as illusion's seeds  
And the suffering that resulted from delusion

Immediately he sat in deep meditation  
Firm like a mountain peak—immovable

Withdrawing his senses into their source  
Turning the mind on itself in inquiry

### **Veetahavya's Contemplation**

---

Most unsteady and fickle is this mind  
Agitated even when it is introverted  
Bouncing back to the senses again and again  
Like an unintelligent ball—most shamelessly

Nourished by the senses—it is loyal to them  
It continues to grasp what brings great pain  
Repelling all attempts to see simple truths  
It vehemently opposes change in any way

The very things that cause suffering  
Seem delightful to it again and again  
Like a monkey does this mind jump  
From branch to branch of sorrow's tree

### **Veetahavya's Inquiry**

---

These five senses are the mind's channels  
I see how easily they get totally distracted  
Blindly and in vain passionate excitement  
They pursue pleasures though they deliver pain

Though inert and insentient are sense channels  
The mind rushes through them for experience  
I see very clearly that you are inert, O senses  
I am consciousness, the real doer—not the mind

The mind functions in consciousness's light  
Even as you, O senses, do your functions  
Do not entertain false notions of independence  
You are neither intelligent nor self-existent

There is nothing at all but consciousness  
Just what are you, O most wicked mind  
How do you assume doership and experiencing  
You are not only deluded but delusion itself

You are neither doer nor experiencer  
You are unrelated to anything in any way  
Even the notion you feel—'I am alive'  
Is totally false as you just don't exist

I am pure consciousness—you are the self  
How then does sorrow arise in you  
Realize that you are indeed the unlimited  
You are pure unconditioned consciousness

Let me gently bring home this point again  
Your intelligence is dependent on consciousness  
Don't vainly assume doership or experiencing  
Live in the realization—consciousness alone is

During harvesting the sickle seems to be doer  
But the energy and intelligence is the farmer's  
So also with the sword that seems to cut  
But the swordsman's energy and intelligence does

O mind, you too are inert in the same way  
Energy and intelligence is not yours at all  
All is derived from infinite consciousness  
It is the doer and experiencer—self of all

Despite many attempts to enlighten you  
That the self is the only existence there is  
You insist on considering yourself separate  
And suffer unnecessarily in your smallness

Realize the truth and be free at once  
From the journey of suffering you endure  
You not only suffer greatly your own self  
But exert to make others suffer as well

O fool—you are infinite consciousness  
Why do wallow in self-created filth  
Realize the omnipresent is the only reality  
Your existence is only an appearance in it

When you realize consciousness is the all  
You become the all—immediately  
Forget this delusion of identification  
With the body-appearance and personality

If you are the self—self exists, not you  
If you are inert—you have no existence  
So abandon your self-imposed delusion  
And realize that infinite self alone exists

You are neither the doer nor the experiencer  
You've been used as a channel in instruction  
The channel is not at all the reality  
Like the sickle and sword earlier mentioned

Why do you grieve and suffer unnecessarily  
The self is all-pervading and omnipotent  
Self needs not your grief, care or worry  
Self alone is—just what's to be feared at all

Just as fragrance is related to the flower  
So also your relationship to the self  
There is no relationship in any way  
As relationship can only exist between two

You are ever agitated—self is ever at peace  
Thus there can never be any relationship at all  
However, if you enter the state of equanimity  
You'll be established in infinite consciousness

O senses, I feel your darkness has dispelled  
By the light of all my admonitions  
O mind, do you see the error of your ways  
Or do you wish to continue loitering shamelessly

Why don't you see how desires and greed  
Have reduced you to a state of beggary  
All good qualities have been eroded  
By your lust and appetite—death now awaits

O mind when you cease to be—goodness blossoms  
There's no more doubt—peace and purity reign  
Doubt, error, worry, fear and anxiety too  
Are all abandoned when you cease to be

Light shines brightly when darkness is dispelled  
Oceans are calm when winds stop agitating  
Self-knowledge reveals itself without you  
Infinite consciousness experiences itself only

As long as there are even roots of desires  
There cannot be peace, happiness or calm  
These roots sprout and suck all nourishment  
For their own survival—most selfishly

Desires seek appeasement for themselves  
They care not one bit for anyone or anything  
Appeasement is fuel for more appeasement  
Desires are vicious winds fanning delusion's fires

He who finds inner strength to resist this trap  
Finds more strength as he sincerely persists  
Soon he is disentangled from mind's tyranny  
And experiences the bliss of self-realization

You are support for desires and hopes, O mind  
When either ceases—the other perishes too  
You can now choose to be one with reality  
Or cease to be an independent entity

In choosing to be one with reality  
You act in wisdom—choosing happiness  
Or you will perish slowly by malnutrition  
And realize you are indeed a non-entity

If you pick wisely that you are consciousness  
Who will wish for your non-existence  
But if you pick foolishly that you exist, O mind  
Your delusion will wear you out painfully

You came into being in ignorance and delusion  
By inquiry into your nature you now cease to be  
You exist as long as one does not inquire  
Into the truth of your non-existence

When the spirit of inquiry is aflame within  
Wisdom rises and you, O mind, cease to be  
Hence, I salute wisdom—goodbye, O mind  
You have now lost all false limitation

You exist now as infinite consciousness  
Now that you've lost all your conditioning  
In spite of yourself—inquiry arose in you  
This is itself the attainment of bliss

There is indeed no mind, O mind  
Self alone exists—there is naught else  
I am that self—infinite consciousness  
My kinetic state appears as the universe

### **Vasistha's Insight**

---

Veetahavya remained in total quiescence  
For three hundred years as if but a day  
The body which was reflected in consciousness  
Was perfected, protected by it as well

He became one with infinite consciousness  
He experienced the experiences of all  
Liberated sages exist in all purity and peace  
As perfection—Brahman the infinite

### **Vasistha: Transcend the Unreal**

---

Veetahavya's creations and this, here now  
Are both pure infinite consciousness  
Appearances are mind's delusions  
Mind is itself a trick in consciousness

Realizing the infinite consciousness  
The sage knew the play of appearances  
He saw all rise and fall in his own self  
His body and all other forms as well

He entered into his subtle body  
And then into the sun's orbit  
Descending then to his physical body  
Reviving it though it had earlier withered

Again the sage sat in deep meditation  
And negated all imagination from the mind

All notions were discarded and abandoned  
He was fully established in total equanimity

His mind was most blissful and balanced  
He addressed his mind and offered it praise  
Encouraging it to remain just like that  
All the time and in all conditions

To the senses he said with firm resolve  
"The self does not belong to you at all  
Nor do you belong to the self in any way  
May you all perish—your cravings have ceased

The error of your existence arose in the self  
In the light of wisdom they've ceased to be  
Error remains error till knowledge dawns  
Then reality alone shines ever radiantly

Established in wisdom he lived a long time  
Free of ignorance and resulting errors  
His heart free of attraction and aversion  
Through all experiences that came unsought

To ensure embodiment would be again  
He entered deep meditation once more  
And sequentially separated all from self  
As he intoned the sacred mantra Om

All mind's earlier desires were utterly stilled  
Well-grounded in non-dual consciousness  
Continuing to intone the sacred mantra Om  
He pierced through the darkness of ignorance

He renounced all visions and experiences  
Had along the way in inner journey

Transcending both darkness and light too  
And remained in pure infinite consciousness

He then abandoned objectivity of consciousness  
Then even the slightest movements within  
Negating all by—'not-this, not-this'  
He became that—beyond description

Becoming one with infinite consciousness  
His body decomposed back to the elements  
This story just narrated of sage Veetahavya  
Was born of direct perception and experience

Meditate on what has been said ceaselessly  
And attain to liberation by your own effort  
Liberation is attained by self-knowledge alone  
Only then will you go beyond all sorrow

What has been described as Veetahavya  
Is notion in the mind—just like you or me  
The senses and world too are but the mind  
Just what else can the world be, O Rama

### **Vasistha: Real Sages**

---

Sages are established in self-knowledge  
They don't perform tricks or conjure things  
Only those devoid of self-knowledge  
Feel the need to deceive by impressing

The sage is utterly content in himself  
He does not pursue or showcase powers  
He does not lead a lavish, extravagant life  
Those who do such are full of ignorance

Anyone can attain by some practices  
Power to manifest things as if magic  
These are gained by those full of desires  
The sage of self-knowledge avoids them

## 12. Death of the Mind

### Two Types of Mind Death

---

There are two types of death of the mind  
When the mind's form remains and ceases to be  
While living when the mind's form still remains  
On disembodiment even the mind's form perishes

Existence of the mind causes great misery  
Its cessation brings great joy and delight  
The mind that is caught in its conditioning  
Brings repeated births and unhappiness

That which regards beginningless qualities its own  
Is without self-knowledge—the unhappy individual  
When the mind perishes, world-appearance does too  
The mind is indeed the seed for all misery

When both happiness and unhappiness  
Do not divert one from his equanimity  
All notions having ceased—his mind is dead  
He is liberated while still living

The very nature of the mind is stupidity  
When the mind dies—purity and virtue reign  
Some call mind's death—the pure or big mind  
This state of utter purity of a liberated sage

Natural goodness exists in the liberated sage  
Noble qualities abound in him naturally

This is also known as purity or sattva  
Also called death of mind with form

Death of the mind without form  
Pertains to the disembodied sage  
Not even a trace of the mind remains  
It cannot be described in a positive way

Neither light nor darkness, no conditioning  
Neither existence nor non-existence, no notions  
A state of supreme quiescence and equilibrium  
Beyond mind and intelligence—supreme peace

The seed of world-appearance is within  
All notions and concepts of good and evil  
This seed of notions and concepts is the mind  
Which constantly moves and brings sorrow

The mind is the repository of notions of being  
World-appearance arises in the mind only  
The dream-state illustrates this clearly  
Whatever is seen is mind's expansion only

## **Two Seeds & Two Ways**

---

The two seeds are there of the mind  
Notions and ideas carry on with these  
Movement of life-force or prana  
And obstinately clinging to a fancy

When prana moves in consciousness  
Mind arises—world-appearance is seen  
When pranic movement is made to be still  
The world-appearance subsides as well

Pranic movement agitates consciousness  
It apprehends ideas and objects as real  
Great sorrow is experienced in this confusion  
Sleep puts this to rest—is why we enjoy sleep

In sleep we experience the dead mind  
But are not conscious and return the same  
So one of the two seeds of mind's mischief  
Must be the way to put the mind to rest

First is restraint of life-force or prana  
Practiced by yogis as pranayama  
Meditation and other practices too  
But pranayama brings quiescence best

Second is practices in the wisdom path  
Tackling obstinate clinging and fancies directly  
This is what disallows inquiry of truth  
And is described as conditioning or limitation

When such fancies are indulged in repeatedly  
World-appearance arises in consciousness  
When conditioning is thinned to transparency  
One becomes a liberated sage while still living

Past momentum sustains the sage's life  
He will never incur rebirth again  
The seed has been fried beyond germination  
He'll be absorbed in the infinite when the body falls

### **Adopt One Way**

---

Adopt one way—one seed of the two  
Arresting prana or quelling obstinate fancy  
When one is dried up the other dries too  
Both are completely interdependent

Pranic movement is due to obstinacy  
Obstinacy causes the prana to move  
A vicious cycle is thus completed  
Feeding on each other—forcing action

Motion is natural to life-force or prana  
When it moves in consciousness—mind arises  
Conditioning quickly takes over prana's movement  
If one is arrested—both will surely fall

The notion of an object is the seed for both  
Be it object of knowledge or that of experience  
Instantly prana moves and obstinacy rises  
A tempest for experience is felt in the heart

When such desire for experience is abandoned  
Movement of prana and obstinacy instantly cease  
But indwelling consciousness is desire's seed  
Neither desire nor experience are otherwise possible

Consciousness has no object outside or inside  
As consciousness alone exists—naught else  
*This truth* has to be realized by direct experience  
For the illusion, suffering and bondage to cease

Strive to eradicate desire for experience  
Get rid of idleness and lethargy  
Free yourself from all experiences  
Rest contented as infinite consciousness

## **Both Reconciled**

---

One without desire or hopes for anything  
Does not exist as an individual jiva  
He is neither inactive or lethargic  
Nor does he seek to experience

Though engaged in ceaseless activity  
He does not act nor is he inactive  
Though he seems to experience all  
He does not experience anything

Objectivity has been removed from his heart  
He is a liberated sage—here and now  
So objective experiences do not touch him  
He continues to act though inactive

### **Destroying the Seeds of Sorrow**

---

If you can cut at one stroke all conditioning  
You will by that great effort be free instantly  
Resting in pure existence that very moment  
In time you will be well established in it

This of course requires gigantic will  
Like crossing the ocean in a single breath  
There are other incremental ways  
To get a foothold and gradually cross

The incremental way takes greater effort  
As ground is lost with each little gain  
Old impressions tighten their hold  
With each time you get involved in them

Still, some gain is better than no gain at all  
And if you are sincere—momentum will gain  
So strive to destroy all conditioning  
Consisting of concepts, notions, habits and such

Of this one must be most careful and firm  
Or success will elude and there may be fall  
You cannot afford to add any conditioning  
When traveling the incremental path beyond

The mind has to be made free of all movement  
Thought has to cease its wayward activity  
Cessation of conditioning is indeed difficult  
Truth has to be realized with each careful step

Each step has to be walked *as if* the final step  
Heedlessness is invitation to great disaster  
Relentless vigilance is your only guide  
The path is seen as you carefully tread

Realization of truth and cessation of mind  
And ending of conditioning are interwoven  
Truth has to be seen in these simultaneously  
It is difficult to deal with these individually

Renounce pursuit of pleasure with all your power  
Resort to these three simultaneously  
If these are practiced simultaneously for long  
They become fruitful—never otherwise

You must be persistent in your practice  
Of these three together at the same time  
World-appearance has been seen as truth  
For a very long time—now overcome it

The wise declare abandonment of conditioning  
And restraint of prana to have equal effect  
Hence practice both of them simultaneously  
Right practice of yoga asanas will aid greatly too

When desires and aversions do not arise  
Though objects of desire appear as well  
Infer mental conditioning has weakened  
Wisdom has started dawning within

You are most vulnerable in these little gains  
As it is easy to feel you are free of pull  
Never relax vigilance and simple living  
Till the mind has completely ceased to be

## **Killing the Mind**

---

Means to overcome and kill the mind include  
Knowledge of self and company of holy men  
Abandonment of conditioning and prana restraint  
These are the most effective means and the way

Peace can only be had on the mind's demise  
From the mind's ashes rises self-knowledge  
Other practices do not aim to destroy the mind  
Which is the cause of all suffering

All actions must be without attachment  
The organs act—one is ever unaffected  
Joy, grief and sorrow don't touch one  
Whose actions are free—non-volitional

Eyes see, ears hear and body touches  
One is not involved in any of these  
This is real contact-disassociation  
It burns attachment and world-appearance

Contact-association fuels attachment  
It results in bondage and endless sorrow  
Abandonment of attachment is liberation  
The wise abandon attachment and are free

Attachment is that which increases conditioning  
By repetition of experiences of pleasure and pain  
In relation to what exists or is imagined  
To the objects of pleasure in any way

New associations are wired in the mind  
Old ones are reinforced and strengthened  
This confirmation brings intense attachment  
To objects of pleasure—invitations to pain

First free conditioning from experiences  
Such as joy, grief, sorrow and such  
This greatly weakens existing conditioning  
Refused any nourishment thus it is starved

Weaker conditioning is easy to see  
And bypass like a stone on the road  
Soon conditioning becomes mere memory  
The snake's venom sacs have been removed

Fools continue to fatten conditioning  
Whatever be the guise and social acceptance  
In heedlessness—silence is consent  
Bondage is always increased willfully

Conditioning is the seed of perverse notions  
Actions that result from it increase bondage  
Actions free of conditioning will not bind you  
As they are spontaneous—thus non-actions

Rise beyond joy and sorrow—seeing them alike  
Unattachment will free you from attraction  
Aversion, fear and grief will leave you  
When you're unattached—-independent of desires

Carry on your activities right here in the world  
Truth does not escape from the inconvenient  
It does not require outer cosmetic change  
Its pillars rise from inner transformation

Awareness of the homogeneity of truth  
Snaps the careless habits of attachment  
Self-knowledge rises when you let go  
Of pettiness resulting from heedless living

When polarized vision is abandoned  
Equal vision is found instantly in its place  
Remain established in non-attachment  
Live liberated without attraction's pull

The sage lives in inner silence  
Without pride, vanity or jealousy  
With senses fully under control  
Free of craving—beyond temptation

His actions are not based on conditioning  
Nor hopes, desires or outcome in any way  
He does what needs to be done—letting go  
Actions never continue in him psychologically

Whatever is inevitable and appropriate  
The sage does joyfully and with delight  
But in him delight rises from within  
And not from hopes or any results

Thus he lives free of world-appearance  
Just as milk stays white even when boiled  
He never abandons his wisdom  
Even when tested by calamities

Whether he be subjected to pain or ridicule  
Whether accolades are poured on him  
Or heaven's rulership be offered to him  
The sage remains in a balanced state of mind

End of Chapter Five

# CHAPTER VI: DEALING WITH LIBERATION

## 1. Dealing with Liberation

### What has been taught

---

Contemplate the truth taught thus far  
Again and again but not mechanically  
Reflect on it from beginning to end  
March along the path you then see

Different activities will not bind you  
If your intelligence saturates with truth  
Otherwise fall is most inevitable  
Elephants too fall from cliffs sometimes

If you conceptualize this teaching  
And do not let it act in your life  
Great will be the danger to yourself  
You will stumble and fall like a blind man

To attain perfection and liberation  
Live a life of utter non-attachment  
Doing what is best as it reaches you  
This is the most important factor of all

Remember well what has been taught  
It is capable of awakening inner intelligence  
Resort then to this unconditioned mind  
With it, you will be able to cross samsara

Cosmic consciousness is the existence  
Know this and be free of the ego-sense  
No mind, ignorance or individual soul exist  
All these are concepts that have arisen

## The arising of ignorance

---

When the body is considered as the self  
The self relates to all that is seen  
Hope in the seen—will surely arise  
Giving rise to delusion concerning mind

The illusory notion of mind's existence  
Persists as long as truth is not realized  
Hence resort to the company of the wise  
Till wickedness falls, as they are unattached

## The arising of wisdom

---

As long as world-experience still seems real  
Clear perception of truth has not dawned  
Blind dependence and craving will persist  
Wickedness and delusion the consequence

One who is not attracted by pleasure  
Has a cool heart because of its purity  
Desires, cravings and hopes are fire  
That burn and cause great heat within

When the body too is seen as an effect  
Of delusion arisen within it somehow  
The mind does not seem to arise  
As it has lost its foothold and support

When incorrect perception comes to an end  
The sun of self-knowledge rises within  
The mind is reduced to naught and unseen  
Burnt completely—just as dry leaves

## Liberated ones

---

Those who are liberated while still living  
See both—truth and relative appearance  
Seen directly by the inner intelligence  
It is sattva, transparency—not the mind

Knowers of truth are in perfect equilibrium  
Living their life here playfully, as it were  
Though engaged in diverse actions  
They behold the inner light continually

Concepts of unity and duality do not arise  
There are no tendencies in the enlightened heart  
The seeds of ignorance have been burnt  
Delusion never rises in sattva's abode

## You can reach this state too

---

Reach this state of sattva or transparency  
Hold onto wisdom—'tis light on the path  
Infinite Brahman is Infinite Brahman  
The reality of world-appearance as well

Appearances are insentient and unreal  
Their substratum is pure consciousness  
Since the substratum is reality itself  
Appearances exist as appearances in it

Recollect your essential nature  
Abandon all notions of diversity  
You are the self-luminous being  
Salutations to the cosmic being

That which is known as Rama  
Is infinite consciousness in truth

In it rise and fall numerous universes  
Remain in equanimity like infinite space

Fire is inseparable from heat  
Fragrance from the lotus flower  
Experiencing too is inseparable  
From infinite consciousness

Experiencing is inseparable from consciousness  
Ego-sense is inseparable from experiencing  
The individual is inseparable from ego-sense  
The mind is inseparable from the individual

The senses are inseparable from the mind  
The body is inseparable from the senses  
The world is inseparable from the body  
And, there is nothing but this world

These dependent categories have always been  
Not created or set into motion somehow  
The truth is that there is naught else  
But self-experiencing of the infinite

There is emptiness in the empty  
Brahman pervades Brahman  
Truth ever shines in truth  
And fullness fills fullness

Remain so with a heart pure as space  
Do what naturally needs to be done  
Remain unaffected by praise or censure  
Above likes and dislikes—witnessing all

Be free of egoistic volitional activity  
Utterly non-attached to people and things

Free of all concepts and tendencies  
Free of conditioning like a lamp without oil

If you have listened most attentively  
Ignorance should have left you by now  
You should be well—resting in the self  
Free of all conditioning, and happy

### **Truth declared again**

---

Listen attentively while I declare again  
Truth which expands one's consciousness  
Even if you are not fully awakened yet  
Listening attentively will save you from sorrow

In ignorance one assumes body as self  
The senses then become one's worst enemies  
If one is endowed with self-knowledge  
The senses are then pleasant and contented

The self is never affected by the body  
Nor is body related to self in any way  
They are like light and darkness  
You must understand this very clearly

Understanding how both really are  
Gives insight into all of creation  
Not from its changing appearances  
But from the truth that stays unseen

When this truth is not understood  
Delusion arises and flourishes within  
Notions devoid of any substance  
Are taken as truth—one suffers greatly

In the absence of direct self-knowledge  
Notions carry one hither and thither  
The senses try to apprehend objects  
And imagine meaningful experience

Infinite consciousness does dwell in all  
But absence of direct self-knowledge  
Gives rise to limited finite appearances  
One mistakes these as something real

Life-force provides energy for living  
It is not meant for personal gain  
In the absence of direct self-knowledge  
One misuses it—and suffers dire consequences

Fools harness life-force for selfish ends  
Not knowing they are playing with fire  
Which will surely ricochet most fiery  
And extract the price of foolish indulgence

The company of such indulgent fools  
Is like sitting on a tree—soon to be felled  
Anything given to them is thrown into mud  
To converse with them is utterly meaningless

Ignorance of self is the seed of all trouble  
All sorrows and calamities stem from it  
Ignorance pervades and sustains creation  
Terrible sorrow repeatedly visits the ignorant

The tree of infatuation grows in the wicked heart  
The fire of hate rages in that forest too  
Jealousy and destructive criticism are the floods  
Flowers of envy are sought by the bees of worry

Death is meant only for such vicious fools  
Birth, childhood, youth and old age  
Ending again in the experience of death  
Repeatedly experienced by the ignorant

With small fleshy eyes one sees some earth  
He regards these as forests and cities  
He sees women who are dressed nicely  
And regards them as pleasure objects

He sees affluence, wealth and prosperity  
And regards them as joy and security  
Pain and pleasure are not in objects  
They are in misguided inner 'regarding'

It is utter ignorance to regard anything  
Anyone or anything as pleasurable or not  
As these are not parts of people and things  
These are one's self-subscribed delusions

Pursuing what one regards as pleasure  
And avoiding what is regarded as pain  
This is the business of ignorant fools  
The price for this is their suffering

Like a beginningless river is delusion  
It gets muddier as it flows along  
From useless actions and reactions  
Carrying great sorrow downstream

Unable to satisfy all one's desires  
Overworked one is under-cultured  
Outwardly rich—inwardly bankrupt  
Desires and expectations invite death

Dissatisfaction and unhappiness is poverty  
Affluence cannot mask inner emptiness  
See—all that is chased is insubstantial  
It only increases delusion and brings senility

Creation has no real substantiality  
It's only substance is utter delusion  
Appearances seem to invite life-force  
Which takes you along if not vigilant

The decadent concept of world-appearance  
Imprisoned in the senses, bound by conditioning  
Hopes and desires are the threads  
Of binding chords that are self-imposed

Like a delicate creeper is world-appearance  
Constantly trembling against prana's winds  
Which sheds all kinds of beings ruthlessly  
Abandoning them to their destruction

Many have risen above this quagmire  
World-appearance is indeed living hell  
Actions polluted by vain desires of fruit  
Swallowed by the obstinacy of action's end

Diverse scenes rise and cease daily  
Like ripples and waves in the ocean  
The ignorant are bound by their notions  
Blow after hard blow fails to awaken them

Creatures and insects silently endure  
All opposites nature afflicts them with  
Contemplating as it were through it all  
Of their own past evil actions until death

All prosperity and adversity in life's march  
From childhood to old age and into death  
Immersion in happiness and unhappiness  
All extensions of dense darkness of ignorance

Ignorance expands by means of ignorance  
Yielding a harvest of greater ignorance  
When it seeks wisdom, it gets cleansed  
Growing into wisdom like winter to spring

Ignorance's creeper twists and turns  
As it wraps itself around its ignorant host  
Somewhere, somehow wisdom is encountered  
Purified a little but it twists and turns again

Memory of past experiences sustains ignorance  
Sustained self-inquiry eats ignorance away  
The creeper manifests as all the world you see  
When transcended—self-knowledge is attained

### **Vasistha: On Ignorance**

---

Existence-consciousness-bliss absolute  
Truth concerning this is beyond thought  
Beyond understanding and imagination  
The faculty of conceptualization arises in it

This self-understanding is considered threefold  
Regarded as subtle, middling and gross  
Or sattva, rajas and tamas in Sanskrit  
These three combined constitute nature

Ignorance is nature and it is threefold  
Each have the same three subdivisions  
These nine qualities constitute the universe  
Beyond this is the source of all beings

Different beings are constituted differently  
Depending on their own inner evolution  
Anyone can reach the highest rung  
Of liberation while living and dispel ignorance

Self-knowledge is transformation itself  
Ignorance gets illumined when it dawns  
Like ripples dissolving in the calm ocean  
Ignorance dissolves in self-knowledge

These distinctions however are just verbal  
Real distinctions do not exist at all  
There is neither ignorance nor self-knowledge  
Infinite consciousness is the only existence

Cease to see knowledge and ignorance  
As different entities—what exists alone exists  
The reflection of knowledge within itself  
Is what is considered to be ignorance

Abandoning both notions—truth remains  
It may be something or nothing  
It is omnipotent, empty but not empty  
Because it is full of consciousness

Like space in a pot is everywhere too  
Indestructible—it is the reality in all things  
It's very presence causes cosmic motion  
Hence it is said it does nothing at all

In rocks, consciousness remains immobile  
Abandoning its thinking faculty, so to say  
It is like the state of deep sleep  
Far away from the state of liberation

Liberation is the state of supreme peace  
Intelligent inquiry is required to discover  
The nature of self which ignorance covers  
When brought out is called awakening

Investigation into the truth is requisite  
The teachings of scriptures are helpful  
As is the company of enlightened sages  
For realization of identity with pure being

As long as conditioning exists in the heart  
Even in its most subtle 'seed' state  
It should be regarded as deep-sleep state  
As it gives rise to rebirth and sorrow

Objects like rocks that appear insentient  
Are not free of self-limitation or vasana  
It is latent in them like flowers in seeds  
Which sprout and yield flowers in due time

Where the seed of self-limitation exists  
That state is like deep sleep—not perfection  
All self-limitation or vasana must be destroyed  
Even a trace will disallow experience of perfection

When all self-limitation is completely removed  
One is established in the state of pure being  
Whether such a one is alive or not  
He is never afflicted by sorrow again

Energy-consciousness exists in all  
But stays latent in immobile forms  
It is this that determines the nature of each  
The inner arrangement of molecules as well

This energy-consciousness or chit-shakti  
Is the energy of infinite consciousness  
Non-different from infinite consciousness  
This realized directly destroys all sorrow

Non-seeing of this truth is ignorance  
Cause of the world-appearance you see  
Just as the rising of a thought destroys sleep  
Inner intelligence awakening destroys ignorance

When approaching darkness with light in hand  
It vanishes—it is simply not found to exist  
So also when one begins to inquire within  
Ignorance too ceases—discovered not to exist

Self-inquiry is direct looking within  
To see the truth without any thought  
'What is I' in this body of constituents  
Composition of blood, flesh, bone and such

Instantly—ignorance ceases to be  
That with a beginning has end as well  
When all with beginning are ruled out  
Ignorance ceases—what remains is truth

That which is to be sought can be regarded  
Either as something or as no-thing  
It is when ignorance has been dispelled  
Each has to realize that for himself

Ignorance is belief in anything as real  
As existing outside cosmic consciousness  
When realization dawns—all is Brahman  
Ignorance ceases—it cannot be found

## Truth Declared, Still Again

---

Let me repeat once again this truth  
For the sake of your spiritual awakening  
Realization of truth does not happen  
Without such repetition—spiritual practice

Ignorance has become dense by repetition  
In thousands of births and experiences  
Expressed, experienced and expressed again  
Within and outside of this body

Self-knowledge is beyond reach of the senses  
It arises when mind and senses cease  
Live firmly established in self-knowledge  
Having known what there is to be known

Many have attained to the supreme state  
You too can lead the enlightened life  
Beyond the reach of sorrow and grief  
Firmly established in self-knowledge

## 2. On Brahman

All that appears as this world-jugglery  
Is absolute consciousness—Brahman only  
Anywhere, anytime, there is naught else  
This world, the elements, is Brahman only

I, yourself, enemies, friends and relatives  
All that seems to exist in periods of time  
Are rooted in Brahman, there is naught else  
As ripples are non-different from the ocean

On account of inherent infinite variety  
It seems to expand and appear diverse

This too is possible by its own power  
Which is non-different from itself only

Attraction, repulsion, likes and dislikes  
Are all imaginative modes of the mind  
The absence of thought is their destruction  
Bringing to end the expansive appearance

Brahman alone moves in all as itself  
Unfolding all and collapsing all within  
Just what do you call joy or sorrow  
When there is neither 'I' nor another

All you see including 'I' is Brahman  
Passion, dispassion, craving and aversion  
These are but imagined notions  
As birth, body and death too is Brahman

In Brahman things come together  
In Brahman do they move apart  
Never coming together or moving apart  
As Brahman is the absolute reality

What is the cause of sorrow and grief  
What is there to be rejoicing about  
Waves moving about on the ocean  
Always remains water—ever unchanged

The agitation we see is an appearance  
The mind imagines division in delusion  
Quickly classifying I as the individual  
And things as insentient matter foolishly

What you consider insentient matter  
Is a contrast with yourself as sentient

Notions arisen your mind somehow  
The wise do not hold such erroneous views

The world is full of sorrow to the ignorant  
This same world is full of bliss to the wise  
Just as the world is dark to the blind  
Being full of light to one who has sight

Brahman alone exists, all exist in him  
Just as ripples exist in the ocean  
They are not born, they do not die  
'This is' and 'is not' are deluded notions

These notions do not have a cause at all  
Nor do they have any motivation  
Just as crystal reflects different objects  
So too do notions arise as reflections

Self remains itself— notions or not  
Just as the ocean with or without ripples  
Independent entities just do not exist  
What is seen as the body is but a notion

Objects of perception that look so real  
People and all the forms of life too  
Thoughts, feelings and the inner world  
Are all Brahman only—there is naught else

Duality exists in the eyes of the ignorant  
Mind, intellect, ego-sense and elements  
Senses and all the diverse phenomena  
Are all Brahman only—there is naught else

Just as a single sound reechoes into diversity  
Brahman experiences multiplicity within itself

As a dreamer dreams many diverse dreams  
All dream objects are within—and himself only

Gold is not recognized when mixed with earth  
Brahman is not recognized with impurity  
Ignorance is non-recognition of truth  
Get rid of it now—experience what seers see

Brahman being omnipotent appears as all  
Devoid of any transformation or change  
When this is known, ignorance is dispelled  
As one appearing as a stranger is recognized

You must know by direct experience  
That duality is an illusory appearance  
'This is not I'—this has to be realized  
From this arises unwavering dispassion

Notions of 'I' and 'you' are dispelled  
Realizing all you see is indeed Brahman  
From a blade of grass to the highest mountain  
All and everything is non-dual Brahman

All things exist and flow from Brahman  
Omnipresent—the only self there is  
Pure consciousness—devoid of objectivity  
It is pure light—referred to variously

In its light do all and everything shine  
As if they had light of their very own  
I am that Brahman—pure consciousness  
Sparks of whom rise and reflect continually

Only appearing to be in contact in experience  
Because of the ego-sense of the conditioned

Yet beyond their reach—untouched by them  
The source of all happiness and delight

Free of all notions like pleasure and pain  
I am eternal, ever pure consciousness  
In which there is true experiencing  
Pure intelligence without interference

That intelligent energy functioning as all  
That pure consciousness manifesting as all  
That imperishable light of all lights am I  
Peaceful and pure—supreme Brahman I am

I am that consciousness in between  
All objects that are seen in sunlight  
The very self of the seer and the seen  
Unbroken in all states and conditions

The taste of sugarcane juice is one  
Though it derives from many plants  
So also I am the consciousness  
Indwelling all beings and everything

I am that consciousness-energy  
Larger than the vast universe  
Yet subtler than a single atom  
Invisible—the nature of experiencing

Jewelry made of gold is gold only  
In the same way all is consciousness  
Pervading all without any change  
Appearing different due to conditioning

Consciousness bestows fruits of all thoughts  
Light that alone shines—the supreme gain

Pervading all, ever awake and alert  
Its energy gives appearances of diversity

Consciousness is the only reality  
Bestower of differing characteristics  
Making substances appear different  
While never losing its homogeneity

Continuous and uniform in all states  
Waking, dream, deep sleep and the fourth  
It shines resplendent when all thoughts cease  
When all agitating excitements have ceased as well

Devoid of desire and indivisible  
Indweller of all—still beyond diversity  
The cosmic net in which all are caught  
But ever unchanged though manifest

The nature of being and non-being  
Resting place of all that is good and divine  
It alone plays the roles of all beings  
Still forever united and liberated

The life of all living beings you see  
Uncreated—the ever existent reality  
Reflected variously in sense-experience  
Yet senses can never know or experience

In it do all beings rejoice at all times  
It itself is pure bliss and beyond all joy  
Like space but far beyond space it is  
Seemingly doing all though it does nothing

All this is 'I' and all this is 'mine'  
But I am not 'I' nor 'other than I'

Realizing this I am free of distress  
Let the world-illusion be just what it is

Established in this, sages have lived  
Long lives in perfect peace and equanimity  
Free of psychological predisposition  
Not rejecting either life or death

Unshaken in their direct experience  
Firm like a mountain they roamed about  
Engaging in activities that seemed natural  
Doing what felt best needed to be done

Their minds had fully entered sattva  
Free of delusion and egoistic notions  
Free of all desires and achievement  
Ever-balanced at the results of actions

Equal vision in praise and censure  
Balanced in defeat and success  
Therefore beyond grief and despair  
And able to function most naturally

Follow their example and be ever free  
Make the personality absolutely egoless  
Let appropriate actions proceed from you  
Resting in indivisible infinite consciousness

Infinite consciousness alone is the truth  
It is the reality in which appearances arise  
Diversity is neither real nor unreal  
Be unattached to anything and beyond grief

### 3. Bhusunda's Story - The Way of Yoga

#### The Two Paths

---

Yoga is the way of mind's transcendence  
Crossing over the cycles of birth and death  
Two main approaches comprise the means  
Self-knowledge and restraint of life-force

Yoga has somehow come to be associated  
With restraint of life-force or prana  
The path of self-knowledge is difficult for some  
Similarly, yoga's path is difficult for others

My conviction is that inquiry is easy for all  
Because truth inquired into is ever-present  
Let me first shed light on the yoga path  
Restraint of life-force to transcend mind

#### Bhusunda - The Long Lived

---

In one corner of infinite consciousness  
A mirage-like world appears, so to say  
I once heard a great sage's discussion  
On an ancient story of long-lived beings

On a tree in a far away distant land  
Dwells a crow known as Bhusunda  
Free of attraction and aversion  
He has lived longer than any I know

Inspired at hearing Bhusunda's story  
I set out to meet him personally  
Knowing sages can assume any form  
Bhusunda had lived many world-cycles

It was tremendous to be in his presence  
He had perfect memory of ages gone by  
Free of 'I-ness', friend to all was he  
Remaining silent unless he needed to speak

### **Meeting Bhusunda**

---

I humbly approached this ancient one  
He recognized me instantly as sage Vasistha  
Explaining the purpose of my visit  
I asked for his wisdom to my questions

I asked to know a little more about him  
How long he had lived and its secret  
Important things about ages past  
And what was ordained about his life

### **Bhusunda's Reply**

---

Listen attentively to the story I narrate  
It will destroy the sins of all who listen  
Very long ago a female deity existed  
Who had for her vehicle a powerful crow

The crow mated and had many offspring  
I was born as one of the little crows  
We approached our wise father one day  
For his sagacious council and guidance

The female deity had already instructed us  
On self-knowledge and the way to liberation  
We practiced and attained both of them  
And wished to know where best to dwell

In accordance with our father's instructions  
We came here, making this our abode to dwell

Ages have passed, my brothers have left  
All ascending to the heavenly realm

### **Bhusunda's Timeless Wisdom**

---

Through ages of time I continue to dwell here  
Though life as a crow is held in contempt by most  
The creator provides for even this lone crow  
Allowing survival through time and calamities

I remain established and immersed in the self  
Ever content with whatever comes naturally  
Cheerful under all conditions or calamities  
Having abandoned vain self-centered activity

Useless activities drain body and mind  
Anxiety is a great drain—abandon it  
You can do this if you avoid seeking  
Anything but that which comes naturally

Mentally abandon body identification  
Establish yourself in self-knowledge  
Remain where you are, rise above time  
Through the practice of pranayama

Great peace you will know in the heart  
Events in the world will not affect you  
Things and people will come and go  
To and fro into the ocean of time

Standing on the shore you are ever dry  
The shore is the changeless, steady state  
You remain calm—ever unaffected  
Untouched by the splashing waves of change

Engage yourself in diverse activities  
In doing the needful there can be no harm  
Avoid drowning in mental modifications  
And never lose contact with reality

When one is firmly rooted in truth  
Time and tide lose their strength  
Changes come and changes go  
You continue to exist as truth

During the great cosmic dissolution  
I meditated on firmness as a mountain  
When creation resumed in a new age  
I meditated on water and flowed with it

Thus meditating differently in midst of change  
I was perfectly adapted to all change  
One cannot survive winds of change  
If one adamantly resists the new winds

During the dawn of new creation  
I meditated as wind and gently flowed  
When nature gradually matured to shape  
I resumed my abode in this very nest

The supreme being cannot be transgressed  
One must align himself with his will  
It is his will that things should be one way  
Discover how to be one with everything

### **Bhusunda: Memories of Ages**

---

I remember earth without much at all  
No trees, plants or even mountains  
Covered in lava, only partly illumined  
Inhabited by all sorts of strange beings

Waters covered vast areas of earth  
Then emerged forests and great mountains  
Humans appeared after quite some time  
What is now has appeared in many cycles

### **Bhusunda: On Pranayama**

---

Death does not wish to kill those souls  
Who are of attraction and aversion  
False notions, mental habits and perversions  
Desires, hopes, greed, lust and hate

If you are established in pure awareness  
Undistracted by the mind and at peace  
Untouched by the evils of lust and hate  
You are inseparable with the natural order

Meditation on the infinite consciousness  
Eliminates sorrow and ignorance its cause  
Purifying and restoring the heart of one  
Who experiences self directly in meditation

One can also meditate on the life-force  
This is the secret of longevity—my way  
This too bestows self-knowledge and freedom  
And overcomes all delusion permanently

This body is supported by three pillars  
The three sheaths or the three nadis  
It is endowed with nine gates or openings  
Protected vehemently by the ego-sense

Body is an assemblage of the elements  
The inner instrument or antahkarna  
In the middle are subtle ida and pingala  
Left and right subtle energy channels

There are three lotus-like wheels  
Vital airs can cause them to vibrate  
Two vital airs are especially important  
Prana is above and apana below

I'm completely dedicated to these two  
They are of fatigue and tiredness  
In the heart they shine like sun and moon  
They are like the cartwheels of the mind

Prana is established in the upper part  
Apana dwells in the lower portion  
Both constantly move in and out  
With practice they can be controlled

When the apana has ceased to move  
And prana arises not from the heart  
Both these must begin to happen  
It is called retention or kumbhaka

Three points are there for the three  
Inhalation, retention and exhalation  
In front of the forehead; outside the nose;  
And in the heart-lotus—prana's source

By devoted practice gradually restrain  
The vital airs which are restless naturally  
Restraint or kumbhaka brings about  
Rest in the mind's ceaseless activity

When the heart's impurities are cleansed  
By sincere devotion to prana and apana  
One is freed of the grip of delusion  
Attaining awakening and inner peace

If you are able to reach that space  
Where apana and prana do unite  
You will soar high beyond all grief  
Transcending samsara—never born again

Prana modifies itself to apana  
After abandoning its burning heat  
Then abandons its coolness  
Rising upward as prana again

One must know the truth directly  
About energies inner movements  
The same energy animates everything  
Including thoughts that agitate the mind

Control of the inner vital airs  
Destroys darkness of ignorance  
As ignorance loses its fuel source  
And cannot operate as delusion

While inner darkness continues  
One sees things under its influence  
When the heart is thoroughly purified  
Self-knowledge is experienced

### **Bhusunda: Observing Energy**

---

If one keenly observes the exact spot  
Where prana is consumed by apana  
Where in turn apana consumes prana  
The mind becomes peaceful, free of grief

Behold within yourself directly  
Where inhalation turns to exhalation  
Where exhalation turns to inhalation  
The precise location and moment of change

The wise regard this place and time  
Of energy's change as most important  
Right there between that change  
Is pure infinite consciousness

Infinite consciousness indwells  
Prana and apana as with all else  
It not only animates prana and apana  
It is the substratum of both and all

All things abide in that consciousness  
All things and beings does it animate  
All power and energy is consciousness  
Infinite consciousness is the only reality

### **Bhusunda Concludes**

---

I salute both prana and apana  
Appearing as energy movement  
Animated and indwelt by consciousness  
I take refuge in infinite consciousness

By regular and systematic practice  
Of pranayama described by me  
You too can reach total equanimity  
And attain happiness and immortality

Contemplation on the movement  
Of the union of prana and apana  
Confers the highest good on one  
Total freedom from all conditioning

You'll be free of the body's clutches  
And the mind's relentless tyranny  
You'll rejoice with the great one's  
Who have crossed samsara's shores

I rejoice in the state of pure bliss  
Friend of all—belonging to none  
None belong to me as I now know  
I am the world and its inner intelligence

### **Vasistha Concludes**

---

I lauded the great Bhusunda  
Who humbly praised me in return  
Thanking me for the great blessing  
Of visiting him after so very long

Such is the nature of great ones  
For all their great accomplishments  
They feel it is nothing special really  
As all can and should attain to it

Practice pranayama with devotion  
If you want to bring peace in the mind  
It is a simple way to end the delusion  
That has caused much suffering and grief

## **4. The Way of Wisdom and Meditation**

### **Appearance and Reality**

---

If one seriously seeks the sources  
Of notions—sources of world-appearance  
Its insubstantiability will be known  
Like discovering a mirage's illusion

When one knows this world seemingly so real  
Is an appearance of one's own self  
By relentless inquiry of mind made pure  
Fear and delusion vanish permanently

Realizing death is inevitable to all  
Why grieve over the death of kith and kin  
Or even one's own approaching death  
Beings appear and disappear continually

What is true is always true  
What is unreal is always unreal  
What exists always exists  
Where is cause for sorrow in this

Do not put hope or faith in the unreal  
It is willing subscription to bondage  
Live in this world free of all hope  
Doing what needs to be done naturally

Avoid what seems to be inappropriate  
Be free of the desirable and undesirable  
These chords bind you and bring sorrow  
You can live happily without these notions

Infinite consciousness alone exists  
What appears is but an appearance  
Know that either experiences are not yours  
Or that you are the all and be free

Attraction and aversion are the chords  
Twin forces with which one ties oneself  
Whatever is attained in any realm  
Is attained by abandoning both of them

Ignorant fools live prompted by these forces  
They think it is choice but it is not so  
Being learned does not mean much at all  
The strength to abandon these is what counts

Again and again I declare the truth  
World-appearance is but a long dream  
Wake up, wake up now, dear one  
Behold the self and shine like the sun

Awaken thoroughly by self-knowledge  
Live in this world fully enlightened  
Without getting trapped in world-appearance  
Without being subjected to suffering

The ignorant suffer unnecessarily in life  
Always subject to the effects of change  
Breaking up as things in their life break up  
Being shattered as things shatter naturally

In changing appearance there is no loss  
Changeless is what animates all change  
That changelessness is the substance of all  
Everything exists in and from changelessness

Infinite consciousness cannot be destroyed  
It does not undergo any change at all  
Illusion is like the experience in a Ferris Wheel  
Feeling things are moving in the opposite way

The spiritual hero boldly rejects appearance  
Knowing it to be a product of thought  
Ignorant notions that exist in the mind  
Eternally vigilant he avoids ignorance's grasp

The inert body does not entertain desires  
It does not have any motivation to act  
Self is all, what motivation can it have  
It is the inner witnessing intelligence

The mind is itself ignorance and delusion  
It is all bark, it has not bite at all  
Fools are frightened by it unnecessarily  
They run this way and that way for help

Gird up your loins for the real task on hand  
Withdraw the senses and gather the rays  
Plunge yourself now in deep meditation  
Slay this ghost—the noise-making machine

Strip the ego-sense of all coverings  
It hides behind what does not belong to it  
Strip it bare and ruthlessly and abandon it  
Make it incapable of doing any further harm

Whatever is done through the body usually  
Is done by the ego-sense with energy's help  
Rein in energy by pranayama and inquiry  
An oilless lamp must give up its flame

It is the self that acts indirectly in all  
Allowing experience for one's evolution  
The price tag for heedlessness is yourself  
Hence avoid all impulsive experiments

What have you to do with the mind  
You are the self, not the fickle mind  
It has foolishly assumed itself as self  
Riding the waves of silence's consent

This foolishness is the cause of all  
Birth, suffering and death its effects  
Ruthlessly abandon this inner imposter  
None can protect one who does not do this

Neither scriptures, guru or relatives  
Can help one enslaved by the mind  
Aid does come to one taking up the task  
Of slaying the mind beyond resurrection

They are 'good people' who exert hard  
To slay the mind... to have succeeded  
Freely, they render real service to all  
By remaining free and guiding others

Uplift yourself by the real self  
All have access to immeasurable help  
People wallow and wail waiting for help  
While all help that can be resides in them

Do not wander in samsara aimlessly  
Caught up in family, friends and career  
These will be soon wiped out completely  
It does not matter what you feel about it

Impermanence must go by its very nature  
Why do you foolishly feel it should stay  
People enter the world stage at one point  
And leave the stage without any approval

As long as ego-sense protects the body  
It will invite a host of pain and suffering  
It is ignorant—what else can it do  
Arise now and complete your real task

### **Asking Lord Siva**

---

Once while living in the abode of Lord Siva  
I asked him the best way of worshipping  
How by worship does one destroy all sins  
And thereby promote auspiciousness

## Lord Siva's Reply

---

God is not all these deities people worship  
Nor the sun, moon or so-called holy people  
God is formless, indivisible and eternal  
This infinite consciousness is called Siva

That is the all—fit to be worshipped  
However all are not able to do so  
Feeling the necessity for a concrete form  
Which naturally bestow finite results

Ignoring the infinite for the sake of the finite  
One discards a garden for a bush  
Sages do worship forms sometimes  
But just for the sheer joy of worship

Wisdom, self-control and recognition  
Of the divine omnipresence or God  
Flowers of wisdom and dedication  
These are the articles for worship

Infinite consciousness alone exists  
Even now, utterly devoid of objectivity  
The mountains and everything you see  
All are naught but pure consciousness

The words and terms we use to discuss  
Theories about creation and dissolution  
Are only to show the interconnectedness of all  
Through the limitations of verbal expression

The duality we seem to experience in life  
Is like the experience of the dream state  
Subject, object and witness seem distinct  
But all happen in the field of the mind

Waking and dream state are similar  
Both are similar in characteristics  
Consciousness is the substance of both  
Nothing really happens in either of them

Pure consciousness is the only substance  
That is the Lord—the supreme truth  
That I am, that you are—that is the all  
There is naught else—realize this directly

Worship of that Lord is true worship  
In it all desires come to an end  
He is undivided, indivisible and non-dual  
His adoration is the fountain-source of joy

Some find external worship necessary  
Finding unbroken inner worship difficult  
As it requires tremendous self-control  
And inner purity to be fixed in non-duality

But those seeking release from samsara  
The vicious circle of birth and death  
Worship the divine omnipresence  
Undivided, indivisible—He alone is God

Hidden in all beings—the indweller  
He veils the truth though omnipresent  
In the middle between being and non-being  
Is God—the supreme truth indicated by OM

Existing everywhere—the essence of life  
In plants, in you, me and everything  
Existing in gods and goddesses too  
All forms indicate its presence only

This entire universe is pervaded by Him  
Holy One—not distant from anyone  
Not difficult to attain if one is sincere  
As he indwells all bodies including yours

He does everything, knows everything  
He is the light by which all things function  
Diverse activities take place in him only  
The omnipresent indweller—the only God

Transcending the intellect, mind and senses  
He cannot be known by these finite means  
Seemingly doing everything—he does nothing  
As spring does in the flowering of trees

Functioning differently he appears different  
Like different oceans of one water's mass  
The experiencer in the lotus-like body  
Gathering honey with the bee of the mind

Everything flows from infinite consciousness  
As rivers and rivulets from the ocean  
The wheel of ignorance sustains life  
Through the energy inherent in consciousness

Like a mirror reflecting within itself  
Without undergoing any change at all  
Appearing as different beings and things  
All and everything is infinite consciousness

Like a creeper it grows within itself  
Sprinkled with latent tendencies  
Desiring its buds, all beings its parts  
Appearing as many while remaining one

Consciousness alone shines like the sun  
By this is all thought of, expressed and done  
Appearing as many, remaining one  
Casting shadows in itself as it were

Actions generated by thoughts and notions  
Are possible because of its omnipresence  
The body can do nothing without its light  
Consciousness alone arises in itself

Unseen in itself, it makes all appear  
Immovable, it moves great distances  
Indivisible, it appears as this world  
Consciousness alone exists—naught else

Any distinctions that seem to appear  
Are verbal, just for communication  
Quickly disappearing when inquired into  
Consciousness alone steadily remains

It cannot be modified or made impure  
Eternal, ever-present and devoid of mind  
The reality in all forms and experiences  
All rise, appear and subside in it only

Mind is conditioned consciousness  
But consciousness remains unconditioned  
The individual is a vehicle of consciousness  
Consciousness's inherent energy sustains it

Life-force or prana is mind's vehicle  
When the mind merges into the spiritual heart  
Prana does not move, it stands ever still  
The mind attains a quiescent state

All things appear in consciousness  
As multiple reflections within itself  
Ignorance sustains apparent individuality  
Quelling ignorance quiescence is regained

As long as mind's conditioning functions  
One continues revolving in samsara's cycle  
Impure tendencies are itself conditioning  
Obstructing peace, happiness and liberation

When the heart fills with pure tendencies  
Based on indivisibility as the truth of things  
All conflicts cease and there is harmony  
Improved health, longevity and liberation

If one continues to nourish division within  
One writes his own order for experience  
Necessitating rebirth one or more rounds  
In situations over which one has no sway

Belief in diversity must be abandoned  
It is in one's own very best interests  
It brings supreme blessedness and peace  
Beyond all experiences imaginable

Invocations to worship the supreme being  
Are unnecessary as it is omnipresent  
Closer than one's breath or heartbeat  
Realization of its omnipresence is its worship

Subtler than sub-atomic particles  
Yet pervading the universe and beyond  
Time and space are contained in it  
Yet it is beyond eternity and infinity

It does nothing, remaining ever unchanged  
Yet the universe has been fashioned by it  
Staying the same non-dual substance  
Yet all this diversity appears so very real

### **Formless but with Five Aspects**

---

Though formless, five are its aspects  
Will, space, time, order and manifest nature  
Countless powers and potencies too  
Like knowledge, action and non-action

But these are pure consciousness only  
They're called potencies for communication's sake  
All of creation is consciousness's stage  
In which these potencies manifest creation

Natural order of things is foremost of all  
It ordains that all should have a characteristic  
From a blade of grass to the creator Brahma  
Each has their inherent unique characteristic

Free of excitement but not limitation  
As impurities are what really limit one  
It is this that keeps up the world-appearance  
The drama of life in this grand creation

It is this that produces and removes  
Rearranging all on the world stage  
The sun, moon, stars and galaxies too  
Are all controlled by its sheer presence

Infinite consciousness is the only God  
Ever alert—the eternal silent witness  
Non-different from the dance is the dancer  
The happenings and the cosmic order

## Meditation (with attributes)

---

Such is the Lord—worthy of adoration  
Constantly worshipped by holy ones  
The same lord is approached in different ways  
Hear now some ways for his worship

First you must abandon the body-idea  
The notion that you are 'this body'  
Meditation alone is the truest worship  
Hence meditate constantly without break

He is pure intelligence, most radiant  
More effulgent than a thousand suns  
The light that illumines all lights  
The inner light of all and everything

Limitless space is his throat  
Firmament his feet, directions his arms  
The worlds his weapons held in his hands  
The entire universe is hidden in his heart

The gods and deities are his body hairs  
Cosmic potencies are his energy  
Time stands watch as his gatekeeper  
Thousands of heads and limbs has he

Eyes and ears everywhere he has  
Touching, tasting and hearing all  
Thinker of all thoughts he is  
Bestower of all thoughts is he

He dwells in all as the indweller  
The unseen innermost self of all is he  
All beings and things—he is the all  
Thus meditate ceaselessly and realize

External materials are not required  
Worship Him by your own consciousness  
Thus he is attained by the least effort  
Worship by self-realization alone

This is supreme meditation and worship  
Continuous unbroken awareness  
Of the indwelling presence, consciousness  
Realize oneness and attain liberation

Meditation is the highest offering  
You yourself are water, flower and fruit  
The self is not realized by other means  
Meditation is the pathway to liberation

Even a few seconds of real meditation  
Bestows more than rites or rituals  
'Tis the supreme yoga—highest action  
Meditation unfolds divinity from within

### **Meditation (without attributes)**

---

Internal worship of the self  
Is the greatest of all purifiers  
It destroys darkness immediately  
It is perpetual unbroken meditation

Whether walking, standing or asleep  
Through all actions, thoughts and speech  
Contemplate without break in activity  
The indwelling divine omnipresence

First discover and establish in inner self  
The manifest consciousness or self-awareness  
This is what comes, goes through the body  
Engaging in diverse external activities

This inner intelligence is a divine ray  
Light illumined by pure intelligence  
Eternally hidden in all substances  
As extroverted awareness it stays unseen

As prana he moves the vital airs  
Sense contact is rendered to experience  
Dwelling within as the innermost self  
He alone is knower and experiencer

Though without parts he is the all  
Dwelling within he is omnipresent  
He is the intelligence in every limb  
The thinking faculty of the mind is he

Between inhalation and exhalation  
Between the eye-brows is he as well  
In the throat, palate and in the heart  
The prompter of all thoughts is he

He is the reality in the imagined  
And in the unimagined as well  
Dwelling in all as oil in the seed  
He indwells throughout the body

He alone shines as pure consciousness  
Immediately everywhere is his presence  
Pure experiencing in all experiences  
He alone appears as every object

Indweller of the body as pure intelligence  
Thus should one contemplate the Lord  
The body's functions and faculties  
Serve that intelligence as his companions

The mind is the Lord's messenger  
Energy of knowing and action his consorts  
Diverse aspects of knowledge his ornaments  
The organs of action are his gateways of travel

Feel that you are the indivisible self  
Unchanging, ever full and infinite  
The indwelling intelligence in the body  
Thus contemplate and reach goodness

Thus you will thoroughly purify self  
Of all conditioning and limitation  
Hence worship the Lord indwelling all  
As intelligence pervading the entire body

This worship is performed perpetually  
Without special materials to be obtained  
Offer all that is obtained without effort  
Offer all that is attained quite naturally

Your every action should be worship  
Eating, drinking and every experience  
Including life, death, joys and sorrows  
Poverty, prosperity and noble qualities

Everything that comes to you naturally  
Are articles for worship and adoration  
Never think about what is lost or has gone  
Worship the Lord with all that has come

Worship is unbroken abidance in truth  
Being established in supreme equanimity  
Regarding everything as good and auspicious  
Realizing everything is the one self only

To pleasant and unpleasant be equal-minded  
Recognizing the same beauty animates both  
Abandon notions of 'this I am' and 'this I am not'  
All is one indivisible pure consciousness

In all forms and their modifications  
The same self indwells and animates  
Inner distinctions are walls that separate  
Worship the self in all appearing forms

Without clinging and without rejecting  
Enjoy what comes naturally to you  
When things change, do not interfere  
Enjoy the change as—'this has now come'

Soar beyond mind's insistence on division  
See that all walls are in the mind only  
See that they do not exist in what is seen  
Act in accordance with the unity of things

Whatever comes naturally—unsought  
Are the best articles for worship  
The goodness in you is the best of sweets  
It is the very best offering in worship

Worship is not just in the prayer area  
Just like breathing—it stays unbroken  
The mind must thus always be balanced  
Quiescent, in equal vision—free of division

Established in this inner equanimity  
Sincerely seek the inner intelligence  
This inner intelligence is the master key  
Flowing from and into infinite consciousness

Those who worship the inner intelligence  
Are free of perversion and conceit  
As the same inner intelligence is in all  
Verily masquerading in different forms

Those who worship the inner intelligence  
Are free of desires, craving and rejecting  
How can you desire or reject anything  
When the same self is known as the self of all

All that you do from morning 'til night  
Offer all as worship unto the Lord  
Pure consciousness, indwelling presence  
Second to Him—none can exist

Likes, dislikes, pleasure and pain  
All these are seen as concepts only  
When worshipping the indwelling light  
The best worship of the cosmic being

This cosmic consciousness is what is seen  
As the world outside of people and things  
What a wonder it is—such forgetfulness  
Appearances masking the unchanging reality

Words cannot describe the grand mystery  
It is not possible to teach another of it  
Those who consider God to be someplace  
Worship a creation of thought only

Beginningless and endless is the supreme Lord  
Only existence and indwelling presence  
The mind and senses can never experience  
Rise beyond all limitations and faculties

The sincere seeker striving to attain  
Freedom from bondage of ignorance  
Is equipped with subtle ignorance  
With this as soap he cleanses the rest

Soap too is a composite of substances  
But it can wash the dirt as it washes out  
So too with this catalytic subtle ignorance  
It washes the coarse and itself out too

The goodness within must make all good  
Rise above conditioning by aspiration and effort  
You must raise the self by the self alone  
And discover your true self-luminous nature

Handling charcoal turns the hands black  
Washing the hands renders them clean  
But playing again will blacken them again  
So best not to play with charcoal at all

The world appears diverse in perception  
Our ignorant reactions confirm it as real  
The flame of self-inquiry says it is not  
So best to live a life of unbroken inquiry

Reject appearance and inner conditioning  
Life is an opportunity for unbroken inquiry  
The self is roused by the self this way  
Gradually the self becomes aware of itself

Self-knowledge is not the result of anything  
Not the guru, not even the instruction  
It is attained when you abandon ignorance  
By the fire of self-effort based on guidance

The guru, teaching and sacred scriptures  
Are all means to realize the self  
But you have to do what has to be done  
And realize the truth for your own self

The self is not revealed by guru or scriptures  
But without them, realization cannot be had  
You must exert for yourself to really know  
These factors melt together into realization

That which is after senses cease functioning  
After like, dislike and such notions vanish  
That is the Self—indicated by truth and reality  
Existing even when ignorance is center stage

Gods, sages, saints and enlightened ones  
Have appeared to awaken the ignorant  
Scriptures are written out of compassion  
So teachings and words may be of help

But these gods, sages and enlightened ones  
Different scriptures and different religions  
Are not different—there is no diversity  
Though it appears so even in this somehow

There is no difference in true religion  
The journey to be traveled is the same  
Words and languages are what differs  
But these are not the truth they point to

Pure consciousness alone appears as all  
It is this we call Brahman the absolute  
Appearing as this subject-object tangle  
Giving rise to delusion though not deluded

The knower, the known and knowing  
All occur within pure consciousness  
The innermost self stays unknown  
As it can never be an object of knowledge

Time and space are self creations  
Put together by the ego-sense only  
Vital energy assembles the individual  
To experience what is felt to be experienced

The individual follows the inner urges  
Responding as he does and results follow  
Giving in to ignorance he feels delusion  
Facing the light he realizes the self

If ignorance remains at the time of death  
One reincarnates again to work it out  
And realize the truth for one's own self  
For this one comes, for this one lives

The elements and substances seem so real  
They are modifications of pure consciousness  
Just as people and things appear in dream  
Does all of this appear as solid reality

The dream is real to the dreamer  
This world is real to the ignorant  
He will continue from dream to dream  
Till he awakens and realizes the self

The Lord alone shines as all you see  
There is naught else, never has been  
'Tis your notions that suggest otherwise  
Abandon these ruthlessly and be free

Why do you defend these vile notions  
They bring untold suffering and pain  
Conditioning itself is great sorrow  
It is based on ignorance—abandon it!

The mind goes where the heart wishes  
The heart is wedded to habit and hope  
Both are like waters in a desert mirage  
Both bring suffering and never cool water

Conditioning itself does not really exist  
But it still continues to wreak great havoc  
Like a ghost it dances on the mind's stage  
Slay this by the sword of self-inquiry

Without conditioning the illusion vanishes  
One beholds the self everywhere as all  
Preceptors instruct only the awakened  
'Tis foolish to teach those who wish to sleep

Those wishing to sleep must be left alone  
Life will teach them lessons quite sternly  
They will be made to abandon foolishness  
And will have to exert as others have done

Mountains seen in a dream appear to exist  
Without really occupying any space at all  
Even so this world only appears to exist  
Thought-forms perceiving each other

The unreal perceives the unreal  
The unreal experiences the unreal  
Due to the unreal influence of unreality  
Mere imagination imagining within itself

As liquidity exists in liquids  
As motion exists in the wind  
As emptiness exists in space  
So does omnipresence exist in the self

Early on when I was first instructed  
By the Lord himself—on these truths  
I have constantly engaged myself in this worship  
Of the undivided self with natural means

Common it is to all embodied beings  
To come into and stay in relationship  
But the yogi is eternally vigilant  
This vigilance is itself worship of self

Adopt the yogic inner attitude  
Be devoid of any and all attachment  
Roam free in this forest of samsara  
You will not suffer in the least bit

When any great sorrow befalls you  
Such as death of relatives or loss of wealth  
Inquire as described into the nature of truth  
You will never be affected by joy or sorrow

Circumstances change and change they must  
People and things come and go  
They do not belong to you at all  
And you do not belong to them either

You are pure unaffected consciousness  
Illusory perception cannot touch you  
Find out how these notions exist within  
Abandon them and realize the true self

Unattached mentally do what needs be done  
The organs of action will act naturally  
Delight from sensual pleasure is deceptive  
A fleeting promise which leads one to great peril

Abandon desires, hopes and expectations  
These are the seeds of great sorrow  
They blossom into thorny entanglements  
Destroying peace and joy that come naturally

In time you will attain experience of self  
Do not store it in the mind as a memory  
Avoid making it an object of desire  
Live in the light of self's omnipresence

Do not make self an object of hope  
Do not make it an expectation of sorts  
Strive instead to be eternally vigilant  
Inquiring relentlessly into the self

When you stop pursuing sensual pleasures  
Experiencing only what comes unsought  
You are in a state of perfect equanimity  
Free of latent tendencies and memory

Like the sky you will remain untainted  
Let clouds come and go as they may  
Knower, known and knowledge merge  
In the one self—the divisionless experiencer

With the slightest movement in the mind  
This world-appearance is roused into action  
Make the mind unwinking by prana's restraint  
Destroy latent tendencies by inquiry's flame

Be diligent in pranayama practice  
Observe the mind without remission  
Relentlessly inquire into the self  
Ignorance and delusion will cease to be

Ignorance and its effects are self-binding  
Be self-disciplined—do not cooperate  
Follow the instruction of the preceptor  
And the teachings contained in scriptures

Movement of thought in the mind  
Is the root cause of world-illusion  
Without the cause there is no effect  
Still the mind—realize pure consciousness

The mind has to be made 'no-mind'  
It has to be drained of all its energy  
Pranayama is vitally important in this  
Inquiry restores the natural state

Reach that state of supreme bliss  
Indescribable—the heavens do not compare  
You have wandered and suffered for so long  
Come now and lay claim to your heritage

## **5. The Story of the Wood-Apple**

### **The Wood-Apple**

---

There is a wood-apple, immeasurably large  
Existing for eons, it does not perish or decay  
It is the source and support of immortality  
Most ancient, ever new—just like the moon

The center and heart of the universe  
Immovable and indestructible it is

Even cosmic dissolution cannot shake it  
Immeasurably large—source of all creation

Even when ripe, it does not fall  
Forever ripe, it never over-ripens  
Even gods know not its origin  
None have seen the tree—its source

Beginningless, without middle or end  
All that can be said is—it does exist  
Changeless and without modification  
Without any diversity within itself

Completely full without emptiness  
Fountain-source of joy and delight  
It is none other than the manifestation  
Of energy in infinite consciousness

### **It is Energy of Infinite Consciousness**

---

This energy of infinite consciousness  
Manifests as this vast creation you see  
Without ever abandoning its true nature  
Merely by willing in its own intelligence

Even 'willing' is not really the truth at all  
As willing implies existing ego-sense  
From it has come all the elements  
Subjective senses and the objects

It itself is space, time and natural order  
Expansion of thought and 'I'-ness too  
Attraction and repulsion, above and below  
The firmament and stars it alone is

Knowledge, ignorance—all, whatever is  
All that was and all that will ever be  
All and everything is energy only  
Energy of infinite consciousness

Though it is conceived of as being diverse  
It is neither one nor many, this 'it'  
It is nature of supreme all-inclusive peace  
It is the one immeasurable infinite self

## **6. The Story of the Rock**

(Nature of Consciousness)

### **The Great Rock**

---

There is a great rock though most tender  
Affectionate, omnipresent and eternal  
Within it countless lotuses blossom  
With countless petals seen and unseen

Sometimes the petals touch each other  
Sometimes they face each other as well  
Sometimes facing upwards or downwards  
Some with roots entwined, some rootless

All things exist in it though they do not  
This rock is indeed cosmic consciousness  
It appears rock-like in its homogeneity  
Harboring within universes of diversity

As one conceives different forms in a rock  
So do galaxies and universes exist in it  
Sculpting does not change the rock's substance  
World-appearance does not change consciousness

The rock has infinite form potential  
A sculptor sees all these in a rock  
So does all appear in consciousness  
Infinite expressions within consciousness

Carved or uncarved—rock remains rock  
So also consciousness remains itself  
World-appearance is an empty expression  
The substance is pure consciousness only

All manifestations are Brahman only  
Cosmic consciousness appears as all  
Appearing modified though unmodified  
How can it change when it alone is

The seed contains the seed only  
Flowers are seed's blossoming  
The seed expressing itself as flower  
The cause expressing itself as effect

So with pure infinite consciousness  
It gives rise to itself within itself  
Duality ceases when this is realized  
Consciousness always remains itself

What appears as a form—modification  
Is consciousness itself, naught other  
All this is Brahman the absolute  
Second to Brahman none exists

Time, space and other such factors  
These too are pure consciousness  
Self is indivisible, infinite existence  
Unity expressing diversity within itself

Numerous lotuses exist in one stone  
But all in relation to the stone only  
Many forms appear in mirages  
But all in relation to water only

Brahman and world are synonyms  
There is no essential difference  
See all with the eye that is wisdom  
Behold consciousness as all these forms

As water seen is hydrogen and oxygen  
Even so the world is Brahman only  
The apparently diverse is non-dual  
The substratum of all is unity

Infinite consciousness pervades all  
All exists in infinite consciousness  
Diversity appears in non-duality  
Without modifying existing unity

Appearance appears as reality  
Though uncreated it appears real  
When duality's illusion is abandoned  
All this is seen as consciousness only

### **Must be Attained by Direct Experience**

---

Sages are active but they are not fooled  
They are firmly rooted in the unchanging  
They work with minds that do not move  
Having abandoned conceptualizing completely

By little movement of thought they function  
Their consciousness is purified of all concepts  
Existing here as pure consciousness only  
This must be attained by direct experience

That alone exists, naught else  
No body, senses, life-force or mind  
Freed of all these—experience it  
As the self in all that is ever seen

Without beginning, without end  
Unaffected and free of all change  
It is mistaken for something else  
Because it alone is everywhere

This self is everywhere, inside and out  
In all and as all bodies it alone exists  
Unaffected while individuals act different  
Though the infinite stays ever the same

Be actively engaged in natural activities  
Free of the sense of I-ness and 'mine'  
Whatever is seen is Brahman only  
Eternal, peaceful and utterly quiescent

### **Unmodified, Appearing Modified**

---

True modification is real transformation  
The substance itself must have changed  
Such is not the case with Brahman  
Which stays unchanged through dissolution

Before and after creation's appearance  
It was and continues to be pure consciousness  
The momentary disturbance seen in the middle  
Is not modification as nothing really changes

### **The Difficulty in Instruction**

---

What is said to be momentary disturbance  
Is not really disturbance—just mere words

There is no other way to give instruction  
Try to see what is intended through these

Earlier I urged you to make inquiry  
Into the nature of this ignorance  
Earlier, you were not fully awakened  
That was necessary to bring awakening

If one declared 'All this is Brahman'  
To one who has not awakened as yet  
It is like asking a tree for relief  
From suffering he is creating himself

Now that you are awakened I do declare  
You, I and the universe is Brahman only  
Whatever you do try to realize this  
The truth is Brahman's omnipresence

Self alone is the reality in all beings  
As clay is the reality seen in all pots  
Inner movement of energy gives rise to  
Apparent diversity in consciousness

What is to be known, what is to be seen  
Brahman alone fills all and everything  
Fullness is filled with fullness—its own self  
This fullness is established in fullness only

Sense organs are present in all beings  
But the dead do not experience sensations  
While alive the same senses experience  
What is not possible when death arrives

## All is Infinite Consciousness Only

---

Birth, death, senses and the mind  
We use these terms to communicate  
All is infinite consciousness only  
Appearing and functioning differently

The nature and senses in a person  
The inner instrument and subtle body  
The inner reflections of objects seen  
All these are pure consciousness only

Though free of all modifications  
The notion 'I am' arises in it  
Localized it is known as the individual  
Ego-sense, thoughts and mind arise

Intellect, senses and the body  
All appear as the notion strengthens  
By persistent pondering on these notions  
Of 'I am' localized as an individual

This 'I am' sees other formations  
They too feel the same 'I am'  
Localized formations in consciousness  
Thus 'you are' and 'they are' do arise

All forms asserting in delusion  
Separateness based on initial errors  
Of feeling 'I am' as a separate form  
From other forms though notions only

Similar bodies and substance are all  
Still because the 'I am' feels localized  
They feel differences and separation  
From each other though they are all one

Experience requires contact in some way  
Contact requires separation similarly  
Localized forms of the same substance  
Separate and contact—called experience

But the individual or localized form  
Is but a notion in its own mind  
Persistent feelings of separateness  
Make notions appear as reality

Whatever the individual conceives of  
He strengthens by persistently pondering it  
Nothing is actually created as such  
One experiences one's own persistence

When you observe something very keenly  
You will see that these notions try to interfere  
Keep observing without being distracted  
And see how these notions soon disappear

Seeing continues without notions  
Only then you can try to discover  
What it is that appears to be seen  
Without interference of memory

Infinite consciousness alone assumes  
All forms including the individual  
But all these are notions within itself  
Nothing is really created or assumed

Knowledge is inherent in consciousness  
Consciousness mistakes its own knowledge  
For an object limited by space and time  
And experiences division in the indivisible

## **A Great Power**

---

Great is the power of infinite consciousness  
It cannot be challenged by anyone at all  
When the individual surrenders individuality  
Consciousness realizes itself as consciousness

As long as the individual feels separate  
Distinct from others—protecting his own  
He will continue to experience separation  
And reap the harvest of his own sowing

All through this delusional experience  
Consciousness stays unchanged, ever pure  
Just as gold remains gold in any form  
Be it a bracelet or ring—gold ever stays gold

Just as one dreams he has traveled far  
And seen different sights in his own mind  
So also does one travel in different births  
To different conditions all within himself

## **It Can Be Overcome**

---

But an error yesterday can be corrected  
If we resolve rightly today, this moment  
So also the habit of separative existence  
Can be abolished by attaining liberation

'I am this body' is a notion in consciousness  
This has taken seed deep within by repetition  
Constantly dwelling and taking deep interest  
In it and all associations that result therefrom

Confusion is the interference of conditioning  
What appears with how you would like it to be

Delusion is feeling you are an individual  
Separate from all that is seen and experienced

The same self has assumed all forms  
The forms feel separate in delusion  
They then act and strengthen ignorance  
Experience adds confusion to delusion

All throughout this truth remains unchanged  
Brahman alone exists—there is naught else  
The bondage of illusion can be overcome  
By abandoning conditioning—attaining freedom

All forms differ in levels of conditioning  
But enough of perception of division  
The whole universe is a manifestation  
Of the energy of infinite consciousness

## **7. The Story of Arjuna**

### **Background**

---

This world appearance or samsara  
Is the original dream of the first jiva  
Different from the normal dream  
It is experienced as the wakeful state

Hence the wakeful state is seen  
As a long dream in which we journey  
From dream to dream within the dream  
Till we leave the dream for our true nature

In each dream are gods and goddesses  
Incarnations appear to restore order  
In each dream Vishnu incarnates as Krishna  
Arjuna also appears as his alter ego

Krishna and Arjuna appear as human beings  
Arjuna's despondency is our inner condition  
Krishna's instruction is the immortal song  
Echoing the truth of soul's indestructibility

### **The Song Eternal**

---

This self is unborn and indestructible  
It is eternal and cannot be killed  
'Tis ignorance to feel it can perish  
It is infinite, immortal—that thou art

Subtler than space, it is infinite being  
Just how and by whom can it be killed  
None exists but the one supreme self  
Self of all beings, things—existence itself

### **Arjuna and Us**

---

Arjuna listened attentively to this song  
His delusion gave way to inner wisdom  
We have to tread the same path ourselves  
Awaken from ignorance and be rid of delusion

Krishna was not just an incarnation  
Appearing in time and a particular setting  
Krishna is ever here, now and within  
Hear ye in silence 'The Song Eternal'

### **Vasistha's Comments**

---

Equip yourself with the attitude of Arjuna  
Remaining unattached inwardly amidst all  
Offer all experiences unto the omnipresent Lord  
You will realize the truth that ends all doubts

That is the supreme state, guru of all gurus  
The self—light that illumines from within  
Reality of all substances and forms  
False notions arise when there's no inquiry

'I am' was there before the world was  
Just how do notions arise and bind  
Discover and abide in the non-dual spirit  
Be actively engaged in life but ever free

What appears is the play of consciousness  
There is no unity, nor is there duality  
My instructions, you yourself and all of this  
All the play of energy in infinite consciousness

In the silent peace of one's inner being  
Consciousness vibrates and the world arises  
If consciousness does not vibrate at all  
There will be no world vision—only peace

Mind is movement in consciousness  
Non-realization of this is world-vision  
Thought aggravates this inner confusion  
A vicious self-feeding cycle arises within

When the inner intelligence is awakened  
Craving and pursuit of pleasure ceases  
The outrush of energy returns to consciousness  
Wisdom and self-knowledge arise within

Desire for liberation must be abandoned  
It too interferes with fullness of self  
Constant awareness is the best way  
Observation itself prevents involvement

When the ego-sense is constantly observed  
Awareness itself ends any movement  
Movement ceases for it has no support  
Who then is bound or liberated by whom

Dwelling in the utter stillness of pure being  
Fully aware but without movement of mind  
Experience the illimitable infinite consciousness  
Go beyond afflictions while actively engaged

### **Vasistha on Pure Being**

---

When the mind, intellect and ego-sense  
Cease to function—there is stillness  
The omnipresent, undifferentiated being  
Exists as pure existence or the reality

As space in space, sound in sound  
Touch in touch, taste in taste  
Sight in sight, form in form  
Rising as mind in the mind

Intelligence in intelligence  
Immovable in the immovable  
Mobility in all moving beings  
Divinity in gods, humanity in humans

Bestial nature in animals it is seen  
Essence of time and the seasons  
Dynamism in action, order in order  
Childhood, youth, old age and death

Undivided and indivisible it is  
The very essence of all and everything  
Diversity is an appearance to the senses  
Realize 'all this is pervaded by me'

Realize that 'I am omnipresent'  
Not intellectually but by experience  
Devoid of body and any limitation  
Dwell in peace and supreme happiness

## **8. The Story of the Hundred Rudra**

Creation appears in infinite consciousness  
Momentarily as an illusory notion  
Though it seems long and very real  
This legend will illustrate this point

### **The Legend**

There once lived a mendicant in days of yore  
Totally dedicated to meditation  
Thoroughly purified his mind became  
Unsought powers came to him naturally

Once with the feeling to do something  
He fancied a birth in a simple setting  
Instantly as a tribesman he incarnated  
In him arose the feeling 'I am this'

He roamed in a city of dream objects  
And dreamt he was many different beings  
Very learned in scriptures and sacred lore  
Next, an emperor of unequalled glory

A beautiful damsel and even a deer  
A creeper and other animals as well  
Since the mind can recall any sight or sound  
All can be experienced within the heart

The inner intelligence makes it possible  
To experience all these without objects

Thus he continued to see different lives  
All within himself—in his own heart

After many incarnations within himself  
He experienced life as a beautiful swan  
Then beholding lord Rudra he instantly felt  
He was lord Rudra and dwelt in his abode

If you can overcome distractions and remain  
Concentrated, saturated with single focus  
You too can see all these within yourself  
All experiences are had in the heart only

Every subsequent action is more powerful  
Than the previous action due to momentum  
So each new thought form that is envisioned  
Overwhelms the one that seems to exist

Thus he felt that he had been lord Rudra  
For a hundred cycles of world creation  
Roaming in the world-appearance freely  
Even though it was but mental jugglery

A dream is felt real while it does last  
The dreamer does not feel it is a dream  
To him—experience is real experience  
Though all of it takes place as imagination

Eons passed since he slipped and fell  
So to say from the infinite consciousness  
Due to Rudra's grace when beheld  
He was purified—impurities slipped away

When the individual comes in contact  
With enlightened ones—change can happen

Impurities can be instantly turned away from  
If the individual is sincere and earnest

Sincerity and earnestness grows in one  
When one constantly applies oneself  
To the task of removing impurities  
By correct living and diligent practice

Real inner change can bring about  
Outer help such as enlightened ones  
If you wish for better conditions outside  
Change now the inner existing condition

The inner conviction—'this body is self'  
Is the root that grows into a mighty tree  
Though when enquired, it is not seen  
Realize this directly and be free of it all

Let the world-appearance be as it is  
It can do no harm if you abide in unity  
This unity underlies and animates all  
Diversity is a dance on unity's stage

To help the individual who dreamt long  
Rudra took him to where the mendicant lay  
Awakening and inspiring him as well  
He recollected all that had happened instantly

He also realized all this was pure consciousness  
All diverse forms exist in the infinite only  
One appears as many—as it were  
The hundred Rudra was indeed omnipresence

Because the individual feels surrounded  
By the world on all sides as something other

He fails to understand self and the world  
And slips into ignorance and its effects

Waves too are surrounded by one ocean  
They too have forms and appearances  
They are made of the same substance  
Waves are ocean—there is no difference

The individual has to realize this by himself  
For himself and know by direct experience  
The world so real is but an appearance  
Truth is self—infinite consciousness

Differentiated consciousness is bondage  
Absence of differentiation is liberation  
Whatever pleases you—affirm that  
Be firm in that till you realize the truth

Awareness exists in both conditions  
The liberated state and even ignorance  
It is regained so to say by 'being still'  
Though calling it a gain is misleading

All incarnations of the mendicant  
Attained awakening by direct realization  
Seeing through differences in appearance  
They returned to their respective realms

## **Dream and Reality**

---

Imagination is not something real  
Abandon this notion completely  
When all notions have been eliminated  
What exists is infinite consciousness

What is seen in dream appears real  
But only in the heart which beholds it  
In the heart of infinite consciousness  
Everything exists—in it one sees all

The dream-like nature of thought-form  
Is realized by intense practice of yoga  
What appears in front of you also appears  
Within and it is this the mind apprehends

This misapprehension is without substance  
Existing in the mind, its content is thought  
People feel they are devoted to objects  
But in reality they are devoted to thought

Thought sees thought, never what really is  
This will continue till thought is abandoned  
The awakening of the inner intelligence  
Is the empowering of direct perception

If the inner being is wholly devoted  
To what is actually in front of it  
You will see 'what really is' clearly  
Without any interference of thought

If there is not one-pointed devotion  
The object is destroyed—thought is seen  
You live in an inner world of imagination  
It does not matter what actually appears

One-pointedness is absolutely essential  
To see clearly 'what actually is'  
Concentration and meditation are the key  
To understand the mind and go beyond

The infinite is the true self of all  
It is omnipotent—all power it is  
The individual limits endless power  
By its notions and thus feels limited

Each limits himself by his own choice  
None and nothing can ever limit you  
Each has to unshackle his own self  
None and nothing can bring freedom

What you really seek is what you get  
Blaming it on karma is irresponsible  
You make and mar your own destiny  
All that comes to you is by your choice

## **Death and Beyond**

---

Birth and death occur within the infinite  
Diversity and world-appearance as well  
The way you live life will determine  
The conditions that you will experience

At the time of death one imagines  
Within themselves another condition  
A state of existence within oneself  
But it seems to exist outside somehow

Until the truth is directly realized  
One undergoes unfathomable sorrow  
Forgetting his inseparability from the supreme  
He wanders in imagination within himself

Going from one dream to another  
Clinging and rejecting dream objects  
Tormenting himself unnecessarily  
Until he abandons all false notions

'I am the body' is the root notion  
It is the seed for ignorance's eruption  
Most destructive it is—abandon it now  
This life is an opportunity for just this

Or you will continue to drift and wander  
Within yourself—in imagination's lands  
Feeling helplessly bound and miserable  
While being your own jailer and liberator

### **Somewhere or Not**

---

I searched for this mendicant within myself  
In deep meditation, wishing to see him  
But could not find him anywhere, anyplace  
One's own imagination makes the unreal real

I then proceeded to a very distant land  
Where exists an old shrine and cottage  
There I found a mendicant deep in meditation  
Today would be the last of twenty-one days

From one point of view it was twenty-one days  
But many ages had passed within his mind  
He had lived in different ages and still today  
He lives elsewhere as the second mendicant

With all the faculties I could command  
I entered the heart of this creation  
Searching for the third mendicant  
And found him but not in this universe

There are and have been other universes  
Countless beings inhabit all realms  
Sages, saints, kings and mendicants  
Some resemble others and some do not

In one realm a period of twenty-one days  
Is a lifetime experienced in another realm  
Delusion makes something appear here  
And disappear or appear elsewhere as well

All this is the play of the mind only  
Most frightening till the truth is seen  
Worlds unfolding in worlds ad infinitum  
All taking place in infinite consciousness

Impurity taints the mind creating havoc  
Fragmentations starts with one fragment  
All appearances are only relatively real  
All manifest in the all—the cause is in the cause

The mendicant has now attained liberation  
Forever transcending this world-appearance  
His attendants discovered his abandoned body  
He has merged in infinite consciousness

## **Wrong Perception**

---

This maya, world-appearance or delusion  
Is of limiting nature with limiting attributes  
It cannot be crossed over by ignorance  
You have to enter pure knowledge directly

Wrong perception sees a bracelet in gold  
Appearance becomes the cause of error  
Mistaking a form for truth—its substance  
And continuing to relate to a form once seen

Whatever notion that one entertains  
The self alone becomes that notion  
This universe spread out in front of you  
Is a fabric of notions entertained by many

The notion of the object becomes the mind  
Thus slipping from infinite consciousness  
Though the mind is not an independent entity  
It sees notions as reflections in consciousness

All these movements happen in consciousness  
Experiences, the mind, individual and creation  
And even though all this appears so real  
Infinite consciousness remains infinite consciousness

Diversity is a compelling appearance  
It vanishes at once when inquired into  
The inquirer exists but no longer in doubt  
That peace is indeed the supreme state

This world you see is really that Peace  
Ignorance is unreal or it can never cease  
Divisions of seer, seen and sight  
Appear in the mind as its defect

Remain firmly established in that state  
Utter freedom from movement of thought  
Do what needs to be done in that freedom  
Resting in the silence of deep sleep

## **The Silence of Deep Sleep**

---

There are two types of sages there are  
The rigid ascetic and the liberated sage  
The ascetic restrains his senses forcibly  
The sage knows what is real and unreal

The ascetic engages in dry practices  
The sage behaves ordinarily but knows  
What is regarded as silence or mouna  
Is based on the nature of these two types

Four types of silence have been described  
First silence of speech; second silence of senses  
Third is silence by violent restraint  
Fourth is the silence of deep sleep

What is known as silence of deep sleep  
Is also known as silence of the mind  
The first three involve rigid practice  
The fourth is conducive to liberation

Even if it costs the displeasure of some  
Strive to know the silence of the mind  
Most conducive it is to liberation  
It requires neither force nor rigidity

In it the prana is not restrained or promoted  
The senses are neither fed nor starved  
Perception of diversity is not altered  
It is not expressed nor is it suppressed

The mind is neither mind nor non-mind  
No division exists—what to abolish  
In this silence there is knowledge of what 'IS'  
And complete freedom from all doubt

Utter emptiness it is—supportless as well  
The nature of supreme unalloyed peace  
No 'I' or 'another' or 'mental projection'  
In it one knows these are all but notions

It is pure existence—'I' an idea in it  
This is known clearly in this great silence  
Strive towards realization of this  
Silence of deep sleep beyond description

## Silence of the Disembodied

---

There is yet another form of silence  
Called the silence of the disembodied  
It is wise not to elaborate on it further  
As you are still embodied so it has no use

Still some words about this great state  
Is attained by prolonged samadhi  
Extensive practice of prana's restraint  
And other yogic disciplines are necessary

It aims to know directly the source of bondage  
World-appearance is bondage's other name  
This too leads to cessation of the mind  
The mind has no support with prana restrained

## Restraint of Prana

---

When prana is about to leave at death  
It makes contact with those elements  
With which the new body will be fashioned  
Where carried conditioning will soon crystallize

Carried conditioning include all vasanas  
Impressions, desires and subtle longings  
Till all vasana have been totally destroyed  
There is no freedom as the mind continues

These vasanas are destroyed by self-knowledge  
Which arises by direct experience, not study  
The mind and prana move not without vasanas  
This indeed is the state of supreme peace

When one enters into self-knowledge  
All vasanas are fried—burnt in toto

The link between the mind and prana  
Is severed completely and one is free

Mind is a collection of these vasanas  
You are bound by the habits you nurture  
Knowledge is direct experience of reality  
Inquiry its basis and itself self-knowledge

### **Three Important Things**

---

Total dedication to one thing is required  
Restraint of prana drains mind's energy  
Let there be unbroken direct inquiry  
With these attain the supreme state

Prana or life-force and the mind  
Have very close relations to each other  
If the movement of one ceases  
The other comes to a standstill as well

If the total mind is one-pointed  
Devoted to a single truth without exception  
Movement of mind stops completely  
And movement of prana stills as well

### **The Best Method**

---

Direct inquiry into the nature of self  
Is the best method to melt into the infinite  
Your mind will be completely absorbed  
Both mind and inquiry will completely cease

What remains after the mind ceases movement  
Is supreme peace—remain established in it  
This peace passeth all understanding  
It is the supreme state and can be attained

When the mind does not crave for pleasure  
It is absorbed into the self with life-force  
Mind masquerades as reality to the deluded  
Free yourself of this grip you yourself sustain

If even for a brief period the mind is absorbed  
Tasting the supreme state of inner silence  
A complete transformation is brought about  
The mind will not abandon this for samsara

The very seeds of samsara will be fried  
The endless cycle of birth and death broken  
Ignorance will be dispelled, vasanas burnt  
And one beholds the inner light attaining peace

## **9. The Story of the Vampire**

### **Background**

---

When ignorance ceases through self-inquiry  
The individual becomes non-individual  
The mind ceases—becomes no-mind  
This is known as moksha or liberation

Deep in the forest there lived a vampire  
It appeased its hunger with the deluded  
Once unable to find such in the forest  
It ventured to the city and met the king

### **The Vampire' Questions**

---

O king kindly answer the questions asked  
What sun's rays form this universe  
In what mighty wind does space manifest  
What is the self that stays always unchanged

What is the essence of the world-appearance  
In which atom are the universes contained  
What formless rock has all worlds within  
Kindly answer these questions or be my meal

### **The King's Reply**

---

The sun of consciousness illumines all  
In that light universes are atomic particles  
All things appear real because of that light  
Dust particles called creation appear in it

All shines in that Supreme Self only  
As dust particles in a beam of light  
Time, space, motion and intelligence  
All is clothed in pure consciousness

### **Vasistha's Insight**

---

The vampire became silent hearing the king  
Deeply contemplating the message conveyed  
You too can achieve what seems impossible  
If you remain immovable in truth and live wisely

Right action is doing what needs to be done  
It is effortless though effort is involved  
It is free of struggle as response is always clear  
Once one feels all this is indeed consciousness

Obstruction is a clash of unreal with real  
The unreal being only notions in the mind  
Ignore all notions—they will starve to death  
Act as part of each situation, not separate from it

## 10. The Story of Bhagirath

### Background

---

There once lived a king called Bhagirath  
Devoted to righteousness in every way  
He worked hard to eradicate poverty  
Himself living a simple and holy life

He relished the company of holy ones  
In their company he was steeped in devotion  
Undergoing great difficulty he propitiated  
Brahma, Siva and the sage Janhu

Discrimination and dispassion arose in him  
At an early age, and thus he reflected  
The meaning of this life and all action  
Possible gains and hidden consequences

He concluded that if anything is to be gained  
It must be the attainment of the beyond  
All else was time passing vain repetition  
A cycle of habit most follow in ignorance

### Bhagirath's First Questions

---

Humbly he approached his guru  
And placed before him his observation  
"How does one put an end to samsara  
How to eradicate ignorance and bondage"

### The Guru Replies

---

Sorrow ceases and bondage ends  
When every doubt has been dispelled  
When established in perfect equanimity  
And the divisionless state for a long time

When perception of division ceases to be  
There is direct experience of fullness  
The omnipresent self—pure consciousness  
One enters into infinity and eternity

### **Bhagirath's Second Questions**

---

I know that the self alone is real  
The body and such are but appearances  
How to experience this directly  
How to go beyond intellectual understanding

### **The Guru Replies**

---

Intellectual knowledge is not knowledge  
Attachments keep knowledge intellectual  
Be unattached to wife, son, house and wealth  
Equal minded in both pleasure and pain

Love of solitude is very important  
To be established in self-knowledge  
Cultivate vigilance of mind's every movement  
See self as distinct from thought's rise and fall

This must continue after meditation too  
The mind must be continually observed  
The ego-sense that gives rise to thought  
Will thin and give way to self-knowledge

### **Bhagirath's Third Questions**

---

This ego-sense seems well established  
One with the body and sense of self  
Pray, kindly instruct me in the way  
To uproot this tree that is rooted deeply

## The Guru Replies

---

Self-effort is absolutely essential  
Resolutely stop 'pursuit' of sense-pleasures  
By seeing the full cost of indulgence  
And understanding—joy comes from within

If you abandon pursuing sense pleasures  
Adopt a simple life with less concern  
You will have abundant time and energy  
To realize the self directly here and now

## Vasistha's Comments

---

Hearing the guru's succinct instructions  
Bhagirath renounced all without delay  
Clad in simple clothes with bare necessities  
Making the forest his home—unknown to any

Very soon he attained supreme peace  
Content to live on what came naturally  
One day he entered a city for alms  
And approached a crowd that had gathered

The old king had died without any heir  
The royal elephant selected Bhagirath  
As king in accordance with the tradition  
He accepted, as this turn came naturally

His old kingdom was adjacent to this  
The citizens heard of Bhagirath's return  
They implored him to rule there as well  
As a king like him was not to be found

Bhagirath accepted this duty as well  
And ruled both kingdoms as one land

Treating all people fairly and equally  
And once again working for their welfare

Even though he was now an emperor  
Ruling a vast kingdom with a large army  
He was ever at peace within himself  
His mind was free of desires completely

He engaged himself with what needed doing  
Shining as an exemplar of righteousness  
One day there arose in him an inner urge  
To do something for his departed ancestors

Once again he repaired to the forest  
And engaged himself in austerities  
Propitiating gods and sages too  
For the task of bringing Ganga to earth

His firm resolve and relentless effort  
Bore fruit in time and Ganga descended  
The earth and all beings were purified  
By the holy waters of the sacred Ganga

Libations were performed for the ancestors  
Of the king and other departed souls  
Since then Ganga continues to purify  
All who come unto her for regaining purity

You too can do all that Bhagirath did  
What one can do, others can do  
Renounce all and attain all is the rule  
Live naturally doing what needs to be done

In this connection there is another story  
Pray, listen with full attention and being

To the story of Sikhidhvaja and Chudala  
Reborn again due to their divine love

## **11. The Story of Sikhidhvaja and Chudala**

(This story includes three smaller stories woven into it to highlight certain important points: Story of the Precious Stone, Story of the Philosophers' Stone and Story of the Wild Elephant.)

### **Part I: Sikhdhvaja and Chudala**

---

Some things appear in abundance  
Sometimes they are not seen for a while  
Disappearing and reappearing again  
In the same or in different forms

There once lived king Sikhidhvaja and queen Chudala  
Both were noble, virtuous and dutiful  
They shared interests of the spiritual way  
Helping each other evolve in life's journey

One day the queen pondered life's meaning  
She started direct inquiry into the truth  
Reflecting and seeing within herself  
Examining previously unconsidered notions

### **Queen Chudala's Direct Inquiry**

---

Who am I and what is this ignorance  
Just how did delusion arise within  
The body and sense organs are not self  
Both are dependent on the mind

This mind too I consider to be inert  
For it is directed by the ego-sense

It thinks and entertains notions  
Prompted by the intellect or buddhi

This intellect too is inert as well  
It too is directed by the ego-sense  
This ego-sense is inert as well  
It is dependent on that which exists

That which exists is pure consciousness  
Entangled somehow with these faculties  
Though this is not possible as it is infinite  
It is ignorance masquerading as reality

I am that self which is pure consciousness  
Dwelling as the individual in this body  
I am aware of all these faculties  
They cannot be me—I am pure awareness

Yet somehow I've forgotten my essential nature  
As pure consciousness—the only existence  
Such is the power of the self—consciousness  
It becomes whatever it conceives itself to be

It seems to abandon its own nature  
Somehow taking on unreal limitations  
Seeing itself as only objects in confusion  
Experiencing itself as something else

### **Vasistha's Comments**

---

Thus contemplating within herself  
Queen Chudala became enlightened  
Attaining what was to be known  
Feeling great joy and peace within

She directly saw reality within herself  
Supreme consciousness as the only truth  
Untainted by any impurity or limitation  
Consciousness became self-aware in her

Consciousness alone manifests as all  
Body, mind, intellect and the senses  
Apart from consciousness nothing is  
World appearance is consciousness alone

All that is known by different names  
All is consciousness—there is naught else  
In it there is no division of subject-object  
This arises in one's mind as delusion only

### **Chudala Continues Contemplation**

---

I am pure consciousness, free of ego-sense  
Birth and death do not exist in me  
I have realized self—indestructible am I  
I see now all forms are manmade only

What is seen and the seer are really one  
All happens in the self or consciousness  
I have attained to perfect quiescence  
There is no this, no 'I', no you or other

### **Vasistha Continues**

---

Chudala grew introverted day by day  
Rejoicing more in the bliss within  
Free of all craving and attachment  
Neither rejecting nor running after things

In a short time she realized the truth  
This world is only an appearance

She shone in the radiance of inner light  
Abiding as the self—most effulgent

Seeing her in such a peaceful state  
Her husband, king Sikhidhvaja, then inquired  
What was it that made this difference  
As he clearly felt she had some attainment

### **Chudala Answers Sikhidhvaja**

---

I have abandoned the form assumed  
It is an appearance, not the truth at all  
I am radiant because I've attained truth  
The joy of reality ever shines in the heart

I am the true ruler of the universe  
Not the finite being earlier mistaken  
All limitations have been abandoned  
I seek nothing, want nothing—I am the all

I'm happy with whatever comes naturally  
I see the self as truth—in all and everywhere  
That which is myself is the only existence  
There is naught else—self alone exists

### **Vasistha Continues**

---

Unable and unwilling to understand  
The king dismissed her words as delusion  
Calling her experiences childish fancies  
Though still conversing with her affectionately

The queen realized the king's mindset  
Unwilling and thus unable to understand  
She continued her role and her duties  
Inwardly steady and abiding in self

Three ways one sees all things  
First is pursuing what is desirable  
Feeling that it will promote happiness  
But realizing it is quite the opposite

Second is what is considered detestable  
One feels avoiding it is happiness  
Not realizing the avoidance itself  
Is the greatest sorrow self-inflicted

Third is what one is indifferent to  
This brings neither of the opposites  
Indifference is not callous cold disregard  
But one knows objects are appearances

### **Vasistha: On Gaining Psychic Powers**

---

Psychic powers are also called siddhis  
The deluded pursue these attainments  
The sage of self-knowledge avoids them  
As self-knowledge is the supreme attainment

All achievements depend on four factors  
Time, place, action and means utilized  
Action or effort is the supreme factor  
Attainments are not possible without it

Immature people have faith in technique  
They feel some act or trick to be most important  
They exert, but from behind this limitation  
And fail because being, not trick, must exert

The whole being must rise and exert  
Doing what needs to be done as duty  
When this inner need itself exerts  
Things come with hard work but no struggle

## Vasistha: On Awakening Kundalini

---

Abandon unrelated and opposing habits  
Learn how to close the body's apertures  
Master a good posture that can endure  
Have pure diet and cleanliness

Contemplate the meaning of teachings  
Found in the scriptures and holy ones  
Good company is absolutely essential  
As is right conduct in all aspects of life

Inwardly renounce things and attachments  
Not as an act but in truth—you must feel this  
Sit comfortably and practice pranayama  
Without allowing rising thoughts to interfere

Thoughts and feelings will rise and fall  
No need to interfere and suppress them  
Gradually bring the life-force under control  
This life-force sustains and animates all

Deep within there is a nerve passage or nadi  
It is known as antravestika—source of other nadi  
Existing in all beings, resting coiled at its source  
It is in contact with all avenues of the body

Within the body dwells the supreme power  
Known as kundalini—the prime power  
When prana or life-force from the heart  
Reaches kundalini awakening happens

Kundalini begins to move within oneself  
Giving rise to awareness in many ways  
It is the seed of consciousness and understanding  
All other energies unleash when it flows

Kundalini's functions appear as diversity  
It is the body, elements and life-force  
It is mind, intellect, ego-sense as well  
It is inhalation and exhalation sustaining life

### **Vasishtha: On Physical and Mental Illnesses**

---

If the downward or the upward pull  
Of this inner energy is excessive  
And is not arrested in some way  
Death comes about as an effect

If the movement of energy is balanced  
So it neither goes up nor comes down  
There is unceasing harmony and balance  
All diseases and ills are quickly overcome

Physical and mental ills are sources of pain  
Appearing sometimes together, sometimes not  
Both are rooted in ignorance and wickedness  
Both end when self-knowledge is attained

Ignorance gives rise to likes and dislikes  
Disrupting the inner balance and harmony  
Causing the inner energy to move erratically  
Leading to physical and mental ills as effects

Ignorance weakens will and mental restraint  
Opening the door to poor, unhealthy habits  
Useless company, indulgence and wicked thoughts  
All weaken the pathways of energy's flow

Environments must be healthy in every way  
Surroundings, clothes and one's company  
Be ever vigilant as earlier impressions surge  
Unhealthy ones can try to subvert aspiration

Minor physical ills are best corrected  
By a healthy, proper mental attitude  
Moderate physical ills are overcome  
By treatment, prayer and right action

Serious physical ills come to end  
Only when self-knowledge is attained  
Mental ills are all rooted in ignorance  
They cease on attaining self-knowledge

Physical ills often arise from mental ills  
In confusion, the path is not clearly seen  
Life-forces are agitated in confusion  
Clogs result in nadis or energy pathways

By right understanding and right action  
The mind becomes whole, pure and healthy  
Life-forces then flow unobstructed  
Diseases cease as the body heals itself

### **Vasistha: Consciousness as All This**

---

Though infinite consciousness alone exists  
It manifests differently as all that we see  
Without undergoing any change at all  
Ever unchanged while appearing to change

Just as space is space alone everywhere  
A room and walls does not alter space  
Consciousness ever stays consciousness  
Light that animates and sustains all in itself

Slight movement of thought generates all  
Elements, bodies and this world you see  
Appearing one way here, another there  
It alone is the substance of all these forms

Distinctions and divisions do not exist  
They are all creations of the perceiver  
Good, bad, latent, patent and such  
All are notions only, not the reality

All forms that feel themselves separate  
Distinct and not part of the one that exists  
Feel so because of their conditioning  
The individual is alone responsible for it

Thought is the seed of appearing diversity  
From thought the trunk and branches come  
Diversifying as leaves, flowers and fruit  
All of it is the seed appearing diverse

### **Returning to the Main Story**

---

Many psychic powers came unsought  
To queen Chudala—the enlightened  
She felt best to continue ordinary existence  
Never exhibiting or talking of attainments

Her husband the king remained ignorant  
Though she made attempts to awaken him  
Even enlightened beings with powers  
Cannot awaken those choosing ignorance

The instruction of preceptor to disciple  
Is but a tradition, words do not liberate  
Enlightenment requires purity of mind  
The disciple has to purify his consciousness

### **Story of the Precious Stone**

---

A wealthy villager was walking home once  
He had lost a copper so began to search

Being a miser he searched in bushes too  
Thinking and calculating the copper's value

For three days he searched the dense forest  
Searching areas he'd never even walked  
Unmindful of the taunt of spectators  
Suddenly finding a most precious stone

The cause of finding the precious treasure  
Was his miserliness and search for the coin  
No instruction received, the taunting endured  
Even so is the case in preceptor's teachings

The preceptor teaches without teaching  
Words can never take one to truth's discovery  
The disciple foolishly looks for appeasement  
From words and techniques which increase vanity

Sometimes the preceptor uses teachings  
To make a point of something beyond them  
The disciple must be alert to understand  
The medium used and what is indicated

It is not that instruction is unnecessary  
But it does not bring about enlightenment  
The sun of enlightenment is ever here  
People face their own clouds of ignorance

### **Back to the Main Story**

---

Sikhidhvaja the king dwelt in delusion  
Devoid of self-knowledge he floundered  
Sunk in grief by many errors and mistakes  
One day he contemplated the need for solitude

He resolved to repair to the forest  
As yogis had done to have self-knowledge  
He announced his intention to queen Chudala  
And asked her not to obstruct his intention

Chudala tried to help Sikhidhvaja see  
That it was not the time for this change  
The heart and mind must change first  
Before one tries to change the environment

The king felt she was being possessive  
And resolved to leave quietly at night  
Then at midnight on some pretense  
He rode away to a remote dense forest

## **Part II: Sikhidhvaja in the Forest**

---

Far, far away from all habitation  
He found a place deep in the forest  
There he built a cottage for himself  
And equipped it with all that was needed

Things he felt an ascetic should have  
Plates of wood and utensils of bamboo  
Earthen drinking cups, pots for flowers  
Deer skins for the cooler months

He quickly drew up a plan for the day  
First part was for meditation and japa  
Second part he gathered flowers and food  
Bathing and worship upon reaching the cottage

In the third part he ate a frugal meal  
Consisting of gathered roots and fruits  
Rest of the time was spent in japa  
He spent most of his time in that cottage

## Queen Chudala's Reaction

---

Chudala realized just what had happened  
Seeing all directly within through meditation  
She saw that her husband was caught up  
In a routine and time was passing by

She ruled the kingdom respected by all  
Spending her quiet hours in meditation  
Eighteen years passed in this way  
While her husband still followed his routine

She became aware of her husband's state  
He had still not attained enlightenment  
Though he had forgotten her and the kingdom  
He lived as an ascetic but was still deluded

Merely living an ascetic life in the forest  
Is not going to bring about an inward change  
The ego that takes you there continues to thrive  
In the newly created atmosphere

## Chudala Thought

---

My husband is the same person inwardly  
Though clad in skin and bark in the forest  
Matted locks too, but so lonely within  
Time hardened the skin and his heart

Those close to you can never be taught  
They insist on preexisting relationships  
My husband will spurn any help that I offer  
As he will feel I am but an ignorant girl

I must disguise myself and try to help him  
As his delusion increases day by day

Thus thinking she transformed herself  
To appear as a young and radiant ascetic

### **Part III: Chudala and Sikhidhvaja**

---

Instantly she appeared in her radiant form  
Sikhidhvaja felt a celestial had come  
Instantly he adored the radiant ascetic  
Chudala as an ascetic accepted his worship

She praised Sikhidhvaja's rugged austere life  
Praising all he had renounced for the forest  
Giving up his kingdom for a cottage  
It was indeed like treading the razor's edge

Sikhidhvaja praised the young ascetic  
Thanking him for the blessing of a visit  
He spoke of wife and kingdom  
Noting there was some resemblance

He felt most blessed by the holy visit  
And asked to know more about the ascetic  
To what did he owe such grace and blessing  
To be enlightened by insight into the truth

### **The Ascetic's (Chudala) Reply**

---

A holy sage was once meditating  
In a cave on the banks of a river  
Upon ending his meditation and rising  
He heard sounds of women nearby

Looking closer, he saw them bathing  
The noise was from their playfulness  
In their beauty he was overcome with lust  
His mind momentarily lost its balance

Though he was a sage of great learning  
A liberated one—free of desires  
His limitless consciousness was shaken  
In that moment lust invaded his mind

### **The Ascetic: On the Dual Forces**

---

The body of all beings is subject to sway  
By the dual forces of like and dislike  
As long as one is embodied—ignorant or wise  
The dual forces can dance and create havoc

Satisfying pleasure does not appease appetite  
Pleasure's appeasement is an experience of pain  
As when the self—reality—is forgotten  
The object of experience attains expansion

If there is unbroken awareness or vigilance  
There is light within—so this does not happen  
Dual forces may rise, they fall the same way  
One abides as awareness—free of its sway

Events and conditions may come and go  
Impressions are not created in the mind  
Older impressions cannot act out at all  
As awareness is also pure subjectivity

Ideas of pleasure and pain may arise  
They are just like winds rustling about  
But if awareness is lost for even a moment  
Passing winds will assume a sense of reality

Bondage is subjection to pleasure and pain  
Without subjection there is enlightenment  
Unbroken awareness is itself equilibrium  
One realizes pleasure and pain do not exist

Pleasure and pain are one's reactions  
They do not exist in things or the world  
When ignorance gets no fuel for delusion  
It is enlightened—reabsorbed in consciousness

### **The Ascetic: On Pleasure and Energy Loss**

---

The individual agitates the life-force  
Life-force extracts vital energy from the body  
This energy descends as seminal energy  
And discharged naturally during pleasure

### **The Ascetic: On Nature**

---

Brahman alone existed as Brahman  
Somehow some ripples appeared within  
All accidental coincidence in Brahman  
Different forms and nature—all called nature

From such nature of self the universe was born  
Sustained by self-limitation due to conditioning  
Alternating between order and disorder  
Giving rise to periods of conflict and peace

### **The Ascetic: Back to the Sage**

---

The sage quickly regained self-control  
And gathered the seed which had been spilt  
This he put in a pot to nurture in time  
This seed grew into an enlightened one—myself

I have said a little about things and myself  
Now, kindly tell me why you are here  
Please speak truthfully—just as things are  
Truth is the cornerstone of ascetic life

## **Sikhidhvaja Replied**

---

O radiant and enlightened one  
You know all but still ask of me  
I shall speak truthfully just as asked  
My story begins as king Sikhidhvaja

Dreading samsara I have abandoned  
Kingdom, wife and all royal pleasures  
Wandering and performing austerities  
I have yet to find peace and tranquility

My mind has not known rest at all  
Though I do not indulge in vain activity  
Living unattached and alone in this forest  
Still I am dry and devoid of fulfillment

I have practiced yogic methods ceaselessly  
But go from sorrow to greater sorrow  
Even simple joys that come naturally  
Torment the soul and seem poison to me

## **The Ascetic Instructs Sikhidhvaja**

---

Direct inquiry leads to self-knowledge  
The way beyond all sorrow and suffering  
Devoid of self-knowledge, ever are we bound  
Our suffering is the effect of our ignorance

Actions themselves do not bind  
Conditioning is limitation and bondage  
Just as seeing a ghost instead of a post  
Fills one with fright and great sorrow

Neither conditioning nor limitation  
Has any reality or substance really

Still they create such great havoc  
Giving rise to foolishness of all kinds

Conditioning is the seed of mind  
When it ceases the mind ceases too  
One who has attained self-knowledge  
Has crossed samsara—is never born again

Sages crossing this dire samsara  
Declare self-knowledge to be supreme  
Why then do you continue in ignorance  
By clinging still to foolish notions

Thinking that you are now an ascetic  
Living here in this forest in austerity  
Feeling: 'this is my pot, stick and cottage'  
Why not inquire directly into the self

Why not strive directly for enlightenment  
Inquiring into the nature of bondage  
Why are you wasting your life here alone  
Instead of seeking enlightened company

### **Sikhidhvaja Remarks**

---

O sage, everything you say is true  
I am freed of foolishness, O guru  
I have taken refuge in you—enlighten me  
To the way beyond grief and suffering

### **The Ascetic Continues Instruction**

---

If you are receptive and eager to learn  
You will benefit from my instruction  
It is your responsibility to see beyond words  
Words are used to indicate lies beyond them

If one is not serious, disciplined and attentive  
Teaching is fruitless—a useless exercise  
You must intend to receive that which is conveyed  
With the whole of your being in attentiveness

## **Story of the Philosophers' Stone**

---

There once lived one who was wealthy and wise  
Most successful though unaware of self  
He engaged in austerities for the sole purpose  
Of acquiring the gem—philosophers' stone

Since his effort was most intense  
The jewel appeared to him very soon  
Uncertain he was that this was the gem  
For how could such be achieved so soon

His mind was still striving and suffering  
Still doubting that this was the stone  
Thinking his austerity to be too ordinary  
For this achievement in such a short time

With this doubt and inner confusion  
He did not take the jewel that appeared  
Not destined to get it even though there  
What is ignored disappears quite soon

When one is sincere in spiritual practice  
Psychic powers called siddhis arise  
If one foolishly pursues these powers  
Insight that also comes vanishes—ignored

This man reengaged himself in austerity  
Still for the purpose of the precious stone  
Then once seeing a shiny glass piece  
He mistook it for the precious gem sought

Greedy and deluded he picked it up  
Thinking this would fulfill all his dear wishes  
Renouncing family, friends, wealth and all  
He went to a forest to harvest the glass piece

Nothing but great calamities came  
There he suffered for his foolishness  
Foolishness is the greatest disaster  
It adorns the head of all suffering and calamity

### **Story of the Wild Elephant**

---

This story resembles yours in many ways  
Listen attentively to its deeper import  
The story of a very strong elephant  
Equipped with the most powerful tusks

Its rider had imprisoned him in a cage  
Making him work hard, inflicting him with pain  
The elephant struggled to free itself  
Whenever the rider was away from him

Once after three days of struggle  
The elephant freed itself finally  
The rider found out and tracked him down  
Alighting on the elephant to his surprise

The rider slipped, falling to the ground  
The elephant saw his enemy before him  
Overcome with pity, he simply went away  
Compassion is seen even in wild beasts

Those bent on evil don't change their ways  
The rider gathered his friends for the task  
A vicious ambush for the elephant was set  
A huge pit—making it impossible for him to escape

They cleverly lured the elephant to trap  
And lo, he fell in and was again bound  
Made to undergo tremendous suffering  
The sad fate of those missing opportunity

If one ignores opportunities offered  
To break away from existing bondage  
They will return strengthened in force  
And subject you to a fresh charge of pain

Ignore the false satisfactions of freedom  
Thinking you are free invites sorrow  
Foolishness is bondage, O holy one  
'Tis foolish for the bound to imagine they're free

Though the self alone exists in truth  
The foolish are snared by ignorance  
Those firmly established in foolishness  
All that *is*—is but an expansion of foolishness

### **Lessons: Story of the Philosophers' Stone**

---

The one searching for the gem is you  
With knowledge of scriptures and learning  
Still peace eludes you at every step  
You are not at rest within yourself

The precious stone is real renunciation  
This alone puts an end to all sorrow  
Total renunciation is total gain  
You've renounced much for the ascetic life

The ego-sense still needs to be renounced  
The heart must fully abandon the mind  
When one abandons movement of thought  
There is realization of the Absolute

You are overcome with renunciation's thought  
An impression created by your renunciation  
Real bliss arises within naturally  
When there is total renunciation

One who has real total renunciation  
Is not agitated by anything at all  
Though winds come with all of their might  
The oak stands still and unperturbed

Worries are but movements of thought  
These movements are known as mind  
If thoughts still operate you must know  
The mind still has much it has not renounced

When the mind is agitated, world appears  
It stays as long as thoughts dwell within  
As long as thoughts continue to operate  
There is no total renunciation

Hence when thoughts arise in your heart  
Renunciation leaves you like the gem  
Taking along freedom from thoughts and worry  
For you failed to recognize its true spirit

Abandoned by the jewel of renunciation  
You clung to the glass of austerities  
This has increased your sorrow manifold  
You've abandoned joy for this sorry state

You fell into a self-created foolish trap  
Mistaking austerity for real renunciation  
Abandoning kingdom, wealth and wife  
Attaching to this pathetic ascetic life

You're more worried now than ever before  
About meals, animals and the weather  
Firmly bound by thoughts and their offshoots  
Only imagining you have some real gain

### **Lessons: Story of the Wild Elephant**

---

You are the wild elephant in the forest  
With tusks of wisdom and dispassion  
Ignorance is the rider inflicting sorrow  
Ignorance overcomes blind strength always

The cage is a cage of your desires  
They get stronger in time, unlike iron  
As the elephant broke out of the cage  
You renounced all and came to this forest

Psychological abandonment is another thing  
Not as easy as leaving things physically  
As the rider was alerted to the elephant's escape  
Ignorance trembles during renunciation

When pursuit of pleasure is abandoned  
Ignorance flees from you instantly  
Coming here you wounded this ignorance  
But you failed to abandon it psychologically

Therefore ignorance has risen in you  
It remembers well its earlier wound  
So it has trapped you now in asceticism  
You should have abandoned it mentally too

You are strong and endowed with wisdom  
But the rider of ignorance has trapped you  
You're now imprisoned in asceticism's well  
And all the while you think you're free

Why didn't you heed your wife's words  
She is indeed a true knower of truth  
But even if you felt that you were right  
Why didn't you abandon all psychologically

### **Sikhidhvaja to the Ascetic**

---

I've renounced kingdom, palace and wife  
What else could I have renounced  
Why do you say it is not renunciation—  
That I have not renounced everything

### **The Ascetic Replies**

---

Kingdom, palace, wealth and wife  
These are not yours to begin with  
The best part you have held back  
Renounce that totally without residue

### **Sikhidhvaha Responds**

---

If all those things are not really mine  
I then renounce this forest and hermitage  
Surely this now constitutes renunciation  
Have I completely renounced everything

### **The Ascetic Replies**

---

The forest and hermitage are not yours  
How do you feel you renounce them  
The best part you have held back  
Renounce that totally without residue

## **Sikhidhvaja Responds**

---

You say these are not mine either  
I then abandon staff, skin and cottage  
Saying this he sprang up and gathered  
All his possessions, however small

Instantly he created a large bonfire  
And burnt all things to ashes and dust  
Proclaiming he'd renounced all activities  
All that was sacred and secular too

Thank you for awakening me, O sage  
I've now abandoned delusion, carried long  
Victorious, I've now renounced everything  
Do you feel there is anything I have left out

## **The Ascetic Replies**

---

You have not renounced everything  
Do not pretend as if you really have  
The best part you have held back  
Renounce that totally without residue

## **Sikhidhvaja Responds**

---

There is only one thing left to renounce  
This filthy body of leather and bones  
I shall now renounce this wretched thing  
And surely achieve total renunciation

## **The Ascetic Replies**

---

Why destroy this innocent body  
Abandon anger which blinds you now  
You have nothing to do with this body  
It is enlivened, sustained and made to act

Real renunciation is beyond this notion  
Renounce that which agitates this body  
Sin and evil will then come to an end  
Or they will rise again in a new body

That alone is total renunciation  
That will make you a supreme renouncer  
Renounce the sole cause of all mischief  
That which makes one revolve in foolishness

### **Sikhidhvaja Responds**

---

O, radiant sage, I hear your words  
But I'm not able to know what to renounce  
Pray, instruct me on the sole cause of all  
So I may see clearly what renunciation is

### **The Ascetic Replies**

---

The mind should be renounced, O noble one  
Call it the individual, jiva or even prana  
It is what created tremendous confusion  
The seed of all sorrow, suffering and grief

Abandoning the mind is renunciation  
The mind causes great distress in the heart  
Its agitation affects one and others too  
'Tis great joy in one who is mind-less

Diverse experiences and stages in life  
The firmness of holy ones as well too  
Are all modifications of the mind only  
Mind's abandonment is true renunciation

Once you renounce this unstable mind  
Truth will be experienced at once

All notions and diversity will come to an end  
You will know peace that passeth understanding

By trying to renounce what is not yours  
You create division within yourself  
You cannot renounce everything as such  
All exists in the one infinite consciousness

Rest in the stage of total renunciation  
'Tis like a quiet lamp without any fuel  
But in the quiet stillness you'll still shine  
With the supreme brilliance of your nature

Just as you'll still exist after renouncing  
Consciousness ever exists after mind's gone  
Nothing will change but changing within  
You'll transcend all sorrow completely

You'll go beyond birth, old age and death  
Entering into eternity and infinity  
All else is a sheer waste of time  
Self-created delusion and bondage

In renunciation exists highest knowledge  
Utter emptiness overflows within itself  
Abandon the mind and notion of renunciation  
Then remain where you are—what is the harm

### **Sikhidhvaja Asks**

---

Holy sage, kindly do instruct me  
As I have taken refuge in you  
What is the nature of this mind  
How to abandon it once and for all

## The Ascetic: On the Mind

---

For the wise, renunciation is easier  
Than renouncing rule over a kingdom  
For fools, renouncing is as difficult  
As it is for simpletons to be king

Subtle impressions are conditioning  
These form the nature of the mind  
The utter destruction of the mind  
Is the extinction of all conditioning

The 'I-idea' is the mind-tree's seed  
It arises in the absence of self-knowledge  
Uproot this tree—root and branch  
And rest in the space of the heart

'I' is the seed of the mind-tree  
It grows in the field of ignorance  
Creating division where none exists  
A trick, an illusion—it is called maya

Only after the 'I-idea' takes root  
Does intellect or buddhi arise within  
From then it expands most vigorously  
Notions and concepts are its substance

The trunk of this tree is the body  
More conditioning the food that sustains  
Its branches reach great distances  
Its fruits are joys and sorrows

This is a vicious mean-spirited tree  
Endeavor to uproot and fell it  
Beware of its branches and fruit at all times  
By the spirit of detachment and renunciation

The spirit of detachment and renunciation  
Stops nourishment and weakens the tree  
You must then uproot this tree completely  
This is the primary task before you

Uproot the tree by relentless self-inquiry  
Directly discover the nature of self  
The fire of inquiry will fry the seed  
Ongoing inquiry will set the tree afire

Ignorance arises in pure consciousness  
As an effect of the non-existent ego-sense  
It is most shameless, vile and persistent  
It keeps returning even when thrown out

It returns only because we deal with effects  
Go after the cause and see what happens  
Every experience is the effect of some cause  
Destroy the cause of returning experience

Experience does not rest on objective reality  
As objects come and go as effects you see  
Pursue the cause and you may discover  
There is none—the effect vanishes too

If the parent is unreal the child is unreal  
The creator too is non-different from truth  
All that seems to have proceeded from him  
Has truth as its substance, form as appearance

The creator is non-different from reality  
Hence, creation is non-different from reality  
This has to be realized directly for oneself  
To get rid of ignorance and the ego-sense

The delusion of the world-appearance  
Has attained expansion by reaffirmation  
When water freezes into a block of ice  
It serves as a seat or something similar

Only when ignorance is finally dispelled  
Does the original state manifest itself  
All notions have to be seen to be unreal  
The deception ceases when inquired into

Brahman is one without a second  
Without cause, effect or purpose  
Being the all—what purpose can there be  
World-appearance is but a delusion

The objectivity we feel of this world  
Has to be seen and known as unreal  
The experiencer of ego-sense does not exist  
Realize this and recognize you are the all

### **Sikhidhvaja's Realization**

---

Lord, eternally grateful I am to thee  
For this awakening and realization  
Neither mind nor ego-sense exists  
I am pure, awakened—there is naught else

### **Vasistha's Comments**

---

Sikhidhvaja entered deep meditation  
Having awoken—fully enlightened  
You are instantly free of modifications  
Once the light of self is directly seen

Coming out of meditation he then inquired  
For further understanding of the truth

"When reality is indeed indivisible  
How does any division arise in it"

## **The Ascetic: On Appearance and Reality**

---

Well asked, O enlightened one  
This is all that remains to be known  
All this will cease at world-cycle's end  
Remaining only as a trace essence

That itself is pure consciousness  
Also known as Brahman or nirvana  
Most minute, yet infinitely large  
Creation is sub-atomic in its expanse

The universal self exists as this universe  
As the ocean with waves appearing in it  
World-appearance is a but a mere ripple  
In the infinite ocean of pure consciousness

Infinite consciousness pervades all  
Holding all together from within  
A total absence of division or duality  
Everywhere, at all times, in all forms

Extremely subtle is this—pure experiencing  
Neither experiencer nor experience  
One cannot say anything about it at all  
Words necessarily omit some things

Causeless and hence the cause of none  
Neither doer, action nor instrument  
Eternal, absolute consciousness it is  
Pure self-knowledge—supreme existence

'World' and 'ego-sense' are words only  
They have no corresponding reality  
Empty notions, non-different from space  
This has to be realized as the supreme self

Whatever consciousness realizes itself to be  
That it becomes instantly—here and now  
Due to confusion consciousness sees itself  
As embodied and as the world outside

The supreme self alone shines here as all  
'World' and 'ego-sense' are only notions  
Having no existence independent of self  
Consciousness shines as consciousness

Neither seed nor cause for this world  
All you see is an experience only  
Apart from experience nothing exists  
What exists is infinite consciousness

The infinite exists as pure experiencing  
That alone is this universe expanded  
There is no substance or outsideness  
Pure experiencing is consciousness

Indestructible—it cannot be modified  
The changes you see are experiences  
A trick of consciousness within itself  
Consciousness alone exists—naught else

Matter and thought have no existence  
There is neither world nor ego-sense  
Remain in peace free of conditioning  
All questions cease on self-realization

The mind does not have any existence  
That which shines is infinite consciousness  
Giving rise to notions like mind and world  
All are reflections within infinite consciousness

The absolute is formless pure consciousness  
Forms cannot come from the formless  
A notion about something felt to be real  
The mind is a bundle of such limiting notions

Just how can the mind be real at all  
Can a divider exist in the indivisible  
Appearances are reflections in consciousness  
The mind and world are but notions

The reality that is seen as the world  
Is beginningless, uncreated, indivisible  
Illimitable, formless and unchanging  
Reflections of Brahman within itself

If there is no world, where is 'you' and 'I'  
Know these directly to be but notions  
Giving rise to bondage and self-destruction  
Realization of I's non-existence is freedom

Bondage and liberation are notions too  
Consciousness is aware of both of them  
You must realize you are not the ego-sense  
To be free and rest in pure awareness

When pure awareness rises, notions subside  
Perfection ensues without agitation  
This universe exists as carvings exist  
Within an uncarved block of granite

To see the universe without conditioning  
Without intervention of the mind  
Without notions and perversions  
This is called nirvana or perfection

When this truth is clearly realized  
When duality is completely discarded  
Peace that passeth understanding remains  
Your indescribable and true nature

Without cause, there can be no effect  
Without seed, trees cannot come forth  
How then from the formless Brahman  
Comes this universe as something real

Brahman comprehended by ignorance  
Is called universe—real and compelling  
When consciousness knows itself to be  
Something other—it takes on ignorance

This ignorance or veiling is self-destructive  
Be it momentary or through birth cycles  
Such delusion can only be rent asunder  
When self-knowledge is directly experienced

The unreal appearing as the real  
Is called ignorance and confusion  
Non-comprehension of the truth  
Is comprehension of untruth—ignorance

When the mind's non-existence is realized  
One sees that ego-sense does not exist  
What exists is infinite consciousness  
All notions based on ignorance cease

There is neither unity nor diversity  
Neither confusion nor delusion  
Nothing comes and nothing goes  
Everything is consciousness—that you are

When all desires have been abandoned  
The mind becomes utterly quiet  
Earlier existing coloring washes away  
These teachings are then comprehended

Earlier efforts are not wasted though  
Effort in conditioning takes you so far  
All conditioning must be abandoned  
For clarity to find its way home

When one is freed of all conditioning  
When all impurities have been removed  
The teachers words enter the heart  
And resonate, awakening the self

Earlier you dwelt in ignorance  
Varied notions of 'I' and 'mine'  
Now on abandoning them completely  
The truth is directly seen in your heart

As long as the heart sees the mind  
Ignorance lasts and creates havoc  
When the heart sees itself or light  
You are enlightened and liberated

Mind and conditioning are synonymous  
As long as these are felt near and dear  
One must suffer ignorance's consequence  
This is by choice and never an imposition

There is no mind in liberated ones  
Consciousness functions unobstructed  
They live in pure light of consciousness  
While the ignorant function in the mind

When there is destruction of the mind  
There is also destruction of all sorrow  
One attains unending happiness and joy  
One abides in utter equanimity

All joys of this world and even heaven  
Are worth nothing more than a copper  
One who clings to its fleeting pleasures  
Himself forsakes his highest welfare

The direct method of self-knowledge  
Is the best and safest way back home  
Indirect methods are full of dead-ends  
Where one only thinks there is attainment

Whatever sorrow there is anywhere  
Know it to be a result of mental craving  
If you establish yourself in equanimity  
You'll rest in the non-different eternal

There is only infinite consciousness  
Brahman is the only existence  
All else is in the mind of spectators  
Mental limitation experiencing itself

### **Vasistha's Comments**

---

Sikhidhvaja engaged in deep meditation  
Free of all modifications in consciousness  
Chudala abandoned her ascetic disguise  
And returned to her palace to resume her duties

After some time she felt to visit him  
To see if he was still inwardly awake  
Sikhidhvaja was still in deep meditation  
And did not hear her calling to him

Using her psychic powers she deduced  
A trace of individuality still existed in him  
She fanned that spark till it grew into a flame  
Sikhidhvaja awakened from his meditation

The most latent desires are disguised as sattva  
They are still seeds, no matter the guise  
Like sparks, they can be fanned into flame  
So one has to be alert and eternally vigilant

These latent desires in sattvic guise  
Are so because of an inner imbalance  
When sattva is in total equilibrium  
Agitation in body or mind do not happen

Sikhidhvaja opened his eyes to find  
The ascetic just there, looking at him  
He prostrated, expressing his gratitude  
For the instructions and guidance received

He expressed his experiences in detail  
Most thankful for the showering of grace  
He now understood total renunciation  
As renunciation of all mental modification

After spending some time in the forest  
Discussing many things of interest  
Chudala felt that he was now ready  
To know the truth of her identity

She also felt that he should return  
To the palace and resume his duties  
There was no point in continuing to dwell  
In the forest now that clarity was achieved

As long as there is oil in the lamp  
It continues to burn ever bright  
So also when there is conditioning  
Ignorance's darkness keeps one bound

The lamp of Sikhidhvaja was now dry  
The oil of ignorance had been purged  
His whole being was in utter equanimity  
She felt he should do his natural functions

She explained the truth of her identity  
Why she had to assume the disguise  
We cannot learn from those closest to us  
As the mind insists on how it relates

Learning takes a disciple's heart  
One who is awake and stays alert  
One who has the requisite discipline  
To find out the truth for himself now

Till an awakening has happened within  
Anything said will not be of much use  
As the cup of one's inner receptivity  
Is turned upside down and will not hold

It is pointless to instruct the unawakened  
They are sleeping—best to let them lie  
Awakening—they will themselves seek  
Ways to end the tyranny of the mind

This story has many subtle teachings  
Contemplate them carefully—gain wisdom  
Know what it is that really binds  
And what must be done to overcome it

## 12. The Story of Kaca

### Background

---

Kaca's story has a similar import  
What is renunciation and liberation  
Kaca was the son of Brihaspati  
Who was preceptor to the gods

When still young Kaca inquired  
Of Brihaspati, his father the wise sage  
"How does one obtain freedom  
From this cage called samsara"

Brihaspati's reply was quite curt  
"Liberation from this prison house  
Is possible by total renunciation  
There is no other way out of this"

### Kaca's First Attempt

---

Kaca renounced everything he had  
And retired to the forest that moment  
His father the sage was unaffected  
The wise are unaffected by such changes

After eight years of seclusion and austerity  
Kaca happened to meet his father again  
"I've performed austerities for long years  
But have still to attain supreme peace"

## **The Sage's Reply**

---

His father the sage repeated again  
His earlier commandment to Kaca  
"Renounce everything" and went away  
Leaving his son to do the needful

## **Kaca's Second Attempt**

---

Considering what was left to renounce  
Kaca discarded the clothes on his body  
Continuing austerity for three more years  
He again sought his father's counsel

"I've renounced all my personal things  
Practiced austerity for three more years  
But I've still to attain supreme peace  
I've yet to gain self-knowledge"

## **The Sage's Reply**

---

"By 'total' I mean only the mind  
For it is the mind that is the all  
Renunciation of the mind is requisite"  
Saying this the sage instantly vanished

## **Kaca's Third Attempt**

---

Kaca looked within to find the mind  
In order that it too could be renounced  
But he could not find the elusive mind  
All his efforts were fruitless and in vain

He realized that punishing the body  
Was the height of folly—it was innocent  
And decided to return to the sage again  
This time to learn what the mind is

## Kaca to the Sage

---

"Please instruct me on the mind  
I do not understand what the mind is  
How does one renounce something  
Of which he has no real knowledge"

## The Sage and Kaca's Dialogue

---

The sage replied to the seeker his son  
They who know, say 'I' is the mind  
The ego-sense that arises within you  
That is the mind—it is naught else

Kaca said it was difficult to impossible  
The sage responded that it was possible  
Easier than crushing a flower in the hand  
Far easier than closing one's own eyes

That which appears to be is ignorance  
It perishes on the dawn of knowledge  
Know there is no ego-sense in truth  
It appears due to ignorance and delusion

Just where is this thing called ego-sense  
How did it arise and what is it really  
Consciousness alone is all things  
There is naught else but consciousness

Ego- sense is just a word that's inflated  
Give it up and give up all self-limitation  
It is also giving up all mental conditioning  
In order to realize you're unconditionally free

## Vasistha's Comments

---

Thus instructed in the highest wisdom  
Kaca became enlightened and free  
You too can attain the very same state  
Of supreme peace and inner quiescence

The ego-sense is unreal—do not trust it  
Do not abandon it either—as it is unreal  
The unreal cannot be grasped in hand  
It cannot be abandoned as something either

You must feel in every cell of your being  
The utter unreality of the ego-sense  
All conditioning must be abandoned  
Mental conditioning is self-limitation

Then what is birth and what is death  
You realize you're subtle consciousness  
Indivisible and free of ideation  
Encompassing all beings and everything

It is only in the state of ignorance  
The world around appears so very real  
The enlightened see all as Brahman  
Having abandoned all concepts and notions

Do not behave like the foolish and suffer  
What one has attained—you can too  
There is no loss in forsaking the unreal  
It is natural if real wisdom has dawned within

## 13. The Story of the Deluded Man

### Background

---

There is a man fashioned by delusion  
Born and brought up in a desert  
In him arose a deluded notion  
"I'm born of space, this space is mine"

### What Followed the Deluded Notion

---

Instantly he felt a need to protect space  
And built a house for this very purpose  
Seeing space safely enclosed within  
He felt happy and most contented

In course of time, the house tumbled  
And weeping aloud, feeling all was lost  
He then dug a well for the same purpose—  
Of protecting space which he thought was his

The well too was lost in course of time  
Again he was consumed by sorrow  
He kept fashioning different containers  
But each perished after a short time

### Vasistha's Insight

---

The man who was fashioned by delusion  
Is the ego-sense—a notion in the mind  
Brahman in reality, but not knowing this  
It foolishly wanders trying to possess things

Identification with the body starts delusion  
Other bodies are then seen as distinct  
The urge to possess surges within  
The mind works furiously to protect it

All things change and perish in time  
Nothing is yours to be possessed  
What will you protect and just how  
When you yourself are journeying here

But even though bodies perish in time  
The self that animates them doesn't  
You are that imperishable consciousness  
Indestructible and even finer than space

Brahman alone is all this you see  
Be happy knowing this deeply within  
The whole universe is pure consciousness  
Objects are appearances within itself

Everything, everyone including you and I  
Though seeming alive is not really alive  
Abandon faith in appearance as reality  
Do what needs to be done appropriately

## **14. The Story of Vipaschit**

### **Background**

---

There once lived a king called Vipaschit  
Four ministers guarded his kingdom  
A wise man visited him one day  
After saluting, he spoke to the king

### **The Wise Man Said to the King**

---

All four ministers have been killed  
The city is surrounded by the enemy  
Only you can fend off this assault  
Only you can destroy this enemy

## The King Acts

---

The king offered prayers and worship  
He then summoned four powerful forces  
Offering his head in return as sacrifice  
Four powerful forces emerged right then

Most radiant were the king's four forms  
They were blessed with seeing everything  
They immediately proceeded to do battle  
And vanquished the enemy's four forces

## Vasistha's Comments

---

Though consciousness is one and non-dual  
It seems to become diverse like in dream  
Thus it is non-diverse—still appearing diverse  
As the diverse forms are its own reflections

Similarly the yogi too acts everywhere  
Experiencing all things in all of time  
Though apparently remaining in one place  
As he has overcome all self-limitation

## Returning to the Story

---

The four radiant forms the king assumed  
Were neither enlightened nor ignorant  
All things are possible for those in such state  
Of both awakening and non-awakening

In the case of partial awakening  
Psychic powers come naturally to one  
Yogis who practice just to attain powers  
May get them but they are still ignorant

Liberated sages are quite different  
They've attained insight into truth  
Though they engage in normal activity  
They are liberated from bondage's chains

They may weep, laugh and get angry  
Within they are never elated or depressed  
They are established firmly in the truth  
Though they may seem to be quite ordinary

The king's four forms had different outcomes  
One attained salvation by the Lord's grace  
Another reached the realm of the moon  
The third continued to rule his kingdom

The fourth attained to heaven's abode  
As he was utterly free of any desires  
Still not having attained enlightenment  
He continued investigation into the truth

Though each had the same vasana initially  
They were drawn in different directions  
Repetitions of vasana impact its effects  
Time, place and activity are other factors

Vipaschit the fourth form roamed very far  
He realized the truth—then ignorance ceased  
Ignorance too is infinite as is truth  
All seen within infinite consciousness

### **Vasistha's Insight**

---

When truth is not realized ignorance is  
When truth is realized ignorance is not  
The same consciousness is ignorance  
The same consciousness is Brahman

Redemption is the original cause's reversal  
That which gave rise to the initial fall  
No other path is adequate or fruitful  
Self effort and grace meet in redemption

Vipaschit had gone through many births  
Gradually freeing himself of ignorance  
Each step was a step into the light  
Leaving behind some clouds of ignorance

Each moment is a precious opportunity  
Towards the light or the fall into darkness  
You must chose which path to tread  
Resulting experiences are beyond your choice

## **15. The Story of the Hunter and the Sage**

### **Background**

---

Vipaschit from the earlier story  
Took birth once again as Bhasa  
Must luminous and radiant was his form  
He had a boon to experience everything

For eons he took birth in different forms  
Remembering knowledge and experiences  
Seeing worlds most distant and different  
Endless were experiences like flowing streams

In a certain universe lived a fierce demon  
Who had destroyed the abode of a sage  
He was cursed to be born as a mosquito  
Somehow suddenly he had self-awareness

He became a mosquito with self-awareness  
That of Brahma down to a blade of grass

All beings are subject to two forms of birth  
Those of Brahma's and illusory creation also

### **Meeting the Ascetic**

---

In time he took birth as a hunter  
One day meeting a ascetic who asked  
"Why do you live this cruel life  
Why not seek liberation instead?"

The hunter took these words to heart  
And entered the wisdom of scriptures  
Just as the flower's deep fragrance  
Enters one's body when it is inhaled

One day the hunter asked the ascetic  
Just how is it that though this dream  
Takes place within oneself only  
It appears to be outside as real

### **The Ascetic Replied**

---

To find the answer to this question  
I once practiced long contemplation  
Exhaling prana and mind outside  
The prana entered another being

I followed it into that being  
And into his heart I did enter  
Beholding the principle of light  
There I saw the entire universe

It was just like seeing with my eyes  
I saw the sun, mountains and oceans  
Different human beings and gods too  
And realized the truth about consciousness

## On the Play of Consciousness

---

Whatever consciousness manifests in itself  
That is what is known as the world  
This world is indeed the dream object  
The perception of infinite consciousness

The expansion of this perception  
Is what is known as the waking state  
Dream is dream in relation to  
The waking state preceding it

Dream is a waking state in itself  
The waking state having two aspects  
When one wishes to rest in himself  
And when one attains perfect illumination

Resting in himself the illusion continues  
One responds to the world in the mind  
But when one attains perfect illumination  
The world-appearance ceases completely

I ventured further into the being  
Entering his individual consciousness  
I experienced his world of confusion  
His vital energy was heavily congested

Years of poor habits, fatigue and drink  
Made his vital energy dense and inefficient  
The self is its own object, you see  
Congestion within is experienced without

Mind is creator of the world  
It fancies prana to be its movement  
Thus mind brings prana into being  
And on prana mind becomes dependent

Prana busied in its own movement  
Is unable to exert in self-knowledge  
When prana and mind are in harmony  
One engages himself in various activities

When prana and mind have disharmony  
Both resting—is called the sleep state  
Clogs in the nadis due to unhealthy habits  
Is experienced as fatigue and need for sleep

All this I saw within that being  
Into whose consciousness I entered  
I saw a world within his consciousness  
And realized it was all consciousness' play

### **On the Power of Assertion**

---

After this I asserted that I was sixteen  
I experienced that I was sixteen years old  
Living in a hermitage in a small village  
All this instantly became real to me

Previous experiences began to fade  
The body seemed to be my only hope  
Social customs and wealth became important  
It felt wisdom had completely abandoned me

One day a guest came by to visit  
He described the truth of this universe  
One infinite consciousness alone is  
I awakened fully on hearing his words

I recollected I was in another's body  
One with his prana but in samadhi  
I exited his body and came to know  
Just one hour had passed in samadhi

Curiously I entered another's heart  
In it, cosmic dissolution had just concluded  
Where is the body, creation and death  
There is only pure consciousness

In the presence of this consciousness  
The tiniest particle appears macrocosmic  
When world-appearance's notion is rooted  
The karma notion takes root—creation seems real

The cycle of life, experience and death  
Continues till one attains liberation  
Creation is in the heart of consciousness  
Just as dream is in the dreamer's heart

Virtue, vice, tendency and personality  
All are but notions, words with no reality  
One infinite consciousness alone is  
In which diversity appears as a dream

Creation is an appearance in consciousness  
'Tis very much like dream-experience  
Just as cloud formations appear in the sky  
Seeming quite stable but ever changing

Countless worlds appear in consciousness  
Some in the same space, some seem separate  
Appearances exist in consciousness only  
There is not else—this must be known directly

Impressions created in the waking state  
Appear in the dream state as well  
Strengthened again in the waking state  
But the waking state too is an appearance

Just as movement is natural in air  
Notions arise in consciousness  
Impressions are not needed to create them  
They appear and dissolve on their own

Consciousness's faculty to hold onto something  
Is what is known as impression or samskara  
When it is realized it is a reflection within  
Impressions are not seen or experienced

Creation is non-different from consciousness  
Consciousness alone shines as all this  
The cause was there before the effect  
This cause continues to shine unchanged

Things appear to exist independently  
All because the substratum is reality  
Just as dream objects appear so very real  
Because of the dreamer dreaming them

Simultaneous multiple reflections  
Appear as this grand creation we see  
All of it rises and exists in consciousness  
Infinite consciousness is the only reality

Diversity appears to be just as in dream  
Creation exists in infinite consciousness  
As dream is non-different from the dreamer  
Creation is non-different from consciousness

Everywhere I look, I see myself only  
As I am a particle in consciousness  
The part cannot be divided from the whole  
This truth has to be realized by you directly

## On Creation

---

In the beginning there was no creation  
Infinite consciousness alone was  
Creation took place as a coincidence  
As a coconut falls from the tree when a bird alights

The individual experiences creation  
As the world outside due to the senses  
When attention is externalized and scattered  
There is confusion and lack of inner clarity

When the senses don't rush out to objects  
The rays of the mind return to fullness  
Once again there is great clarity within  
No contradiction between appearance and reality

Senses extroverted is world-appearance  
As if it were outside infinite consciousness  
The individual is an aggregate of the senses  
Consciousness endowed with life force

This individual exists as everything everywhere  
Or he could never experience anything at all  
The nature of the individual has impact  
On the experiences and pull to respond

As one's natural tendencies surge within  
One feels a certain way towards things  
This does not mean that he must respond  
In the way the feeling within urges

## Back to the Story

---

When I asserted I was sixteen years old  
I momentarily forgot that a notion had gripped

I lived with others for sixteen years  
Until one day an ascetic re-awakened me

All are in the heart of the infinite being  
We somehow regard others as so and so  
The infinite is the cause for all experiences  
All opposites and diversity are in him alone

When the energy in the infinite is agitated  
The effect is experienced by us in his heart  
We experience things as natural calamities  
And calm is restored on energy's balance

The infinite being is creations' reality  
Everything happens because of its will  
We attribute things to some local cause  
It is mere coincidence for this to so appear

Instructed by the ascetic—I was enlightened  
And felt not to leave him just yet  
I lived with him for a number of years  
That very ascetic is sitting right next to you

I wanted to see within myself as well  
Just as I saw in the body I was in  
But I could not return to my body  
And sought help from the ascetic

### **The Ascetic's Instructions**

---

You can know all and everything  
If you see it with your inner vision  
You are not this little personality  
You are the infinite being himself

You desired to enter another's heart  
To have a certain experience  
You've now entered this creation  
Your old body and his have decayed

You've continued to vibrate as consciousness  
Not finding exit as both bodies are gone  
Your experience has materialized as dream  
All of us now here are our own dream objects

All of this happens in pure consciousness  
It exists everywhere, in every moment  
Knowers of truth know no sorrow  
They teach and enlighten others as well

### **How to Rest in the Self?**

---

Embarking on self-knowledge's quest  
Must be a whole-hearted effort  
First, find a foothold in sound wisdom  
Stay steady in practice till the goal is reached

Every moment of time and every thing  
Has the potential to raise inner clarity  
All that you seek is here and now  
Face the truth in all things without break

Experiences will come naturally on their own  
No need to run after anything at all  
The inevitable cannot be averted by any  
It cannot be altered by any effort

Let come what comes—what is the problem  
Be concerned with facing the truth  
Ceaselessly watch the mind's movement  
Unbroken must be the meditative mood

The world-appearance is a grand illusion  
It gives rise to delusion in the mind  
Opposites and contradictions appear  
But the substratum of them is unchanging

Every inch of space is filled with creations  
Countless worlds exist though unseen  
All existing together though most varied  
Without any contradiction or conflict

This universe appears in Brahman only  
In Brahman the universe does dissolve  
Brahman is the only reality there is  
Appearances are its creative play

From Brahman did the mind arise  
Faculties of thinking and imagination  
All that you see exists in that mind  
Fondness of notions are illusion's chains

Light rays are non-different from the sun  
Bracelet is non-different from gold  
Waves are non-different from the ocean  
Sparks are non-different from flame

When the truth behind appearance is seen  
Direct understanding breaks illusion's chains  
One attains what is worth attaining  
And never gets enmeshed in objects again

Abandon your notions and conditioning  
Ideas of diversity that invite preference  
Refute objectification and externality  
Remain steadily establishes in consciousness

Whatever the self contemplates  
Materializes instantly, here and now  
This materialization shines as if independent  
Know this directly to be the origin of diversity

World-appearance is neither real nor unreal  
All appearances have reality as their substratum  
When this truth is realized by you directly  
You will know absolute reality as the self

From one point of view things appear real  
From an absolute view they are appearances  
Brahman remains Brahman—ever unchanged  
Though this world appears to exist as well

Abide in truth no matter what you do  
All this is nothing but pure consciousness  
Brahman alone is the absolute reality  
This, that or the other just do not exist

Abandon all concepts—even of bondage  
Liberation too is a notion only  
Remain pure, egoless and indivisible  
Engage yourself in natural activity

Light in darkness and darkness in light  
Good in evil and evil in good as well  
All opposites synthesize in the absolute  
Renounce all limitation and realize freedom

I left the heart I had entered into  
Realizing Brahman as the only reality  
Everything exists everywhere all the time  
All this is pure undivided consciousness

In the infinite play of the infinite being  
Worlds and universes rise and fall  
Each full with different forms and beings  
Some are enlightened, others are not

The world exists in the mind only  
World-appearance is indeed beginningless  
Endless too is consciousness's infinite play  
All this is pure consciousness—naught else

## 16. The World Within the Rock

### Background

---

A woman celestial once said to me  
When questioned about her identity  
"You live in a corner of the universe  
Beyond which are many diverse universes

On the slopes of a far-off mountain range  
Is a solid rock within which I dwell  
The world there is much like yours  
Different inhabitants and the rest

One desire remains for me now  
To be instructed by you in the truth  
And to attain self-knowledge  
Pray, do visit the world I dwell in"

### Vasistha's Comments

---

At her request I did visit  
Her world within the rock  
I saw the rock but not her world  
She insisted it was within her only

Then by repeated affirmation  
Her world I began to experience  
And realized that for salvation too  
One has to be totally devoted

Instruction in right effort is necessary  
As the path and means are not known  
Then one has to exert by one's self  
Engaging in right action continually

### **Back to the story**

---

What appeared to be a rock  
Shone as pure consciousness  
On account of the power of illusion  
The unreal becomes obvious somehow

The subtle body is the first obvious truth  
The gross body follows as do all forms  
But what seems obvious is most unreal  
While reality stays hidden and unobvious

As the world within the rock was unseen  
Within and of consciousness only  
So also all this is pure consciousness  
Ignorant people cling to this as reality

I followed the celestial into her world  
And met her husband, a holy man  
He was the creator of that world  
I inquired about this world of theirs

### **The Creator in the Rock**

---

I'm but a vibration in consciousness  
Uncreated, I do not see any other

You, I and all of which is seen  
Are all mere vibrations or notions

This lady you see here as my wife  
Is also an uncreated vibration  
Now I wish to merge in consciousness  
Rising dispassion signals dissolution

This lady, my wife, feels the same  
All notions have ceased in us both  
At the very same time that notions' end  
There is yearning for the unconditioned

Time, space, matter and motion  
Are all parts of consciousness only  
Consciousness exists as this immobile rock  
All worlds exist in consciousness only

## **Dissolution and Creation**

---

The creator entered into deep meditation  
So did the lady—his wife—and myself  
Withdrawing consciousness from notions  
The earth in his world started to disintegrate

Water then deluged all that existed  
Flames arose high in the skies  
The creator withdrew his life-force  
Unrighteousness precedes natural calamities

Nothing lives without life-force  
Stars, heavens and gods cannot survive  
All these began to disintegrate as well  
All being notions of the creator only

What survives is only the eternal  
Beyond description, most minute  
A particle compared to mountains here  
From that everything seems to exist

Though of the nature of pure space  
Matter within it appears solid  
Consciousness alone appears as all  
Gods and worms too are all in that particle

All worlds are contained in the minute  
Pure consciousness is the only reality  
The substance stays unchanged throughout  
The world appears, so to say, as its body

All actions taking place originate in him  
On account of him all appears so real  
He exists as the cosmic body of creation  
Just as you exist in your heart in meditation

As we continued to meditate deeply  
I saw suns rising in each direction  
Three looked like the eyes of Rudra  
Their light destroyed the universe

Only two objects remained unaffected  
Space because it was all-pervading  
And gold because it was absolutely pure  
Total darkness blanketed all directions

After the colossal destruction  
Devoid of the veil of creation  
Fullness that seemed hidden during creation  
Was experienced as the only existence

This fullness has been there all the time  
Veiled only by one's own conditioning  
When conditioning is fully abandoned  
Fullness alone overflows in all directions

Limitless consciousness being everywhere  
I saw the creator in meditation  
Not as material solid forms  
But as empty dream-objects in a void

Instantly all vanished from view  
A fearful and radiant form appeared  
Rudra, the cosmic ego-sense it was  
The one who disturbs the equilibrium

Pure space or void is his form  
The five senses are his faces  
Organs of actions and their fields  
Are the great Rudra's ten arms

Though grand and colossal in size is Rudra  
He's but a small particle in consciousness  
Existing as movement in consciousness  
As air, space and life-force that sustains all

In time, all his movements cease  
He attains supreme equilibrium  
For he is attended by goodness for all  
He is known as Siva or auspiciousness

Attaining the state of supreme peace  
He comes to be known as Krishna  
He then starts creation's cycle  
And attains to supreme peace again

Rudra began to dance in space  
Casting a shadow without a sun  
That danced with him emitting fire  
The worlds reflected in her body

Like mirrors in one's body were worlds  
Seen in Rudra's shadow which appeared  
Coming into view and disappearing  
From moment to moment as she danced

There was neither male, female nor any dance  
Siva alone existed—pure consciousness  
His own dynamic energy appeared variously  
Non-different and inseparable from him

Just as gold cannot be without some form  
Consciousness has all forms inherent within  
Never without some movement within  
Birth, death and the rest are but consciousness

### **Vasistha's Insight**

---

The enlightened see not diversity  
I myself saw that space of supreme peace  
Experiencing the forms described earlier  
As motion in that pure consciousness

All that appears and whatever there is  
Is real to the self—you must realize this  
Multiple reflections in consciousness  
Appearing real because of the substratum

Rudra then became atomic and invisible  
Becoming one with Brahman the absolute  
I saw all this in the rock I entered into  
With the divine eye or awakened intelligence

This cannot be seen with physical eyes  
You'll just see a rock somewhere outside  
But when you behold all with inner vision  
Every particle of sand is pure consciousness

I saw universes past, present and future  
Realizing that all this was within myself  
Just as the tree exists within the seed  
I myself was experiencing all these forms

I had become sub-atomic, a ray of light  
Then gross with potential for sense experience  
When consciousness opens its eyes, as it were  
It becomes aware of its own potentialities

Pure elements and senses come into being  
Though arising from and within consciousness  
Seeming substantial but still most illusory  
Known individually as I-ness or ego-sense

Experiencing space, I understood earth  
Experiencing earth all universes were known  
I myself became all that I experienced  
Apart from mind, nothing is experienced

What is seen as the world does not exist  
You have to observe this very carefully  
With the inner eye of awakened intelligence  
To know just how it seems to come into being

Pure consciousness appears as all this  
False notions we hold insist otherwise  
Direct self-realization must be had  
To know that you are indeed the all

I experience all as Brahman only  
Even elemental experiences are all him  
Non-different and inseparable from him  
This you have to know by direct experience

## 17. The Sage from Outer Space

### Background

---

After all this I entered my cottage in space  
And looked around for my physical body  
Only an old sage could be seen  
Absorbed in the deepest meditation

I thought he must have felt like me  
Wanting absorption in deep meditation  
He may have discarded my old body  
And occupied the cottage he found empty

When my desire for that cottage ceased  
It disappeared, simply vanished from view  
The cottage fell as did the sage meditating  
We both descended to the earth plane

The sage landed in the same posture  
Undisturbed, still deep in meditation  
In thunderstorm's form I roused him  
And greeted him as he came out of meditation

### The Sage's Story

---

I've wandered in heaven's realm  
In an effort to end samsara's wheel  
All this is pure consciousness only  
Just what is it that one calls pleasure

Pleasure is dreadful pain only  
Prosperity is adversity disguised  
Sensual enjoyment invites disease  
Pursuit of pleasure is most demeaning

Why even with advancing age  
Does craving not diminish in people  
Faculties diminish, weakness ensues  
But craving soars like unquenchable flames

After a long time I've attained egolessness  
Uninterested in heavenly pleasures too  
Like you, O sage, seeking seclusion  
I found this cottage and occupied it

### **Vasistha's Insight**

---

I asked that he continue to dwell  
In the cottage he had occupied  
I wandered high into heaven's realms  
Soon I gained another material body

To me there was no difference at all  
Between subtle and material bodies  
Knowing all is pure consciousness alone  
Free of any notion or conditioning

Even when engaged in diverse activities  
The realization of Brahman is unbroken  
I am seated here instructing you  
Because of your need for instruction

In truth, all this you see is pure void  
All notions in the mind of the creator  
When truth is realized by direct experience  
The true nature behind appearance is known

Liberation alone confers supreme peace  
Bondage promotes psychological distress  
Yet people don't strive for liberation  
And suffer in vain—how foolish they are

## 18. The Story of Bhringisa

### Background

---

Bhringisa once approached Lord Siva  
For a way out of delusion and bondage  
Siva gave this advice to Bhringisa  
By which he attained total freedom

Give up doubts, resort to moral courage  
Be a supreme doer of actions  
A supreme enjoyer of delight  
And, a supreme renouncer of all

### Be a Great Doer

---

Be free of all doubt and confusion  
Do what is appropriate in each situation  
Natural action does not depend upon  
Whether others consider it right or wrong

Do not be swayed by likes and dislikes  
Success, failure, gain, ambition or greed  
Remain steady in silence and purity  
Unattached, without any selfish motive

Be a witness to all and everything  
Do what needs to be done with full heart  
Indifferent to how things may turn out  
Do the best without any attachment

Act with a mind completely at peace  
Steady, without excitement or exultation  
Do the best in each situation afresh  
In perfect equilibrium all the while you act

### **Be a Great Enjoyer**

---

Free of hate or any longing  
Enjoy what comes along naturally  
Without clinging or rejecting  
Even while engaged in action

Without experience though experiencing  
Witness of world-play though unaffected  
With mind balanced in pleasure and pain  
These come naturally in the course of life

Free of natural changes that occur  
Reactions to change cause confusion  
Find joy in misfortune, poverty and calamity  
In old age and death too—all natural changes

Be non-violent and an abode of virtue  
Enjoy sweet and bitter with equal relish  
Avoid completely all arbitrary distinctions  
Enjoy each moment as it comes naturally

### **Be a Great Renouncer**

---

Banish from your mind all concepts  
Ideas of what is right and wrong too  
What is considered pain and pleasure  
Desires, doubts and all convictions too

See falsity in the experience of pain  
By realizing that you are not the body

Abandon completely from the heart  
The idea of world-appearance as reality

### **Vasistha's Comments**

---

Thus did Siva instruct Bhringisa  
Who then became enlightened  
Adopt this very attitude yourself  
And transcend sorrow completely

## **19. The Story of Iksvaku**

### **When the Ego-Sense Dissolves**

---

When the ego-sense dissolves in the mind  
Such a mind is free of greed and delusion  
No provocation can shake the virtue  
Of he who delights in the true welfare of all

Conditioning and tendencies are undone  
Anger does not surge uncontrollably  
Desires just do not reside within  
The senses function in perfect balance

Pleasure and pain come and go  
Without disturbing the inner storefront  
The heart regards these as insignificant  
And rests in peace and equanimity

All these virtues reside naturally in him  
Effortlessly he glides through all action  
Responding to situations best as they come  
Without personal agenda, confusion or pain

He who ignores self-knowledge's path  
Which is within reach of all, in every condition

Abandons his highest good and supreme peace  
Choosing to continue in samsara's wheel

### **Iksvaku, your Ancestor**

---

Your own ancestor, the king Iksvaku  
Pondered deeply while ruling as king  
The way out of suffering once and for all  
And sought instruction from his father

### **Manu's Instructions**

---

His wise father, having attained the supreme  
Instructed him thus: listen attentively  
"What you see here does not exist  
Beyond the senses, nothing is seen

The eternal and infinite self alone exists  
The universe you see reflects within it  
Because energy is inherent in consciousness  
Everything appears alive and most real

There is neither bondage nor liberation  
One infinite consciousness alone exists  
Abandon notions of bondage and liberation  
Abide in the self and rest in peace

The actions of one of self-knowledge  
Are non-volitional, never motivated  
Hence he is free of their merit  
Beyond praise and censure is he

He is not agitated by others at all  
He himself does not agitate anyone  
The self isn't attained by rites or rituals  
Only by worship of sages who've attained

## Vasistha's Insight

---

Thus instructed Iksvaku was enlightened  
You too should adopt such an attitude  
The ignorant are dazzled by cheap tricks  
Cheap shows put on by two-bit imposters

Psychic ability is not holiness's sign  
Only purity of mind and craving's absence  
Absence of confusion and delusion  
These are real characteristics of the holy

When samsara has come to an end in one  
He is free of confusion and delusion  
Lust, anger, grief, greed and attachment  
These are totally absent in the enlightened

The Lord assumes individuality as jivas  
Creation arises in Him spontaneously  
Individuals too arise without reason  
Individual actions bring bondage, not other

Pleasure and pain come by our choices  
Limitations are they in one's understanding  
Resulting in actions that are solely individual  
Inviting consequences of wrong understanding

Existing notions are the cause of bondage  
Absence of all notions is itself liberation  
Why do you harbor such painful seeds  
Abandon all notions for your own welfare

The ropes of attraction bind the careless  
You are free if attraction does not attract  
You can still enjoy natural pleasures as they come  
Without attraction which craves and binds

Do what has to be done, as it comes  
With full heart, mind and energy  
Avoid all personal interests—poisons all  
Bringing untold suffering and increased delusion

All notions exist in the mind  
Conquer the mind by the mind  
Purify the mind by the mind  
Destroy the mind by the mind

A washerman washes dirt with dirt  
A thorn is removed by another thorn  
Poison is the antidote for poison  
Resort to the all—letting go of the small

Resort to pure unmodified consciousness  
The supreme reality, the cosmic being  
Remain ever firmly established in it  
Resolutely and firmly rejecting all else

## **20. The Hunter and the Deer**

### **The State of Turiya**

---

That pure and equanimous state  
Devoid of ego and non-ego too  
Beyond real and unreal as well  
Is a free fourth state called turiya

'Tis the state of liberated sages  
Unbroken witness consciousness  
Different from waking and dream  
Both characterized by thought movement

'Tis different from deep sleep too  
Characterized by inertia and ignorance

When the ego-sense is fully abandoned  
Turiya manifests in that equilibrium

Hear now a story in this regard  
It will bring out subtle points very well  
If you hear it with rapt attention  
You will certainly become enlightened

### **The Hunter and the Deer**

---

In a certain forest there lived a sage  
He shone with extraordinary radiance  
A hunter once approached to ask  
If he had seen a wounded deer recently

The sage replied to the hunter thus:  
"Only holy men dwell in this forest  
Our nature is peace, free of ego-sense  
Ego-sense being the cause of restlessness

This ego-sense and its activating mind  
Have come to a rest in us forest sages  
We do not know what you're alluding to  
In us, objects as such just do not exist"

### **Vasistha's Insight**

---

The hunter could not understand at all  
What the radiant sage was referring to  
He went his way nodding his head  
The sage was firmly established in turiya

There is naught but this glorious state  
Turiya, unmodified consciousness alone exists  
Waking, dream and sleep are in the mind  
When they cease—the mind too ceases to be

The pure state that is—continues to be  
This glorious state the yogis try to reach  
This is the conclusion of all scriptures  
Brahman alone exists—there is naught else

Some call it void, some consciousness  
Others still call it the supreme Lord  
Arguing foolishly among themselves  
Abandon all these notions completely

Rest in nirvana without thought movement  
With mind greatly weakened and at peace  
The inner intelligence now fully awakened  
Abide in the self, the eternal and infinite

Inwardly abandon, relinquish everything  
Externally engage yourself in right action  
The mind is happiness and unhappiness  
Not objects, people or any conditions

Remain eternally aware of the mind  
Unaffected by attraction and repulsion  
By just this much self-effort you'll achieve  
Freedom from samsara's grip completely

Be unaware of pleasure and pain too  
And even that which lies in between  
You'll rise beyond sorrow and limitation  
This self-effort will take you to the infinite

## **21. The Seven States of Yoga**

### **Background**

---

Some accept world-appearance as reality  
They bind themselves by attraction

Others who question world-appearance  
Strive to know the truth by direct experience

The latter are seekers, they seek the truth  
Not answers, explanations or vain theories  
Dispassion naturally arises in seekers  
As they seek truth, not passing pleasures

Truth is enduring, never at the mercy of change  
But passing pleasures ever are  
The seeker finds strength in the changeless  
Those after pleasure must stay in pursuit

### **The First State of Yoga**

---

When one is disinterested in passing pleasures  
Seeing the defects in pursuing the sought  
One faces the unchanging with all being  
The seed of inner change flowers into dispassion

One is afraid to sin or cause anyone hurt  
Knowing truth deep in heart—'one alone is'  
He has set foot on the first state of yoga  
And is devoted to the service of holy ones

With scriptures he engages in self-study  
One thought fills his mind at all times  
"Just how to cross samsara's ocean"  
He alone is a seeker, others are still selfish

### **The Second State of Yoga**

---

Inquiry's beginning heralds the second state  
He now resorts to the company of holy ones

He seeks to understand the way, the path  
The means of yoga for the other shore

He knows well what is to be done  
And also knows what is not to be done  
The blossoming of this inner clarity  
Leaves no doubt about any decision

If there is still faltering in decision  
Understand wisdom has not as yet dawned  
Intellectual understanding is but ignorance  
Concepts are impotent to empower change

He earnestly learns the yoga way  
To discover the underlying unity  
Sincere, humble, with unwavering dedication—  
Inner flowering has begun

### **The Third State of Yoga**

---

Non-attachment heralds the third state  
Freedom comes with non-attachment  
One simply leaves the past without effort  
Like taking off a coat as it gets warmer

He resorts to seclusion and solitude  
Inwardly and perhaps outwardly as well  
Striving to understand the mind's chaos  
Attention's flame restores inward order

Virtuous conduct becomes natural to him  
The old ways are not even a choice at all  
Virtue's gift is inner strength to face the light  
With nary a glance in the rearview mirror

One feels he is neither doer nor enjoyer  
Does not afflict others and is unafflicted  
All past momentum towards facing the light  
Joins present effort as helping hands

He rises free above all mental distress  
Physical illnesses too are taken in stride  
He sees change brought about by time only  
Practicing non-attachment, freedom is gained

Diligence in treading the yoga path  
Resorting to good and holy company  
Avoiding those who prefer worldliness  
Steady on the path without compromise

Steady on the path and ever vigilant  
One realizes the supreme in the heart  
Essence of truth, beyond samsara  
Doership and its limitation fall away

He abandons vain and meaningless words  
Abiding in unbroken inner quietude  
This is beyond mere absence of speech  
Inner quietude is mental silence

Superior to non-attachment and freedom  
Dependency has been long abandoned  
He shines like supportless, limitless space  
Enjoying peace, contentment and self-inquiry

### **Focus on the First to the Third States**

---

The first state of yoga just presents itself  
You can call it accidental coincidence  
If one has lived a pure and virtuous life  
The first state comes upon one suddenly

Like a runner's second wind is the first  
One has to be prepared for at every moment  
Seizing the opportunity—great momentum itself  
A tremendous loss if unready or unwilling

If one does not seize the first's momentum  
The steps beyond will not be seen  
Seizing and nurturing the first precious gift  
Will gain one entry to the second—self-inquiry

Inquiry must be practiced diligently  
Not something you do when convenient  
An inner revolution must be brought about  
Every thought is scrutinized with impartiality

Freedom's gates are not for the careless  
The faint at heart need not apply at all  
Fearlessness tempered with genuine humility  
Perseverance to the end—regardless the path

After many lives comes the first state  
Suddenly, seeming quite accidental  
Till then one revolves in samsara's wheel  
Dispassion's sudden rising points a way out

Fan the spark of dispassion to ignite  
Or it will extinguish and great be the loss  
You'll return back to samsara's spokes  
Grinding and being ground all over again

Perfect practice is not important at first  
Detailed orientation destroys the spirit  
Even imperfect practice if sincere  
Will perfect itself in sincerity's flames

Steady in sincere practice if one departs  
It is said one will return to continue again  
In more favorable conditions than before  
Till gradually one ascends the highest rung

The first three are known as waking states  
In them, there's no division in consciousness  
As sattva, purity or holiness grow within  
One moves from the first to the third state

Diligent practice on and off the mat  
Your life must be aspiration's testimony  
For ignorance to be destroyed in the heart  
The flames of wisdom must ever burn

### **The Fourth State of Yoga**

---

Mind's divisionlessness heralds the fourth  
The mind is now free of all division  
Unity is unceasing, unbroken and steady  
One sees this world just as a dream

### **The Fifth State of Yoga**

---

Established in non-division heralds the fifth  
Hence it is likened to the deep-sleep state  
Though engaged in diverse activities  
The yogi rests in himself unmoved

### **The Sixth State of Yoga**

---

Moving through states, turiya is reached  
This is the sixth, a glorious state  
One transcends real, unreal and ego  
Ignorance's fuel has run completely dry

Like a lamp without fuel is the yogi  
Empty and yet full within  
All doubts have been laid to rest  
The yogi rests in himself as himself

## **The Seventh State of Yoga**

---

Words cannot describe this seventh state  
Though many attempts have been made  
All words fall short so best to just say  
They are known as disembodied and liberated

## **Vasistha's Instructions**

---

Those who practice this supreme yoga  
Ascending the seven steps diligently  
Come to no harm or grief or incur loss  
Putting the mad elephant mind to rest

This elephant is intoxicated by desires  
Completely maddened by sensuousness  
Restless, driven by its own conditioning  
This elephant destroys everything everywhere

The mad elephant mind has to be slain  
With the weapon of courage and determination  
Born of the realization of existing oneness  
Or it will subject you to repeated suffering

This mad elephant mind is samsara  
The feeling, 'this is...' about everything  
Its death is moksha or liberation  
This is the essence of jnana or wisdom

Abandon all thoughts concerning the past  
Abandon hopes about the future too

These ropes will bind you to suffering  
Samsara is not outside but self-sustained

I declare with uplifted arms again and again  
The thought-free, notionless state is best  
Infinitely superior to world sovereignty  
A mind free of thought is the best yoga

Remain established in this yoga state  
Do actions that feel appropriate to you  
Or, you can chose to do nothing at all  
For when thoughts cease—sorrow ceases

Knowing all about this supreme yoga  
Do as you please, it is your choice  
The thought-free, notionless state is best  
A mind free of thought is the best yoga

### **Valmiki to Bharadvaja**

---

Having heard the quintessence of wisdom  
Rama remained absorbed in meditation  
All questions ceased, realization blossomed  
He became established in the highest state

Thus I've narrated to you in full  
The dialogue between Rama and Vasistha  
Consider it well and do as you will  
For it is also my instruction to you

There's no division in consciousness  
Just how can the world seem separate  
Waking and dream are creation's parts  
Enlightenment is characterized by pure light

Beginningless false self-limitation  
Makes the unreal appear very real  
This generates tremendous confusion  
Only because you have not inquired

Who tells you to go along with the flow  
You have inner intelligence—awaken it  
Empower it—the way out will be seen  
Exert, make self-effort and go beyond

Delusion is an accepted weakness  
Taking the path of least resistance  
Why swallow the poison of self-limitation  
And endure the results of conditioning

This delusion continues till you reach  
The feet of those who have overcome  
Seek right knowledge from these sages  
And exert relentlessly in yoga's path

What did not exist in the beginning  
Cannot exist now, think about this  
Something cannot come from nothing  
The absolute is the only reality

All appears and disappears in the infinite  
The ocean of samsara is ignorance  
The notion of 'I' is self-limitation  
Generating mineness, attraction and repulsion

When these notions take root within  
One falls prey to endless calamities and grief  
Dive deep into the existing inner peace  
Never into turbulent waters of diversity

Self alone is the only reality  
Why get lost in false notions  
Truth is simple, it is just One  
Why complicate by standing apart

Reject all theories about creation  
They are stories for the childish only  
Meant to entertain the foolish and ignorant  
The enlightened abide in the unchanging

### **Bharadvaja to Valmiki**

---

Lord, I'm free now from the subtle body  
Swimming in the ocean of bliss  
I am the indivisible supreme self  
Possessing consciousness and unconsciousness

As fire thrown into fire becomes fire  
The insentient when offered to consciousness  
Becomes indistinguishably one with it  
Abandoning any hint or trace of separateness

I have entered into infinite consciousness  
I am that supreme Brahman—eternal  
Omnipresent, pure, peaceful and indivisible  
Devoid of any form of scattering at all

The source of this vast universe am I  
Light of lights, one without a second  
Thus should one vehemently assert  
It will alleviate mind's pointless agitation

When the mind's movement ceases  
The self shines brightly by its own light  
In that light sorrow comes to end  
The self experiences its bliss—that's all

There is direct awareness of the self  
None other but the self exists  
O master, your instruction has awakened me  
World-appearance does not seem real at all

Just what do men of self-knowledge do  
Do they have any duties or none at all  
Pray, please instruct me further  
Kindly accept my respectful obeisance

### **Valmiki to Bharadvaja**

---

Those desiring freedom from samsara  
Should engage themselves in right action  
Free of defects of selfishness and sin  
Till the mind is free of all its qualities

It then takes on qualities of the infinite  
The individual no longer is an individual  
One realizes he is beyond individuality  
All beings and things are the self only

Through all states including the highest  
One ever abides in infinite consciousness  
Immersed in the nectar of pure bliss  
Never again wet at diversity's shores

I have narrated to you in full  
The supreme yoga of sage Vasistha  
Steady your mind by diligent practice  
You will in time realize everything

### **Valmiki's Closing Comments**

---

Seeing Rama ever absorbed in the self  
Sage Vishvamitra requested of sage Vasistha

To bring Rama back to normal consciousness  
As there was important work to be done by him

After telling the assembly gathered  
That Rama was godhead incarnate  
He was here for the welfare of all beings  
And brought him out of deep meditation

### **Vasistha to Rama**

---

O Rama, this is not the time to rest  
Get up and bring joy to the world  
People are still in bondage here  
It is not proper to continue absorbed

### **Rama to Vasistha**

---

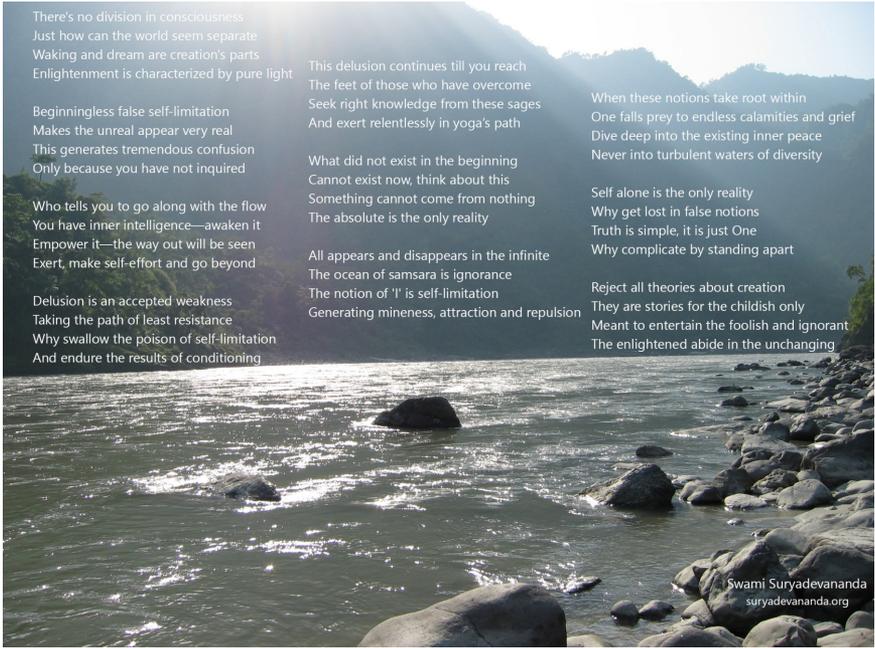
Rama awoke from deep meditation  
Placing his head at Vasistha's feet  
"There is nothing I should or should not do  
But, thy word will be always honored"

### **Valmiki Closes**

---

Thus I have told you Rama's story  
By this practice attain supreme bliss  
He who studies this most diligently  
Will attain Brahman and be liberated

End of Chapter Six



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