

आदिकविश्रीमद्वाल्मीकिमहर्षिप्रणीतबृहत्पुत्रगवासिष्ठः

BRAHADYOGAVAASISHTA

JNAANA RAAMAAYANAM

[DVITEEYA RAAMAAYANAM]

COMPOSED BY

VAALMIKI MAHARSHI

निर्वाणप्रकरणस्य पूर्वार्धम्

FIRST HALF OF NIRVAANA PRAKARANAM

SIXTH SECTION

‘THE NIRVAANA STATE’

PART FIFTY EIGHT

[SEVEN LEVELS OF REALIZATION]

Sanskrit text, Translation and Explanation

by

Narayanalakshmi

DEDICATED
TO
ALL THE SEEKERS OF TRUTH

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Narayanalakshmi

Narayanalakshmi (Shubhalakshmi), an ascetic spent most of her life in the Himalayan terrain, engaged in the penance of knowledge. She is well-versed in all philosophies and is a scholar in Sanskrit language. Her mission life is to retrieve the lost knowledge of the ancient Rishis and offer it unblemished to all the seekers of the Truth. She is from Bangalore, Karnataka, India

सप्तभूमिकाविवरणम् / SEVEN LEVELS OF YOGA

रामोवाच
Rama spoke

सप्तानां योगभूमीनामभ्यासः क्रियते कथं कीदृशानि च चिह्नानि भूमिकां प्रति योगिनः।
How does one practice the seven levels of 'Yoga' (Union of the individual Self with the Supreme Self)?
What are the distinguishing characteristics of the Yogi (aspirant) in those levels?

वसिष्ठोवाच
Vasishta spoke

प्रवृत्तश्च निवृत्तश्च भवति द्विविधः पुमान्स्वर्गापवर्गयोः शृणु लक्षणमेतयोः। कियत्तन्नामनिर्वाणं वरं संसृतिरेव मे
इति कर्तव्यकर्ता यः स प्रवृत्त इति स्मृतः। चलार्णवयुगच्छिद्रकूर्मग्रीवाप्रवेशवत् अनेकजन्मनामन्ते विवेकी
जायते पुमान्। असारा बत संसारव्यवस्थालं ममैतया किं कर्मभिः पर्युषितैर्दिनं तैरेव नीयते। क्रियातिशयनिर्मुक्तं
किं स्याद्विश्रमणं परं इति निश्चयवान्योऽन्तः स निवृत्त इति स्मृतः।

An embodied entity of this world is said to be of two types; one who is engaged in the performance of the rites ordained in the Vedas (Karma); and the other renounces the actions and seeks only knowledge (Jnaana). One desires the heaven and the other the final beatitude. Listen to their characteristics.

The Pravrtta type of person is more interested in achieving the directly experienced pleasures of the family, worldly achievements, the surety of heaven after death and so on. He does not bother to know the truth behind the world-patterns; nor does he care about Nirvaana-state. He will argue saying that if the world is an illusion, still he feels safe and happy in it.

'What is that thing called 'Nirvaana' (final beatitude)? This world itself is the best place for me.' He who attends to the ordained duties of the world in this manner is known as a 'Pravrtta' (turned towards).

He is addicted to his anxiety states; and silence frightens him rather.

He likes the heavy excitement, and longs to experience dramatic events. He is like the tortoise which lives on a stone edge very close to the dashing waves. When the wave dashes violently on it, it withdraws its neck inside; but again it slowly pushes the neck out of the shell and continues to remain there itself, as if nothing again will happen to it, till another wave suddenly drowns it.

A man of the world also is similar to this tortoise, crying and weeping aloud when the tragedies occur, and laughing gleefully at festive occasions as if free of all the miseries forever; and is never tired of the repeated kicks and hugs of the life events; but still he never tries to get out of his miserable state of ignorance.

However, after many many existences getting pushed up and pulled down by the Vaasana waves, rarely by chance, he may develop the discrimination of what is real and what is not real; and start asking questions about his own reality and the realness of the world around him.

This is the start of the Nivritti state, when he starts to do Vichaara by himself and feels disinterest in the worldly activities. He feels tired of the routine pleasures and pains; and instead of seeking fresh excitements of the world, he withdraws his mind from pleasures and says, 'Alas! The world activities are essenceless.

Enough of all this for me! What do I have to do with these repeated actions? The days pass off in routine actions only, the very same eating, the very same sleeping and the very same joy-seeking. Where can I get rest once for all from these actions, so that I do not have to any more action for any more fulfillment?'

When a man starts thinking like this, and develops true dispassion in his heart, then he is known as a Nivrtta (turned away from), one who has turned away from the worldly activities. Then he enters the first level of Yoga, where starts his journey towards dissolving the individual self in the Supreme self.

FIRST LEVEL

कथं विरागवान्भूत्वा सम्साराब्धिं तराम्यहं एवंविचारणपरो यदा भवति सन्मतिः विरागमुपयात्यन्तः

भावनास्वनुवासरं क्रियासूदाररूपासु क्रमते मोदतेऽन्वहम्। ग्राम्यासु जडचेष्टासु सततं विचिकित्सति नोदाहरति मर्माणि पुण्यकर्माणि सेवते। मनोनुद्वेगकारीणि मृदुकर्माणि सेवते पापाद्विभेति सततं न च भोगमपेक्षते।

स्नेहप्रणयगर्भाणि पेशलान्युचितानि च देशकालोपपन्नानि वचनान्यभिभाषते। तदासौ प्रथमामेकां प्राप्तो भवति भूमिकाम्। मनसा कर्मणा वाचा सज्जनान्युपसेवते यतःकुतश्चिदानीय ज्ञानशास्त्राण्यवेक्षते। एवंविचारवान्यः स्यात्संसारोत्तरणं प्रति स भूमिकावान् इत्युक्तः शेषः स्वार्थ इति स्मृतः।

First level is that of a slight struggle, because the student feels the pain of having wasted the life in meaningless activities, and the fear of whether he will ever get out of this hot cauldron of world-existence will harass him. He will try his best to develop dispassion, and fight his weaknesses again and again, with more determination and hard work. 'When will I get dispassion and cross over the ocean of worldly existence?'; the noble hearted one thinks like this, and slowly develops disinterest in the acquirement of sense enjoyments day by day, and spends his days in doing actions that are conducive to his new goal of realization, like seeking the Knowers to clear the doubts, studying the knowledge-Scriptures, developing devotion to some deity and praying for emancipation and so on. He will enjoy such actions more and more, slowly free himself from the worldly actions, and purify his mind in this manner. He will feel averse to the cheap pleasures sought for wasteful time-pass, will avoid crowds, will avoid gossiping about the faults of others, and will do meritorious actions only, by developing the virtues of kindness, compassion etc, and will try to get rid of the bad qualities like greed, self-conceit, envy etc.

He will stop going after passion-filled actions that rise excitement, and will take resort to soft actions which will keep his mind calm and composed always. He will refrain from sinful actions which bring harm to the other beings. He will avoid seeking pleasures, with effort.

No more the loud laughter and irritated shouts will rise from him; he will practice speaking soft and tender words always, and will utter speech suitable to the occasion as per the place and time context.

It will take some weeks or months before he perfects himself in these Saattvic qualities and rises above the lure of the actions and the dullness of non-thinking.

When he is naturally good and composed, he has reached the first level named 'Shubhecchaa', the liking towards his true welfare. It is not easy for all to get to even this first level, and it is indeed a lucky turn point in his life, when he grows the wings of Viveka and Vairaagya which will surely lift him high into the supreme beatitude.

He not only develops noble qualities in this level, but thirsts to know the answers to so many questions about the self and the world. He seeks the Knowers wherever they are, and studies many books on knowledge somehow collecting them from here and there, and tries to follow their instructions with sincerity and devotion. He, who has made his mission of life to think out the answers to cross over the Samsara-ocean, is said to be stabilized in this path of ascendance towards liberation.

However, anyone who is into the studies of knowledge-texts, who spends time in the company of saints, who acts good outwardly, and yet is not engaged in the Vichaara of the self and has not developed dispassion, is doing all this for selfish reasons only, to impress others about his goodness only, or to hide his failures in the worldly achievements; such a person is neither here nor there; and is ruined completely.

SECOND LEVEL

विचारनाम्नीमितरामागतो योगभूमिकाम्। श्रुतिस्मृतिसदाचारधारणाध्यानकर्मणां मुख्यया व्याख्यया ख्याताञ्श्रयते श्रेष्ठपण्डितान्। पदार्थप्रविभागज्ञः कार्याकार्यविनिर्णयं जानात्यधिगतश्रव्यो गृहं गृहपतिर्यथा। मदाभिमानमात्सर्यमोहलोभातिशायितां बहिरप्याश्रितामीषत्यजत्यहिरिव त्वचम्।

Next he enters the level of Yoga called 'Vichaara' (enquiry).

He seeks highly learned men who have expertise in giving instructions about self-realization; who are well versed in Shrutis and Smritis; who are of a noble conduct; who are engaged in meditation and contemplation. Before embarking on the journey of Aatma-Saakshaatkaara, one has to understand completely, what is his goal, how it is to be achieved, what texts are useful in succeeding in his goal and so on. Like the Master of the house has the complete know-how of the house, he (the aspirant) also, after listening to the teachings of the Knowers, is able to understand the exact meanings of the terms used in the scriptures. He understands also which dictum is to be followed as conducive to the attainment of self-knowledge, and which should be avoided as a wasteful act. He understands what actions are desire-oriented, and what actions are the duties that are to be necessarily performed. In this way, he reduces the load of actions, and gets free time to engage in the analysis of Aatman. Even in the necessary actions of his life, he tries to avoid anger, envy etc.

Like a snake discarding its old skin, he discards even the least of the remaining traces of arrogance, vanity, malice, attachments, greed etc that may be there in his activities in the outside world. He struggles hard to keep his mind without agitation, and spends all his free time in Vichaara-practice as guided by the Knowledge texts.

THIRD LEVEL

इत्थंभूतमतिः शास्त्रगुरुसज्जनसेवनात्सरहस्यमशेषेण यथावदधिगच्छति असंसङ्गाभिधामन्यां तृतीयां योगभूमिकां ततः पतत्यसौ कान्तः पुष्पशय्यामिवामलाम्।

The truths depicted in the Scriptures are not easily understood by the impure minds. The first and second levels have to be perfected well before one reaches the third level of Asamsanga (complete detached state of the mind towards the objects and people of the world).

(‘Asamsanga’ -the complete removal of the glued up state of a Jeeva to the world through various factors like attachment to family, friends, objects, wealth, land, religious rites, goodness etc.)

Even as the aspirant keeps studying texts like Upanishads under the guidance of Knowers, and keeps analyzing what he has studied with his sharpened intellect and inculcating those virtues that are deemed necessary for a Mumukshu, his mind gets slowly purified and becomes capable of understanding the abstract secrets of the Aatman-knowledge that are hidden in the Scriptures.

And slowly without his own being aware of it, his mind starts feeling disinterest towards everything. His only interest is in understanding the mystery of Aatman, and feels no attraction towards anything else. In such as state of mind, he continues serving the Knowers and studying the scriptures; and attains fully the third level of Yoga known as ‘Asamsanga’ (non-attachment), without even being aware of it; it is like the lover (aspirant) who naturally slips into the soft faultless fragrant flower-bed where his beloved (Aatman-knowledge) is waiting to embrace him and is ready to drown him in immense happiness.

यथावच्छास्त्रवाक्यार्थं मतिमादाय निश्चलं तापसाश्रमविश्रामैरध्यात्मकथनक्रमैः संसारनिन्दकैर्तद्वद्वैराग्यकरणक्रमैः शिलाशय्यासमासीनो जरयत्यायुराततम्। वनवासविहारेण चित्तोपशमशोभिना असङ्गसुखसौम्येन कालं नयति नीतिमान्। अभ्यासात्साधुशास्त्राणां करणात्पुण्यकर्मणां जन्तोर्यथावदेवेयं वस्तुदृष्टिः प्रसीदति।

He is able to concentrate on the abstract truths of the Scriptures, and is able to remain steady in his Vichaara practice. He engages himself in visiting the great Rishis living in the forests and discusses knowledge topics with them, understands the faults of the worldly existence, learns from them as to how to practice dispassion towards the world-objects, and develops equanimity. Now he treats the stone and the soft bed both equally. Thus he continues in his life, slowly improving day by day with only the Aatman-realization as his mission of life. He seeks the solitude of the forests and spends time in contemplating on the truths he has learnt from the Rishis, and practices the subjugation of the mind; and calmly goes through life with the joy of quietness rising from (Asamsanga) non-attachment.

How long? There is no time-limit fixed for Aatman-realization. For Janaka, it was instant; for Chudaala, just few days; for ShikhiDhvaja, some eighteen years or so, for Leelaa, just a night; for Padma king, two lives; for Gaadhi, many years. It depends on the understanding capacity of the aspirant. To reach Asamsanga level is not so easy. Without giving up the practice mid-way, the aspirant should continue his studies and keep the constant company of the Knowers, and also hold on to the virtuous acts. When his Vichaara reaches its culmination, the vision of truth dawns in him naturally at some fine moment.

तृतीयां भूमिकां प्राप्य बुधोऽनुभवति स्वयं द्विप्रकारमसंसङ्गं तस्य भेदमिमं श्रुणु। द्विविधोऽसंसङ्गः सामान्यः श्रेष्ठ एव च। नाहं कर्ता न भोक्ता च न बाध्यो न बाधकः इत्यसज्जनमर्थेषु सामान्यासङ्गनामकम्। प्राक्कर्मनिर्मितं सर्वमीश्वराधीनमेव च सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं कैवात्र मम कर्तृता। भोगाभोगा महारोगाः संपदः परमापदः वियोगायैव संयोगा आधयो व्याधयः धियः। कालः कवलनोद्युक्तः सर्वभावाननारतम्। अनास्थयेति भावानां यदभावनमान्तरं वाक्यार्थलग्नमनसः सामान्योऽसावसंगमः। अनेकक्रमयोगेन संयोगेन महात्मनां वियोगेनासतामन्तः प्रयोगेणात्मसंविदां पौरुषेण प्रयत्नेन संतताभ्यासयोगतः करामलकवद्वस्तुन्यागते स्फुटतां दृढं संसाराम्बुनिधेः पारे सारे परमकारणे।

Reaching the third level of Yoga, the wise aspirant experiences two types of Asamsanga. Listen to their different characteristics. This Asamsanga is of two types, the ordinary and the excellent.

The ordinary one is just the beginning, which is attained through practice. The excellent one is when one has reached the final state of liberation, and this Asamsanga is his natural state of being. The ordinary Asamsanga practiced with effort as a seeker of truth culminates in the natural Asamsanga state of Brahman.

‘I am not the doer; I am not the experiencer. I do not affect others; nor am I affected by anything.

Happiness or sorrow is the result of the actions of past lives and everything happens by the will of God.

Where do I cause anything? Whatever pleasures are experienced are just great ailments.

Wealth is another name for calamity. Unions are there only for separation. Mental afflictions are viral fevers of the intellect. Kaala is consuming all without a break’.

When one has such a non-attached disposition, it is known as ordinary non-attachment.

(Dispassion develops by such thoughts as depicted in the Vairaagya Prakarana.)

This ordinary type of non-attachment results when the mind is seriously absorbed in understanding the statements of the scriptures. The aspirant slowly gets rid of his desires by losing attraction for the joys of the world as connected to the family and possessions.

Through the strict adherence various practices mentioned before; by keeping the company of the Knowers always as guidance; by not getting attracted in the mind towards the sense objects which are not real but conceived only; by repeating the Vichaara thoughts of those who have realized; making extreme effort in practicing all the instructions without fail (Shravana, Manana etc); he gets stabilized in the path leading towards the other end of the worldly existence, the Supreme Cause; as easy as seeing the gooseberry in one’s palm. The Aatman-state appears more real, and faith develops in the words of the Scriptures.

नाहं कर्तेश्वरः कर्ता कर्म वा प्राकृतं मम कृत्वा दूरतरे नूनमिति शब्दार्थभावनं यन्मौनमासनं शान्तं
तच्छ्रेयासङ्ग उच्यते। यन्नान्तर्न बहिर्नाथो नोर्ध्वं नाशासु नाम्बरे न पदार्थे नापदार्थे न जडे न च चेतने
आसितं भासनं शान्तमभासं नभसा समं अनाद्यन्तमजं कान्तं तच्छ्रेयासङ्ग उच्यते।

Asamsanga which has landed him in the faith in the words of Scriptures, by practice becomes a natural state of existence for him. He does not have to make effort and practice thoughts like ‘I am not the doer; the Lord alone is the doer of all things; past actions do not belong to me.’

Such words and meanings are kept away and the Yogi remains established in the quiet silent seat. Such a state is known as ‘Shreshtaasanga’ (excellent non-attachment). He does not even have to practice any Praana-control or Aasanaa (stable seat as prescribed in the Yoga method) to contemplate on the Self. Silence within, is his seat now, and he never swerves from it. Objects do not just lose their attraction but completely become non-existent by the ripening of his Vichaara. Ordinary Asamsanga slowly turns into excellent Asamsanga by constant effort.

The state of ‘Shreshtaasanga’ is said to be that (state of the Self), which is not inside, not outside, not above, not below, not in directions, not in the sky, that which is not in the object, not in a non-object, not in the inert, not in the conscious, that which shines by itself, that which is quiet, not shining, equal to the empty sky, that which is without beginning and end, that which is unborn, and that which is attractive.

In short, it is the established state of a Jnaani who is in the Brahman-state.

THE FIRST THREE LEVELS OF YOGA

संतोषामोदमधुरः सत्कार्यामलपल्लवः चित्तनालाग्रसंलीनो विघ्नकण्टकसंकटः विवेकपद्मो रूढोऽन्तः

विचारार्कविलासितः फलं फलत्यसंसङ्गां तृतीयां भूमिकामिमाम्।

Purify the mind, plant the lotus of discrimination (Viveka) firmly within.

Vaasanaas and attachment to the world-object surround the Chitta-stalk like entwining weeds and thorns; cut them all off with the sword of dispassion. Then slowly by the rise of the sun namely ‘Vichaara’, the lotus will bloom with its leaves of taintless noble actions (where the water drops of the worldly actions do not touch the leaves in the least).

The fragrance of ‘Samtoshha’ contentment and the joy of the quiet mind will fill the mind.

It yields the fruit of ‘Asamsanga’ as this third level of Yoga.

समवायाद्विशुद्धानां संचयात्पुण्यकर्मणां काकतालीययोगेन प्रथमोदेति भूमिका। भूमिः प्रोदितमात्रा तैः अमृताङ्कुरिकेव सा विवेकानाम्बुसेकेन रक्ष्या पाल्या प्रयत्नतः। येनांशेनोल्लसत्येषा विचारेणोदयं नयेत् तमेवानुदिनं यत्रात्कृषीवल इवाङ्कुरम्। एषा हि परिमृष्टान्तरन्यासां प्रसवैकभूः द्वितीयां भूमिकां यत्रात्तृतीयां प्राप्नुयात्ततः। श्रेष्ठाऽसंसङ्गता ह्येषा तृतीया भूमिका। अत्र हि भवति प्रोज्झिताशेषसंकल्पकलनः पुमान्।

These first three levels may take many years for an ordinary aspirant.

Even the first level is not possible for all. To be good and do good acts is natural for the ordinary good man of the world; but to develop dispassion and start analyzing the mystery of Aatman is not given to all. The first level itself rises, only as a random effect, on a heap of meritorious actions collected after many life-existences; and also by the rare chance of contacting the true Knowers who are established in Brahman. The seed of AatmaJnaana taken from the Scriptures, has to be sown in a land that is removed of all the weeds of Vaasanaas, that is ploughed and fertilized with good acts (first level); then only, the seed will sprout without withering away. The sprout has to be taken care of by the daily watering of Viveka and Vichaara, the rational analysis done with discrimination. The more the effort and zeal, the faster the plant of Aatman knowledge will grow and yield the fruit.

This sprout which shines forth with the qualities of dispassion and calmness of the mind, should be made to grow well through Vichaara (enquiry), like the farmer takes care of the sprout every day with great effort. Study and Vichaara should never be missed ever.

Slightest lapse, and the mind will be instantly lost in the realness of the world.

This first level when properly maintained, will become the source of other levels.

Through sincere effort, the second level will arise and then the third. One should try hard and slowly rise from the ordinary Asamsanga level to the excellent Asamsanga level.

The aspirant will be completely removed of all sorts of conceptions, in this third level.

रामोवाच

Rama spoke

मूढस्यासत्कुलोत्थस्य प्रवृत्तास्याधमस्य च अप्राप्तयोगिसङ्गस्य कथमुत्तरणं भवेत्। एकामथ द्वितीयां वा तृतीयां चेतरां च वा आरूढस्य मृतस्याथ कीदृशी भगवन् गतिः ।

How will a person who has no intellectual capability, or a man who cannot have access to the Scriptures because of his low birth (or lack of learning), or a man who is extremely attached to his family and life, or a man who is stuck to selfish and wicked acts, or a man who has no chance to meet a true Knower, rise high in the path of realization? Suppose, the man who has reached the first or second or third or some other level dies, then what happens to him? Will his effort go waste?

वसिष्ठोवाच

Vasishta spoke

मूढस्यारूढदोषस्य तावत्संस्तिरातता यावज्जन्मान्तरशतैः काकतालीययोगतः अथवा साधुसङ्गत्या वैराग्यं नाभ्युदेति हि। वैराग्येऽभ्युदिते जन्तोरवश्यं भूमिकोदयः ततो नश्यति संसार इति शास्त्रार्थसंग्रहः।

Every being that is incapable of thinking and analyzing is in an inert state only. It is the basic animal level of deep-rooted acceptance of what is there without questioning its source or nature.

No one can easily start questioning the proof of his own existence; and if he does, then it is really some wonderful thing that happens after hundreds of inert body-existences with no purpose served till then. Only when the question rises as how and why, can a man evolve further.

And for no reason, some mind starts asking questions and his life at that very moment becomes purposeful and meaningful. It is a random occurrence like a Taala leaf falling when the crow sat on the branch.

Suddenly the intellect understands the meaninglessness of life and starts probing for hidden truths; or it may happen by the sudden random contact of some noble Knower also. The questioning trend is followed by disinterest in worldly activities, and develops into a thorough dispassion. Till this dispassion trait rises, the world existence will continue to exist as an absolute independent reality.

No one can prove the unreal nature of the world to a non-thinking person.

If by chance, dispassion rises in the creature, the 'Jantu'(that is born and dies as a physical body made of elements, without the thinking power), then naturally the first level will make its appearance; then the Samsaara is destroyed gradually; this is the summarized statement of the scriptures.

योगभूमिकयोत्क्रान्तजीवितस्य शरीरिणः भूमिकांशानुसारेण क्षीयते पूर्वदुष्कृतम्। ततः सुरविमानेषु लोकपालपुरेषु च मेरुपवनकुञ्जेषु रमते रमणीसखः। ततः सुकृतसंभारे दुष्कृते च पुरा कृते भोगजाले परिक्षीणे जायन्ते योगिनो भुवि शुचीनां श्रीमतां गेहे गुप्ते गुणवतां सताम्। जन्तुत्वा योगमेवैते सेवन्ते योगवासिताः तत्र प्राग्भावनाभ्यस्तयोगभूमिक्रमं बुधाः स्मृत्वा परिपतन्त्युच्चैरुत्तरं भूमिकाक्रमम्।

What happens if one dies while in the practice of some beginning level of this realization process?

When one has entered even the first level of Yoga, he has already altered his life-style and is performing good deeds only; so the results of his past wrong and selfish actions will stop bearing fruit (like a plant that is pruned of its infected parts). Therefore, as per the level of understanding and purity of mind, he will reap the fruits of his noble deeds.

(If he dies mid-way in this Truth-quest, he will reap the fruits of his meritorious deeds as pleasures in the next life, or will take birth somewhere in a family of noble Knowers and continue his Aatman-quest in a better environment.)

After death, he will enjoy the company of heavenly damsels, in the air-vehicles of gods, in the cities of Lokapaalas, or in the flowery gardens of Meru Mountain; or reject them and seek only the company of Rishis there also. He will continue as the same Vaasanaa for liberation. He may remember his past existence or not, as it depends on which level he is in. However, if he enjoys the heavenly pleasures as a reward for his good acts, then he has to be out of the heaven, once the measure of merits are over with.

Since the results of the wicked deeds are gone; and the results of the meritorious deeds also have dissolved away in the enjoyments of the heavenly pleasures; the Yogis (who died in some or other particular level of Yoga) take birth in noble families which are renowned for their purity and prosperity, and whose members are endowed with excellent virtues. After the birth, these men of wisdom who had reached certain levels of Yoga, will continue their journey of realization, remembering (not the body-identities, but) the level of the Yoga they had been practicing in their previous life, and will rise naturally to the next level of the Yoga.

The journey continues in a better environment, and nothing that is practiced in this path ever goes waste.

A man who is in the quest for knowledge, never perishes.

(The levels mentioned here are just on the surface level only; there are countless sub-levels under these main levels, and it is not possible to predict the fate of a particular individual as such.)

भूमिकात्रितयं त्वेतद्राम जाग्रदिति स्मृतं यथावद्बुद्धेदं तज्जाग्रदिति दृश्यते। उदेति योगयुक्तानामत्र केवलमार्यता यां दृष्ट्वा मूढबुद्धीनामभ्युदेति मुमुक्षुता। कर्तव्यमाचरन्कामं अकर्तव्यमनाचरन्तिष्ठति प्राकृताचारो यः स आर्य इति स्मृतः। यथाचारं यथाशास्त्रं यथाचित्तं यथास्थितं व्यवहारमुपादत्ते यः स आर्य इति स्मृतः। प्रथमायामङ्कुरितं द्वितीयायां विकसितं फलीभूतं तृतीयायामार्यत्वं योगिनो भवेत्। आर्यतायां मृतो योगी शुभसंकल्पसंभृतान्भोगान्भुक्त्वा चिरं कालं योगवाञ्छायते पुनः।

Rama! This set of the first three levels is known as 'Jaagrat' (waking state); as it is similar to the waking state where one understands it to be different from the dream or sleep state.

When the intellect seeks to analyze the unreal nature of the world-existence, then indeed it is waking up from the dream; this is true Jaagrat state for a Jeeva. For those who are in the path of Yoga, there rises a respectable nature, seeing which even those of ignorant minds will aspire for liberation.

(What happens when you are waking up? You totally change into a different person than before.

The self-control gives you a majestic disposition, and makes others aspire for your state.

You are a true Aarya, a noble man. The term 'Aarya' refers to any human who is perfect in his manners and conduct, and who is an abode of all virtues.)

He is known as an Aarya, who just goes through the life-actions in the normal manner; performs the necessary works of life to the best of his ability, avoids those actions which are prohibited by the Scriptures and also refrains from wasteful meaningless actions which ordinary people are engaged in.

He is known as an Aarya, who goes through the routine actions of the life without anxiety and apprehension, who does not transgress the rules laid out by the Scriptures, who chooses to do whatever action pleases him as being conducive to his goal of realization, and does all the duties in the proper manner to their utmost perfection. This nobility of conduct as that of an Aarya sprouts in the first level, blooms in the second level, and yields fruit in the third level.

The Yogi who dies when in the state of the Aarya, will enjoy the pleasures that rise as a result of his auspicious acts of goodness for a long time, and again will continue his Yoga-path in some other birth (or may just continue his Aatman-quest in the very next birth if his dispassion level is extremely high).

FOURTH LEVEL

भूमिकात्रितयाभ्यासादज्ञाने क्षयमागते संयग्ज्ञानोदये चित्ते पूर्णचन्द्रोदयोपमे निर्विभागमनाद्यन्तं योगिनो युक्तचेतसः समं सर्वं प्रपश्यन्ति चतुर्थी भूमिकामिताः। अद्वैते स्थैर्यमायाते द्वैते प्रशममागते पश्यन्ति स्वप्नवल्लोकांश्चतुर्थी भूमिकामिताः। भूमिकात्रितयं जाग्रच्चतुर्थी स्वप्न उच्यते विच्छिन्नशरदभांशविलयं प्रविलीयते।

By the practice of the first three levels, the ignorance perishes; true understanding rises in the mind like the full moon oozing nectar; and the Yogis ascend to the fourth level, see everything as equal and without divisions, without beginning or end, because of being one with the Aatman within. The non-dual vision gets stabilized and the dual vision subsides; and those who are in the fourth level see the world as if it is a dream. The first set of three levels is called 'Jaagrat' (waking up); and the fourth level is known as 'Svapna' (dream); and this level shines with purity like the autumn sky cleared of all the clouds.

FIFTH LEVEL

सत्तावशेष एवास्ते पञ्चमी भूमिकां गतः पञ्चमी भूमिकामेत्य सुषुप्तपदनामिकां शान्ताशेषविशेषांशः तिष्ठत्यद्वैतमात्रके गलितद्वैतनिर्भासमुदितोऽन्तः प्रबुद्धवान्। सुषुप्तघन एवास्ते पञ्चमी भूमिकामितः अन्तर्मुखतया तिष्ठन्बहिर्वृत्तिपरोऽपि सन्परिशान्ततया नित्यं निद्रालुरिव लक्ष्यते।

The Yogi in the fifth state is left with the remainder of the mind in the Sattva state; then he attains the fifth level which is named 'Sushupta' (deep sleep state). The enlightened Yogi remains in the non-dual vision alone, with all the divisions subsided without any residue; with all the realness of the appearances based on duality dissolved off; and feeling extremely blissful within.

The yogi, who has reached the fifth level, is like a person in deep slumber. Though engaged in outward activities, he is turned towards the Self within. (*He does everything as if sleepwalking, you can say.*)

Since he is always calm and composed, and is unaffected by the outer activities, he always looks like a man in slumber.

SIXTH LEVEL

कुर्वन्नभ्यासमेतस्यां भूमिकायां विवासनः षष्ठीं तुर्याभिधामन्यां क्रमात्क्रमति भूमिकाम्। यत्र नासन्न सदूपो नाहं नाप्यनहंकृतिः केवलं क्षीणमननमास्ते द्वैतैक्यनिर्गतः। निर्गन्धिः शान्तसंदेहो जीवन्मुक्तो विभावनः अनिर्वाणोऽपि निर्वाणश्चिन्नदीप इव स्थितः। अन्तःशून्यो बहिःशून्यः शून्यः कुम्भ इवाम्बरे अन्तःपूर्णो बहिःपूर्णः पूर्णकुम्भ इवार्णवे किंचिदेवेष सम्पन्नस्त्वथ वैष न किंचन। षष्ठ्यां भूम्यामसौ स्थित्वा सप्तमीं भूमिमाप्नुयात्।

Even as he becomes adept in this fifth level, he is freed of all Vaasanaas and gradually ascends to the next level named Turyaa. In this level, there is no idea of existence and non-existence; there is no ego-sense; there is also no non-ego sense. (*He exists as Brahman with a fully-cleaned mind-window.*)

Removed of the concepts of both duality and oneness, he remains with all the thoughts silenced.

(*Even if you are in the fifth level, you cannot understand what it is to be in the sixth level where thoughts do not exist at all, where Brahman alone rises as all with the full awareness-state of itself.*)

The tormenting knot of the heart that ties the world and Jeeva-ness together is no more there.

Doubts are all cleared off. The Yogi is a JeevanMukta without conceptions. Though he is with the body held through 'Praarabdha' (as some identity of time and space measure in an already started life-story), he is liberated already.

He remains like the picture of the lamp painted on a screen; though seen, he is not really there as anyone.
Empty inside; empty outside; he is like an empty pot inside the empty sky.
Full inside; full outside; he is like a filled up pot in the ocean.
He has attained something unique, or rather he has not attained anything at all.
After being adept in the sixth level, he ascends to the seventh level now.

SEVENTH LEVEL

विदेहमुक्ता तूक्ता ससमी न तु जीवतां अगम्या वचसां शान्ता सा सीमा भवभूमिषु। कैश्चित्सा शिवमित्युक्ता
कैश्चित्ब्रह्मेत्युदाहता कैश्चित्प्रकृतिपुंभावविवेक इति भाविता।अन्यैरप्यन्यथा नानाभेदैरात्मविकल्पितैः
नित्यमव्यपदेश्यापि कथंचिदुपदेश्यते। ससैका भूमिका प्रोक्ता मया तव रघूद्वह आसामभ्यासयोगेन न
दुःखमनुभूयते ।

The body-less liberation is the seventh level; it is not for the Yogi who is living with a body. It cannot be described by words. It is a quiet state. It is the end of all levels experienced in the world. Sometimes that level is known as Shiva; sometimes called as Brahman; sometimes understood as the knowledge of Prakrti and Purusha. Though it is beyond any definition, it is somehow explained by many others in different ways as deduced by their own mind-states.

Hey Best of Raghus! I have explained to you the seven levels of Yoga. By practicing them properly, you will never again experience any grief.

अस्त्यनन्तमदोन्मत्ता मृदुमन्थरचारिणी करिणी विग्रहव्यग्रा महादशनशम्सिनी। सा चेन्नहिन्यते
नूनमनन्तानर्थकारिणी तदेतासु समग्रासु भूमिकासु नरो जयी।करिणी मदमत्ता सा यावन्न विजितौजसा को
नाम सुभटस्तावत्संपत्समरभूमिषु।

(Rama! You are indeed a prince of valour and can hunt and kill any beast of the forest; but can you conquer this beast which I describe here?)

There is this cow-elephant; she is highly intoxicated always; she walks very slowly with soft steps; she has the tendency to fight; she is renowned for her huge tusks. If that ever-harmful beast is killed, then a man can become victorious in all these levels. As long as one does not conquer the cow-elephant which is mad with intoxication, in the battle-ground through his valor, what sort of a valorous soldier is he?

रामोवाच कासौ प्रमत्ता करिणी काश्च रणभूमयः कथं निहिन्यते चैषा क्व चैषा रमते चिरम्।

Rama spoke: Who is that intoxicated cow-elephant? Which are the battle-grounds? How does she get killed? Where does she wander always?

वसिष्ठोवाच

Vasishta spoke

रामेच्छा नाम करिणी इदं मेऽस्त्वितिरूपिणी शरीरकानने मत्ता विविधोल्लासकारिणी मतेन्द्रियोग्रकलभा
रसनाकलभाषीणी मनोगहनसंलीना कर्मदन्तदयान्विता मदोऽस्या वासनव्यूहः सर्वतः प्रसरद्वपुः
संसारदृष्टयो राम तस्याः समरभूमयः भूयो यत्रानुभवति नरो जयापरजयौ इच्छानागी निहन्त्येषा
कृपणाञ्जीवसञ्चयान्। वासनेहा मनश्चितं संकल्पो भावनं स्पृहा इत्यादि निवहो नाम्नामस्यास्तु आशयकोशगः।
धैर्यनाम्ना वरास्त्रेण प्रसूतामवहेलया नागीं सर्वात्मिकामेतामिच्छां सर्वात्मना जयेत् ।

Rama! She is the cow-elephant named 'Desire'. She is in the form of - 'Let this be mine!'

She plays around madly in the forest of the body. The ever intoxicated senses are her rogue cubs.

Her tongue oozes out sweet attractive sounds. She is hidden in the dense darkness of the mind.

She has two tusks of actions (good and bad). The oozing rut is the hosts of Vaasanaas.

Her body spreads everywhere. Her battle grounds are the perceived world-scenes, where the man gets victory or defeat. This elephant called desire kills ruthlessly all the wretched Jeevas.

Vaasanaa, wants, mind, mental faculty, conception, cogitation, attraction, are all the names borne by her, which are all hidden inside the store-house of the mind.

With the wonderful weapon called 'Courage', by the identification with the Self which in all, a man (who aspires for liberation), should mercilessly kill this cow-elephant called 'desire', who is in all the objects of the world, and who wanders wherever she likes without control.

यावद्वस्त्वित्त्वदमित्येवमियमन्तर्विजृम्भते तावदुग्रा कुसंसारमहाविषविषूचिका। एतावानेव संसार इदमस्त्विति यन्मनः अस्य तूपशमो मोक्ष इत्येवं ज्ञानसंग्रहः। प्रसादकारिणी स्वच्छा निरिच्छे विमलाकृतौ तैलबिन्दुरिवादर्शे विश्राम्यत्युपदेशवाक्।

As long as the idea 'This object is there! (I want it)' (Vastu Idam) occupies the mind, so long does the deadly virus of the painful Samsaara will shine forth. 'This is all the Samsaara is! Let it be as it is! (Idam Astu)'; such a mind dissolves off this Samsaara; and that alone is liberation. This is the essence of all knowledge. The mind then remains happy and pure. In only such a desireless taintless mind, the instructions get stuck like the oil drop in the mirror.

असंवेदनमात्रेण नोदेतीच्छाभवाङ्कुरः मनागभ्युदितैवेच्छा छेतव्यानर्थकारिणी असंवेदनशस्त्रेण विषस्येवाङ्कुरावली। इच्छाविच्छुरितो जीवो विजहाति न दीनताम्।

By not thinking about the existence of an object, the sprout of the desire for the objects of the world does not arise. Even if the desire pops up slightly, it should be cut off instantly with the weapon of non-conception, like cutting off the successive sprouts of the poisonous weed which is harmful. A Jeeva bestrewed with desires does not ever come out of his wretched state.

स्वसंवेदनयत्नस्तु तूष्णीमेवान्तरासनं अवधानविनिर्मुक्तं सुप्तं शवशतं यथा तां प्रत्याहारबडिशेन इच्छामत्सीं नियच्छत। इदं मेऽस्त्विति संवेगमाहुः कल्पनमुत्तमाः अर्थस्याभावनं यत्तत्कल्पनात्याग उच्यते। स्मरणं विद्धि संकल्पं शिवमस्मरणं विदुः। तत्र प्रागनुभूतं च नानुभूतं च भाव्यते। अनुभूतां नानुभूतां स्मृतिं विस्मृत्य काष्ठवत् सर्वमेवाशु विस्मृत्य गूढस्तिष्ठ महामतिः।

The method for remaining in the awareness of the 'Self' is; make the mind silent first and make it completely empty of thoughts like a room filled with hundreds of dead bodies.

Then bind the 'desire-fish' with the hook of 'Pratyahaara' (withdrawal from sense objects).

That mad hankering that says 'This object should belong to me'; that alone is known as imagination by the excellent men of Self-knowledge. Remembering it again and again is known as Conception.

Not remembering alone is said to be the proper course to be adopted.

In memory, both that is previously experienced and not experienced are remembered.

Like a dry piece of worthless stick, throw away both the experienced and not-experienced memories; forget everything; and remain hidden in the Self-state as a great Knower.

ऊर्ध्वबाहुर्विरौम्येष न च कश्चिच्छृणोति तत् असंकल्पः परं श्रेयः स किमन्तर्न भाव्यते।

I lift up my two hands and scream with all my effort! No one listens to me!

'Non-conception' is the best of all methods. Why is it not practiced in the mind by anyone?

किल तूष्णीं स्थितेनैष तत्पदं प्राप्यते परं परमं यत्र साम्राज्यमपि राम तृणायते।

If the mind is kept silent, that Supreme state is easily achieved. In that Supreme state of the Self, hey Rama, even a kingdom looks like a worthless piece of dry grass.

गम्यैकदेशनिष्ठस्य यथा पान्थस्य पादयोः स्पन्दो विगतसंकल्पस्तथा स्पन्दः स्वकर्मसु। बहूनात्र किमुक्तेन संक्षेपादिदमुच्यते संकल्पनं परो बन्धस्तदभावो विमुक्तता।

When a man is walking towards some place, his feet keep moving without any conception of their own. So one should remain (without conceptions) when doing actions that belong to him. What more to say!

I will tell you this in brief. Conception is the greatest bondage. Absence of it, is liberation.

सर्वमेवमजं शान्तमनन्तं ध्रुवमव्ययं पश्यन्भूतार्थचिद्रूपं शान्तमास्व यथासुखम्।

Remain peaceful, happy in your own Self, seeing all as the shine of Chit which fills all the objects, which is unborn, which is quiet, which is endless, which is stable, which is changeless.

अवेदनं विदुर्योगं शान्तमासितमक्षयं योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि निर्वासनोऽथ मा कुरु।

अवेदनं विदुर्योगं चित्तक्षयमकृत्रिमं अत्यन्तं तन्मयो भूत्वा तथा तिष्ठ यथासि भो।

Non-conception is the proper method of Yoga. It is the abode of quiescence and it never deteriorates. Do all the actions established in the Yoga (Self-state), freed of all Vaasanaas; or do not do anything if you feel so, and remain absorbed in Brahma-Samaadhi..

Non-conception is the proper method of Yoga. The mind gets destroyed and one remains in the natural state through non-conception. Remaining fully in the state of the Self, stay like that only! Be as you are!

शिवं सर्वगतं शान्तं बोधात्मकमजं शुभं तदेकभावनं राम सर्वत्याग इति स्मृतः। भावयञ्छब्दन्तः स्वं कार्यं कर्म समाचर अहंमेति संविदन्न दुःखतो विमुच्यते असंविदन्विमुच्यते यदीप्सितं समाचर।

Rama! The contemplation of that, which is supremely good, which is everywhere, which rises out of enlightenment, which is auspicious, that alone is known as 'Renunciation of all'!

Always contemplate on that within and do the actions that belong to you.

By holding on to the ideas of 'I' and 'mine', you cannot get out of the sufferings.

Without such conceptions, you will be liberated.

Now lead the life in any manner you like, being established firmly in this knowledge.