

आदिकविश्रीमद्वाल्मीकिमहर्षिप्रणीतबृहत्योगवासिष्ठः

BRAHADYOGAVAASISHTAM

JNAANA RAAMAAYANAM

[DVITEEYA RAAMAAYANAM]

COMPOSED BY

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निर्वाणप्रकरणस्य पूर्वार्धम्

FIRST HALF OF NIRVAANA PRAKARANAM SIXTH SECTION

NIRVAANA, THE EXTINGUISHED STATE OF THE 'I'
[PART ONE]

CHAPTER FIFTY EIGHT

[SEVEN LEVELS OF REALIZATION]

Sanskrit text, Translation and Explanation

by

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DEDICATED
TO
ALL THE SEEKERS OF TRUTH

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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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 in 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.

CHAPTER FIFTY EIGHT

[SEVEN LEVELS OF REALIZATION]

सप्तभूमिकाविवरणम्
SEVEN LEVELS OF YOGA

रामोवाच

Rama spoke

सप्तानां योगभूमीनामभ्यासः क्रियते कथं, कीदृशानि च चिह्नानि भूमिकां प्रति योगिनः। (126.01)

How does one practise 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

PRAVRITTA AND NIVRITTA

प्रवृत्तश्च निवृत्तश्च भवति द्विविधः पुमान्स्वर्गापवर्गोन्मुखयोः शृणु लक्षणमेतयोः। (126.02)

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) (Pravrtta) ;
and the other renounces the actions and seeks only knowledge (Jnaana) (Nivrtta).
One desires the heaven and the other the final beatitude. Listen to the characteristics of both.

*(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, even if the world is an illusion, still he feels safe and happy inside it.)*

कियत्तन्नामनिर्वाणं वरं संसृतिरेव मे इति कर्तव्यकर्ता यः स प्रवृत्त इति स्मृतः। (126.03)

'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'.

*(He is addicted to his anxiety states; and even the 'silence' (of the noise) frightens him rather.
He likes the heavy excitement-states, and longs to experience dramatic events in life, like festivals, celebrations, crowd-gathering, and even the death-scenes and tragedies (which feed his mind that keeps longing for the anxiety-states alone.)*

चलार्णवयुगच्छिद्रकूर्मग्रीवाप्रवेशवत्

(ग्रीवा - neck) (चलार्णवयुगच्छिद्र- the in-between state between two waves)

He is like the tortoise which lives on a stone edge very close to the dashing waves of the ocean.

When the ocean 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, in-between the
splashing of two waves, as if nothing again will happen to it,
till the next 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 the festive occasions as if free of all the miseries forever.*

*He is never tired of the repeated kicks and hugs of the life events, and never tries to get out of his
miserable state of ignorance.)*

अनेकजन्मनामन्ते विवेकी जायते पुमान्। (126.04)

However, after many many existences getting pushed up and pulled down by the Vaasanaa 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,)

असारा बत संसारव्यवस्थालं,

‘Alas! The world activities are essence-less. Enough of all this, for me!

ममैतया किं कर्मभिः

What do I have to do with these repeated actions?

पर्युषितैर्दिनं तैरेव नीयते,

The days pass off in routine actions only, as - the very same eating, the very same sleeping and the very same joy-seeking.

क्रियातिशयनिर्मुक्तं किं स्याद्विश्रमणं परं,

Where can I get rest once for all from these actions, so that I do not perform any more action for any more fulfilment?’

इति निश्चयवान्योऽन्तः स निवृत्त इति स्मृतः। (126.05,06)

When a man starts thinking like this, and develops true dispassion in his heart, then he is known as a Nivrtta, 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 - SHUBHECCHAA

(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. He will try his best to develop dispassion, and fight his weaknesses again and again, with more determination and hard work.)

कथं विरागवान्भूत्वा संसाराब्धिं तराम्यहं एवंविचारणपरो यदा भवति सन्मतिः

‘When will I get dispassion and cross over the ‘ocean of worldly existence’?’;

when the noble-hearted one starts thinking like this,

विरागमुपयात्यन्तः भावनास्वनुवासरं

he 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).

क्रियासूदारूपासु क्रमते मोदतेऽन्वहम्। (126.07.08)

He will enjoy such actions more and more (and will slowly free himself from the worldly actions, and purify his mind in this manner).

ग्राम्यासु जडचेष्टासु सततं विचिकित्सति,

(विचिकित्सते - जुगुप्सते - feels disgusted or feels aversion)

He will feel always averse to the cheap pleasures sought for wasteful time-pass, will avoid crowds, नोदाहरति मर्माणि,

will avoid gossiping about the faults of others,

पुण्यकर्माणि सेवते। (126.09)

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).

मनोनुद्वेगकारीणि मृदुकर्माणि सेवते,

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.

पापाद्विभेति सततं, न च भोगमपेक्षते। (126.10)

He will refrain from sinful (selfish) 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.)

स्नेहप्रणयगर्भाणि पेशलान्युचितानि च देशकालोपपन्नानि वचनान्यभिभाषते। (126.11)

He will practise speaking soft and tender words always, filled with affection,
and will utter speech suitable to the occasion as per the place and time context.

तदासौ प्रथमामेकां प्राप्नो भवति भूमिकाम्।

Then he is said to have reached the First Level.

मनसा कर्मणा वाचा सज्जनान्युपसेवते

He seeks the Knowers wherever they are, and serves them with mind, actions and speech;

यतःकुतश्चिदानीय ज्ञानशास्त्राण्यवेक्षते। (126.12,13)

studies many books on Knowledge, somehow collecting them from here and there,
and tries to follow their instructions with sincerity and devotion.

(It will take some weeks or months before he perfects himself in these Saattvic qualities and raises 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 'Shubecchaa', 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 the abstract questions about the self and the world.)

एवंविचारवान्यः स्यात्संसारोत्तरणं प्रति स भूमिकावान् इत्युक्तः

He, who has made his mission of life to think out the answers to cross over the Samsaara-ocean,
is said to be stabilized in 'this path of ascendance towards liberation'.

शेषः स्वार्थ इति स्मृतः। (126.14)

The other one who is not like this, is said to be selfish.

(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 - VICHAARA

विचारनाम्नीमितरामागतो योगभूमिकाम्। (126.14)

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

श्रुतिस्मृतिसदाचारधारणाध्यानकर्मणां मुख्यया व्याख्यया ख्याताञ्जयते श्रेष्ठपण्डितान्। (126.15)

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, as to, what is his goal, how it is to be achieved, what texts are useful in succeeding in his goal and so on.)

पदार्थप्रविभागज्ञः कार्याकार्यविनिर्णयं जानात्यधिगतश्रव्यो गृहं गृहपतिर्यथा। (126.16)

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.)

मदाभिमानमात्सर्यमोहलोभातिशायितां बहिरप्याश्रितामीषत्यजत्यहिरिव त्वचम्। (126.17)

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.)

(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, the complete detached state of the mind towards the objects and people of the world.

THIRD LEVEL - ASAMSANGA

(‘Asamsanga’ - the ‘complete removal’ of the ‘glued-up state of a Jeeva to the world’, which is expressed in a variety of ways, like attachment to family, friends, objects, wealth, land, religious rites, goodness etc.)

इत्थंभूतमतिः शास्त्रगुरुसज्जनसेवनात्सरहस्यमशेषेण यथावदधिगच्छति। (126.18)

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 fully the abstract secrets of the Aatman-knowledge that are hidden in the Scriptures.

(And, slowly, without consciously being aware of it, his mind starts feeling disinterest towards everything. His only interest is in understanding the mystery of Aatman, and he feels no attraction towards anything else. In such a state of mind, he continues serving the Knowers and studying the Scriptures under their guidance.)

असंसङ्गाभिधामन्यां तृतीयां योगभूमिकां ततः पतत्यसौ कान्तः पुष्पशय्यामिवामलाम्। (126.19)

Then, he attains fully the third level of Yoga known as ‘Asamsanga’ (non-attachment), without even being aware of it; he 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

He is able to concentrate on the abstract truths of the Scriptures, and is able to remain steady in his Vichaara practice.

तापसाश्रमविश्रामैरध्यात्मकथनक्रमैः संसारनिन्दकैर्तद्वैराग्यकरणक्रमैः

He engages himself in visiting the Great Rishis living in the forests, discusses the Knowledge-topics with them, understands the faults of the worldly existence, learns from them as to how to practise dispassion towards the world-objects, and develops equanimity.

शिलाशय्यासमासीनो जरयत्यायुराततम्। (126.20,21)

Now, he treats the stone and the soft bed both equally. Thus, he continues in his life, slowly improving day by day, with the Aatman-realization alone as his mission of life.

वनवासविहारेण चित्तोपशमशोभिना असङ्गसुखसौम्येन कालं नयति नीतिमान्। (126.22)

He seeks the solitude of the forests, and spends time in contemplating on the truths he has learnt from the Rishis, and practises the subjugation of the mind; and calmly goes through life, with the 'joy of quietness' rising from (Asanga) non-attachment.

(For how long? There is no time-limit fixed for Aatman-realization.

For Janaka, it was instant; for Chudaala, just a 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.)

अभ्यासात्साधुशास्त्राणां करणात्पुण्यकर्मणां जन्तोर्यथावदेवेयं वस्तुदृष्टिः प्रसीदति। (126.23)

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। (126.24)

द्विविधोऽसंसङ्गः सामान्यः श्रेष्ठ एव च।

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' that is practised with effort as a seeker of truth, culminates in the 'natural Asamsanga state of Brahman'.)

SAAMAANYA ASANGA

(Ordinary type of dispassion develops by such thoughts as depicted in the Vairaagya Prakarana.)

‘नाहं कर्ता न भोक्ता च न बाध्यो न बाधकः’ इत्यसञ्जनमर्थेषु सामान्यासङ्गनामकम्। (126.25,26)

(असञ्जन – not clinging to)

प्राक्कर्मनिर्मितं सर्वमीश्वराधीनमेव च

सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं कैवात्र मम कर्तृता। (126.26,27)

भोगाभोगा महारोगाः संपदः परमापदः,

वियोगायैव संयोगा, आधयो व्याधयः धियः। (126.27,28)

कालः कवलनोद्युक्तः सर्वभावाननारतम्। (126.28)

The type of non-attachment towards the objects, with ideas like given here, is known as the 'ordinary Asamsanga',

(where one still is identified with the Jeeva-character in a life-story)

like - '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 Ishvara.
 Where do I cause anything at all?
 Whatever pleasures are experienced are just great ailments.
 Wealth is another name for calamity. Unions are there only for separation.
 Mental afflictions are the viral fevers of the intellect.
 Kaala is consuming all the objects without a break' (and so on)!

अनास्थयेति भावानां यदभावनमान्तरं वाक्यार्थलग्नमनसः सामान्योऽसावसंगमः। (126.29)

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

SHRESHTA ASANGA

अनेकक्रमयोगेन,

When, through the strict adherence various practices mentioned before;

संयोगेन महात्मनां,

by keeping the company of the Knowers always as guidance;

वियोगेनासतामन्तः,

by not getting attracted in the mind towards the sense objects which are not real but conceived only;

प्रयोगेणात्मसंविदां,

by repeating the Vichaara thoughts of those who have realized;

पौरुषेण प्रयत्नेन संतताभ्यासयोगतः

making extreme effort in practising all the instructions without fail (Shravana, Manana etc);

करामलकवद्वस्तुन्यागते स्फुटतां दृढं संसाराम्बुनिधेः पारे सारे परमकारणे। (126.30 to 32)

as easy as seeing the gooseberry in one's palm, he gets stabilized in the path leading towards the other end of the ocean of worldly-existence, the Supreme Cause.

(The Aatman-state appears more real, and faith develops in the words of the Scriptures.)

(Asamsanga which has landed him in the faith in the words of Scriptures, by practice becomes a natural state of existence for him.)

नाहं कर्तेश्वरः कर्ता कर्म वा प्राकृतं मम, कृत्वा दूरतरे नूनमिति शब्दार्थभावनं

Such type of words and meanings are kept away, - which are like -

'I am not the doer; the Lord alone is the doer of all things; past actions do not belong to me.'

(because of transcending the level of Jeevahood trapped in the space and time boundaries);

यन्मौनमासनं शान्तं तच्छ्रेष्ठासङ्ग उच्यते। (126.32,33)

and thus, when the Yogi remains established in the quiet silent seat of the self, that state is known as 'Shreshtaasanga' (Excellent non-attachment).

(He does not even have to practise any Praana-control or Aasanaa, the 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.)

यन्नान्तर्न बहिर्नाधो नोर्ध्वं, नाशासु नाम्बरे, न पदार्थे नापदार्थे, न जडे न च चेतने,

आसितं भासनं, शान्तमभासं, नभसा समं, अनाद्यन्तमजं, कान्तं, तच्छ्रेष्ठासङ्ग उच्यते। (126.34,35)

(आसितं भासनं - स्वप्रकाशचिद्रूपं)

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

*(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.)*

LOTUS OF VIVEKA AND THE SUN OF VICHAARA

संतोषामोदमधुरः,

The fragrance of 'Samtosha, the contentment and the joy of the quiet mind' will fill the mind;

सत्कार्यामलपल्लवः,

leaves of taintless noble actions arise all over (where the water drops of the worldly actions do not touch
 the leaves in the least);

चित्तनालाग्रसंलीनो विघ्नकण्टकसंकटः,

Vaasanaas, and the attachment to the world-objects, surround the 'Chitta-stalk' like entwining weeds and
 thorns (cut them all off with the sword of dispassion);

विवेकपद्मो रूढोऽन्तः

the 'lotus of discrimination (Viveka)' is rooted firmly inside the purified mind;

विचारार्कविलासितः,

it slowly blooms by the rise of the sun namely 'Vichaara',

फलं फलत्यसंसङ्गां तृतीयां भूमिकामिमाम्। (126.36,37)

and yields the fruit of 'Asamsanga' as this third level of Yoga.

समवायाद्विशुद्धानां

By the rare chance of contacting the true Knowers, who are established in Brahman,

संचयात्पुण्यकर्मणां

on a heap of meritorious actions collected after many life-existences,

काकतालीययोगेन प्रथमोदेति भूमिका। (126.38)

the first level itself rises, only as a random effect.

(The 'seed of AatmaJnaana' taken front the Scriptures, has to be sown)

भूमिः

in a 'land that is removed of all the weeds of Vaasanaas' that is ploughed and fertilized,

प्रोदितमात्रा तैः

and sprinkled with the waters of good acts (like sprinkled by cloud waters) (proditaa) (first level);

अमृताऽङ्कुरिकेव

then only, the seed will sprout without withering away (amrtaa);

सा विवेकानाम्बुसेकेन रक्ष्या पाल्या प्रयत्नतः। (126.39)

the sprout has to be taken care of, by the 'daily watering of Viveka and Vichaara', the rational analysis done
 with discrimination (and without giving way to the weed, namely the attraction towards the worldly objects);

(The more the effort and zeal, the faster the plant of Aatman-Knowledge will grow and yield the fruit.)

येनांशेनोल्लसत्येषा विचारेणोदयं नयेत्,

This sprout which shines forth with the qualities of dispassion and calmness of the mind, should be made to grow well through Vichaara (enquiry),

तमेवानुदिनं यत्नात्कृषीवल इवाङ्कुरम्। (126.40)

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.)

एषा हि परिमृष्टान्तरन्यासां प्रसवैकभूः द्वितीयां भूमिकां यत्नात्तृतीयां प्राप्नुयात्ततः। (126.41)

This first level when properly maintained, will become the source-level (prasavaBhu) 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.)

श्रेष्ठाऽसंसङ्गता ह्येषा तृतीया भूमिका, अत्र हि भवति प्रोज्झिताशेषसंकल्पकलनः पुमान्। (126.42)

This is the third level named 'Shreshta-asamsangataa'.

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

(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.)

रामोवाच

Rama spoke

मूढस्यासत्कुलोत्थस्य प्रवृत्तास्याधमस्य च अप्राप्तयोगिसङ्गस्य कथमुत्तरणं भवेत्। (126.43)

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, raise high in the path of realization?

एकामथ द्वितीयां वा तृतीयां चेतरां च वा आरूढस्य मृतस्याथ कीदृशी भगवन्गतिः। (126.44)

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 तावत्संसृतिरातता

यावज्जन्मान्तरशतैः काकतालीययोगतः अथवा साधुसङ्गत्या वैराग्यं नाभ्युदेति हि। (45,46)

As long as Vairaagya does not rise for a non-thinking person who is well-settled in the fault of ignorance, by a random chance or by the contact of some Knower, after hundreds of births or so, till then, the Samsaara-existence keeps on spreading out (as various life-existences) without end.

वैराग्येऽभ्युदिते जन्तोरवश्यं भूमिकोदयः, ततो नश्यति संसार, इति शास्त्रार्थसंग्रहः। (126.46, 47)

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.

(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 the wrong and selfish actions of the past 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.)

योगभूमिकयोत्क्रान्तजीवितस्य शरीरिणः भूमिकांशानुसारेण क्षीयते पूर्वदुष्कृतम्। (47, 48)

For the embodied one, whose body is removed of life when still in some level of Yoga-Bhumikaa, then, the results of the past selfish deeds remain destroyed as per the level he is in.

ततः सुरविमानेषु लोकपालपुरेषु च मेरुपवनकुञ्जेषु रमते रमणीसखः। (48, 49)

After death, he will enjoy the company of heavenly damsels, in the air-vehicles of Suras, 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.)

ततः सुकृतसंभारे दुष्कृते च पुरा कृते भोगजाले परिक्षीणे,

जायन्ते योगिनो भुवि शुचीनां श्रीमतां गेहे गुप्ते गुणवतां सताम्। (126.49, 50)

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 the earth,

in the noble families which are renowned for their purity and prosperity, and whose members are endowed with excellent virtues.

जनित्वा योगमेवैते सेवन्ते योगवासिताः

तत्र प्राग्भावनाभ्यस्तयोगभूमिक्रमं बुधाः स्मृत्वा परिपतन्त्युच्चैरुत्तरं भूमिकाक्रमम्। (126.51)

(पूर्वाभ्यासेन तेनैव ह्रियते ह्यवशोऽपि सः - भगवद्गीता - he will be forcefully led by the previous habits without control)

After the birth, these men of wisdom who had reached certain levels of Yoga,

will continue their journey of realization further, (as if by the force of the habits of the past life)

remembering (not the previous life-existence but) the level of the Yoga they had been practising in their previous life,

and will raise naturally to the next level of the Yoga.

(The journey continues in a better environment, and nothing that is practised 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

Rama! This 'set of the first three levels' is known as 'Jaagrat' (waking state);

यथावद्बुद्धेदं तज्जाग्रदिति दृश्यते। (126.52)

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 the true Jaagrat-state for a Jeeva.)

उदेति योगयुक्तानामत्र केवलमार्यता यां दृष्ट्वा मूढबुद्धीनामभ्युदेति मुमुक्षुता। (126.53)

For those who are in the path of Yoga, there rises a respectable nature (nobility, Aaryataa), 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, with non-attachment as your natural state.

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

कर्तव्यमाचरन्काममकर्तव्यमनाचरन्तिष्ठति प्राकृताचारो यः स आर्य इति स्मृतः। (126.54)

He is known as an 'Aarya' (a man of excellent conduct),

who just goes through the life-actions in the normal manner,

who performs the necessary works of life to the best of his ability,

who avoids those actions which are prohibited by the Scriptures,

and who also refrains from wasteful meaningless actions which ordinary people are engaged in.

यथाचारं यथाशास्त्रं यथाचित्तं यथास्थितं व्यवहारमुपादत्ते यः स आर्य इति स्मृतः। (126.55)

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.

प्रथमायामङ्कुरितं द्वितीयायां विकासितं फलीभूतं तृतीयायामार्यत्वं योगिनो भवेत्। (126.56)

This 'nobility of conduct as that of an Aarya' for a Yogi,

sprouts in the first level,

blooms in the second level,

and yields the fruit in the third level.

आर्यतायां मृतो योगी शुभसंकल्पसंभृतान्भोगान्भुक्त्वा चिरं कालं योगवाञ्छायते पुनः। (126.57)

The Yogi who dies when in the state of the Aaryataa,

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,

When the ignorance perishes, by the practice of the first three levels,

संयग्ज्ञानोदये चित्ते पूर्णचन्द्रोदयोपमे

when the 'True understanding' raises in the mind like the full moon oozing nectar,

निर्विभागमनाद्यन्तं योगिनो युक्तचेतसः समं सर्वं प्रपश्यन्ति चतुर्थी भूमिकामिताः। (126.58,59)

the Yogis, because of being one with the Aatman within (Yuktachetas),

reach (ita) the fourth level;

and see everything as equal and without divisions, without beginning or end.

अद्वैते स्थैर्यमायाते द्वैते प्रथममागते, पश्यन्ति स्वप्नवल्लोकांश्चतुर्थी भूमिकामिताः। (126.60)

When the non-dual vision gets stabilized and the dual-vision subsides;

they reach the fourth level, and see the world as if it is a dream.

भूमिकात्रितयं जाग्रच्चतुर्थी स्वप्न उच्यते विच्छिन्नशरदभ्रांशविलयं प्रविलीयते। (126.61)

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

The Yogi, who is in the fifth state,

and who is endowed with true understanding (Prabuddhavaan),

is left with the remainder of the mind in the Sattva state;

and attains the fifth level which is named 'Sushupta' (deep sleep state);

शान्ताशेषविशेषांशः तिष्ठत्यद्वैतमात्रके

and remains in the non-dual vision alone,

with all the divisions subsided without any residue;

गलितद्वैतनिर्भासमुदितोऽन्तः प्रबुद्धवान्। (126.62,63)

with all the realness of the appearances based on duality dissolved off;

feeling extremely blissful within.

सुषुप्तघन एवास्ते पञ्चमी भूमिकामितः

The yogi, who has reached the fifth level, is like a person in deep slumber;

अन्तर्मुखतया तिष्ठन्बहिर्वृत्तिपरोऽपि सन्

though engaged in outward activities, he is turned towards the Self within;

परिशान्ततया नित्यं निद्रालुरिव लक्ष्यते। (126.64,65)

since he is always calm and composed, is unaffected by the outer activities,

and, he always looks like a man in slumber.

(He does everything as if sleepwalking, you can say.)

SIXTH LEVEL

कुर्वन्नभ्यासमेतस्यां भूमिकायां विवासनः

Even as he becomes adept in this fifth level, he is freed of all Vaasanaas,

षष्ठीं तुर्याभिधामन्यां क्रमात्क्रमति भूमिकाम्। (126.65,66)

and gradually ascends to the next level named Turyaa.

(He exists as Brahman with a fully-cleaned mind-window.)

यत्र नासन्न सद्रूपो नाहं नाप्यनहंकृतिः

In this level, there is no idea of non-existence and existence;
there is no ego-sense; there is also no non-ego sense.

केवलं क्षीणमननमास्ते द्वैतैक्यनिर्गतः। (126.66,67)

Removed of the concepts of both duality and oneness, he just 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 raises as all, with the full awareness-state of itself.)

निर्ग्रन्थिः

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

शान्तसंदेहो जीवन्मुक्तो विभावनः

Doubts are all cleared off. The Yogi is a JeevanMukta without conceptions.

अनिर्वाणोऽपि निर्वाणश्चिद्रदीप इव स्थितः। (126.67,68)

Though he is with the body held through 'Praarabdha' (as some identity of time and space measure in an already started life-story) (anirvaana), he is liberated already (Nirvaana).

He remains like the picture of the lamp painted on a screen; (though seen, he is not really there as anyone.)

अन्तःशून्यो बहिःशून्यः शून्यः कुम्भ इवाम्बरे

Empty inside; empty outside; he is like an empty pot inside the empty sky.

अन्तःपूर्णो बहिःपूर्णः पूर्णकुम्भ इवार्णवे

Full inside; full outside; he is like a filled-up pot in the ocean.

किञ्चिदैवेष सम्पन्नस्त्वथ वैष न किञ्चन। (126.69)

He has attained something unique, or rather he has not attained anything at all.

षष्ट्यां भूम्यामसौ स्थित्वा सप्तमीं भूमिमाप्नुयात्। (126.70)

After being adept in the sixth level, he ascends to the seventh level, now.

SEVENTH LEVEL - WHICH IS NOT A LEVEL AT ALL

*(This level is not a level at all; is not at all connected to the ascendance levels described till now.
It is the state of Brahman itself.)*

विदेहमुक्तता तूक्ता सप्तमी न तु जीवतां,

The body-less liberation is known as the Seventh level; it is not for the Yogi who is living with a body.

अगम्या वचसां,

It cannot be described by words.

शान्ता,

It is a quiet state (where words and meanings have no place).

सा सीमा भवभूमिषु। (126.70,71)

It is the end of all levels that experienced in the world.

*(Imagine climbing a mountain whose peak lies beyond the clouds, unknown and unseen.
Even as you keep climbing, the view from each level keeps changing, and is more blissful.*

At last you reach the peak, and what do you see?

There is no mountain at all, you never went through the climbing at all.

You were always 'above' only!)

[(Upanishads explain it like this.

There were two birds on a tree.

One was a golden bird which stayed always at the top, another always was down somewhere lost in the branches.

The bird which was down below, was always engaged in eating the fruits only.

Some fruits were delicious, some bitter, some were rotten (like the experiences of the world.)

Once, suddenly, the bird in the lower level of the tree chanced to have a glimpse of that golden bird, and wanted to reach it, so that it can also stay happily at the top.

It somehow avoided the longing to eat the fruits, and with determination, climbed up and up; and at last reached the golden bird, and tried to look at the golden bird.

There was no golden bird at all there in sight.

This bird suddenly found that it alone was the golden bird all the time; it never was down there, lost in the branches; it never ate any fruit. It never climbed up also. It never even knew of the tree!

The golden bird alone was there, lost in its own blissful state!

The seventh level is where all the levels dissolve off!

The Jeeva bound by delusion is also a dream; and the ascendance of the seven levels leading to your waking up state also, is a dream only,

Who was bound? Who woke up? Who ascended the seven levels?

No one! No one is there as anyone but 'That'!

What is 'That'?

Who can know! 'That' alone knows 'That'; and that is the 'Jagat'!)]

कैश्चित्सा शिवमित्युक्ता कैश्चित्ब्रह्मेत्युदाहृता कैश्चित्प्रकृतिपुंभावविवेक इति भाविता। (126.71,72)

Sometimes that level is known as Shivam; sometimes called as Brahman; sometimes understood as the knowledge of Prakrti and Purusha.

अन्यैरप्यन्यथा नानाभेदैरात्मविकल्पितैः नित्यमव्यपदेश्यापि कथंचिदुपदिश्यते। (126.72,73)

Though it is beyond any definition, it is somehow explained by many others in different ways, as deduced by their own mind-states.

ससैका भूमिका प्रोक्ता मया तव रघूद्वह, आसामभ्यासयोगेन न दुःखमनुभूयते (126.73,74)

Hey Best of Raghus! I have explained to you the 'Seven levels of Yoga'.

By practising them properly, you will never again experience any grief.

CAN YOU KILL THIS ROGUE COW-ELEPHANT?

(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?)

अस्त्यनन्तमदोन्मत्ता मृदुमन्थरचारिणी करिणी

There is this cow-elephant;

she is highly intoxicated always; she walks very slowly with soft steps;

विग्रहव्यग्रा महादशनशंसिनी। (126.74,75)

she has the tendency to fight; she is renowned for her huge tusks.

सा चेन्निहन्यते नूनमनन्तानर्थकारिणी तदेतासु समग्रासु भूमिकासु नरो जयी। (126.75,76)

If that ever-harmful beast is killed, then a man can become victorious in all these levels.

करिणी मदमत्ता सा यावन्न विजितौजसा को नाम सुभटस्तावत्संपत्समरभूमिषु। (126.76,77)

As long as one does not conquer the cow-elephant which is mad with intoxication, what sort of a valorous soldier is he, in these huge battle-fields of the world (which are very ordinary in comparison to this elephant's might)!

रामोवाच

Rama spoke

कासौ प्रमत्ता करिणी, काश्च रणभूमयः, कथं निहन्त्यते चैषा, क्व चैषा रमते चिरम्। (126.77,78)

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

Rama! She is the cow-elephant named 'Desire'.

She is in the form of - 'Let this be mine!'

शरीरकानने मत्ता विविधोल्लासकरिणी

Always intoxicated, she plays around madly in the forest of the body.

मतेन्द्रियोग्रकलभा रसनाकलभाषिणी

The ever-intoxicated senses are her rogue cubs.

Her tongue oozes out sweet attractive sounds.

मनोगहनसंलीना कर्मदन्तद्वयान्विता

She is hidden in the dense darkness of the mind.

She has two tusks of actions (good and bad).

मदोऽस्या वासनाव्यूहः, सर्वतः प्रसरद्वपुः,

The oozing rut is the hosts of Vaasanaas.

She moves her body anywhere and everywhere.

संसारदृष्टयो राम तस्याः समरभूमयः भूयो यत्रानुभवति नरो जयापरजयौ

Her battle-grounds are the perceived world-scenes, where the man experiences victory or defeat.

इच्छानागी निहन्त्येषा कृपणाञ्जीवसञ्चयान्।

This elephant called desire kills ruthlessly all the wretched Jeevas.

वासनेहा मनश्चित्तं संकल्पो भावनं स्पृहा इत्यादि निवहो नाम्नामस्यास्त्वाशयकोशगः।

'Vaasanaa, wants, mind, Chitta, conception, cogitation, attraction',

are all the names borne by her, which are all hidden inside the store-house of the mind.

धैर्यनाम्ना वरास्त्रेण, प्रसृतामवहेलया नागीं सर्वात्मिकामेतामिच्छां सर्वात्मना जयेत्। (126.78 to 84)

(सर्वात्मना - सर्वथा सर्व अहमेवेति भावितेन आत्मना - by the identification with the Self which is in all, in all ways)

With the wonderful weapon called 'Courage',

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,

by the identification with the Self which is in all, in all ways.

'VASTU IDAM' IS SAMSAARA: 'IDAM ASTU' IS LIBERATION

यावद्वस्त्वदमित्येवमियमन्तर्विजृम्भते तावदुग्रा कुसंसारमहाविषविषूचिका। (126.84,85)

As long as the idea '(Vastu Idam) this object is there! (I want it)', occupies the mind, so long will the 'deadly virus of the painful Samsaara' shine forth.

एतावानेव संसार इदमस्त्विति यन्मनः अस्य तूपशमो मोक्ष, इत्येवं ज्ञानसंग्रहः। (126.85,86)

'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 alone is the essence of all knowledge.

प्रसादकारिणी स्वच्छा निरिच्छे विमलाकृतौ तैलबिन्दुरिवादर्थे विश्राम्यत्युपदेशवाक्। (126.86,87)

The mind then remains happy and pure.

In only such a desire-less taintless mind, the instructions get stuck like the oil drop in the mirror.

असंवेदनमात्रेण नोदेतीच्छाभवाङ्कुरः

By not thinking about the existence of an object, the sprout of the desire for the objects of the world does not arise.

मनागभ्युदितैवेच्छा छेतव्यानर्थकारिणी असंवेदनशस्त्रेण विषस्येवाङ्कुरावली। (126.88)

Even if the desire pops up slightly, it should be cut off instantly with the weapon of non-conception, like cutting off the sprout-succession of the poisonous weed which is harmful.

इच्छाविच्छुरितो जीवो विजहाति न दीनताम्। (126.89)

A Jeeva bestrewed with desires, does not ever come out of his wretched state.

स्वसंवेदनयत्नस्तु

The method for remaining in the 'awareness of the Self' is - (like catching a fish)

तूष्णीमेवान्तरासनं

make the mind stay silent first (agitation-less) (with silence alone as its seat)

अवधानविनिर्मुक्तं सुप्तं शवशतं यथा

and make it completely empty of thoughts, like a room filled with hundreds of dead bodies.

तां प्रत्याहारबडिशेन इच्छामत्सीं नियच्छत। (126.89, 90)

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

इदं मेऽस्त्विति संवेगमाहुः कल्पनमुत्तमाः,

That mad hankering that says 'This object should belong to me';

that alone is known as imagination (Kalpanaa) by the excellent men of Self-knowledge.

अर्थस्याभावनं यत्तत्कल्पनात्याग उच्यते। (126.91)

Not remembering any object (effortlessly), is known as the 'renunciation of imagination'.

स्मरणं विद्धि संकल्पं

Remembering it again and again (unable to control it) is known as conception (Samkalpa).

शिवमस्मरणं विदुः।

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

तत्र प्रागनुभूतं च नानुभूतं च भाव्यते। (126.92)

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

अनुभूतां नानुभूतां स्मृतिं विस्मृत्य काष्ठवत्,

Forget off, both the experienced and not-experienced memories, like some worthless piece of dry stick,

सर्वमेवाशु विस्मृत्य गूढस्तिष्ठ महामतिः। (126.93)

forget everything (whatever is there as your past impressions connected to the world)

and remain hidden in the Self-state, as a 'Great Knower'.

ऊर्ध्वबाहुर्विरोम्येष न च कश्चिच्छृणोति तत्

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

असंकल्पः परं श्रेयःस किमन्तर्न भाव्यते। (126.94)

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

किल तूष्णीं स्थितेनैष तत्पदं प्राप्यते परं परमं यत्र साम्राज्यमपि राम तृणायते। (126.95)

If the mind is kept silent, that Supreme state gets easily achieved.

In that Supreme state of the Self, hey Rama, even a kingdom looks like a worthless piece of dry grass.

[परं परमं - यदा पञ्चावतिष्ठन्ते ज्ञानानि मनसा सह बुद्धिश्च न विचेष्टति तामाहुः परमां गतिम्।

When the five knowledge organs remain stable along with the mind, and the intellect also keeps quiet, that is known as the Supreme state to be achieved.)]

गम्यैकदेशनिष्ठस्य यथा पान्थस्य पादयोः स्पन्दो विगतसंकल्पस्तथा स्पन्दः स्वकर्मसु। (126.96)

When a man is walking towards some place, his feet keep moving without any conception of their own.

So also, one should remain (without conceptions) when doing the actions that belong to him.

बहुनात्र किमुक्तेन, संक्षेपादिदमुच्यते, संकल्पनं परो बन्धस्तदभावो विमुक्तता। (126.97)

What more to say! I will tell you this in brief.

Conception is the greatest bondage. Absence of it, is complete liberation.

सर्वमेवमजं शान्तमनन्तं ध्रुवमव्ययं पश्यन्भूतार्थचिद्रूपं शान्तमास्व यथासुखम्। (126.98)

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

Non-conception is the proper method of Yoga.

It is the abode of quiescence, and it never deteriorates.

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि निर्वसन्नोऽथ मा कुरु। (126.99)

Do all the actions, being 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).

अवेदनं विदुर्योगं चित्तक्षयमकृत्रिमं

Non-conception is the proper method of Yoga.

When the Chitta gets destroyed, one remains in the natural state through non-conception.

अत्यन्तं तन्मयो भूत्वा तथा तिष्ठ यथासि भो। (126.100)

Remaining completely in the state of the Self, stay like that only! Be as you are!

शिवं सर्वगतं शान्तं बोधात्मकमजं शुभं तदेकभावनं राम सर्वत्याग इति स्मृतः। (126.101)

Rama! The contemplation of 'That'-

which is supremely good, which is everywhere, which is quiet,

which rises out of enlightenment, which is unborn, which is auspicious -

'that alone' is known as 'Renunciation of all' (SarvaTyaaga)!

भावयञ्छब्दन्तः (भावयन् शब्दत् अन्तः) स्वं कार्यं कर्म समाचर,

Contemplate (identity with the Self) continuously without a break within,

and do the actions that belong to you (as the Brahman rising as those states).

अहंममेति संविदन्न दुःखतो विमुच्यते,

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

असंविदन्विमुच्यते, यदीप्सितं समाचर। (126.102)

Without such conceptions, you will be liberated.

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