

The Supreme Yoga  
a new translation of  
Yoga Vasistha

6/2 . Nirvana Prakaranam  
part 2

Section dealing with Liberation

Swami Venkatesananda



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A new translation of the Yoga Vasistha  
(IN TWO VOLUMES)

**Swami Venkatesananda**

## 6.2 - Nirvana Prakaranam

Section dealing with Liberation

*Published By*

**THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY**

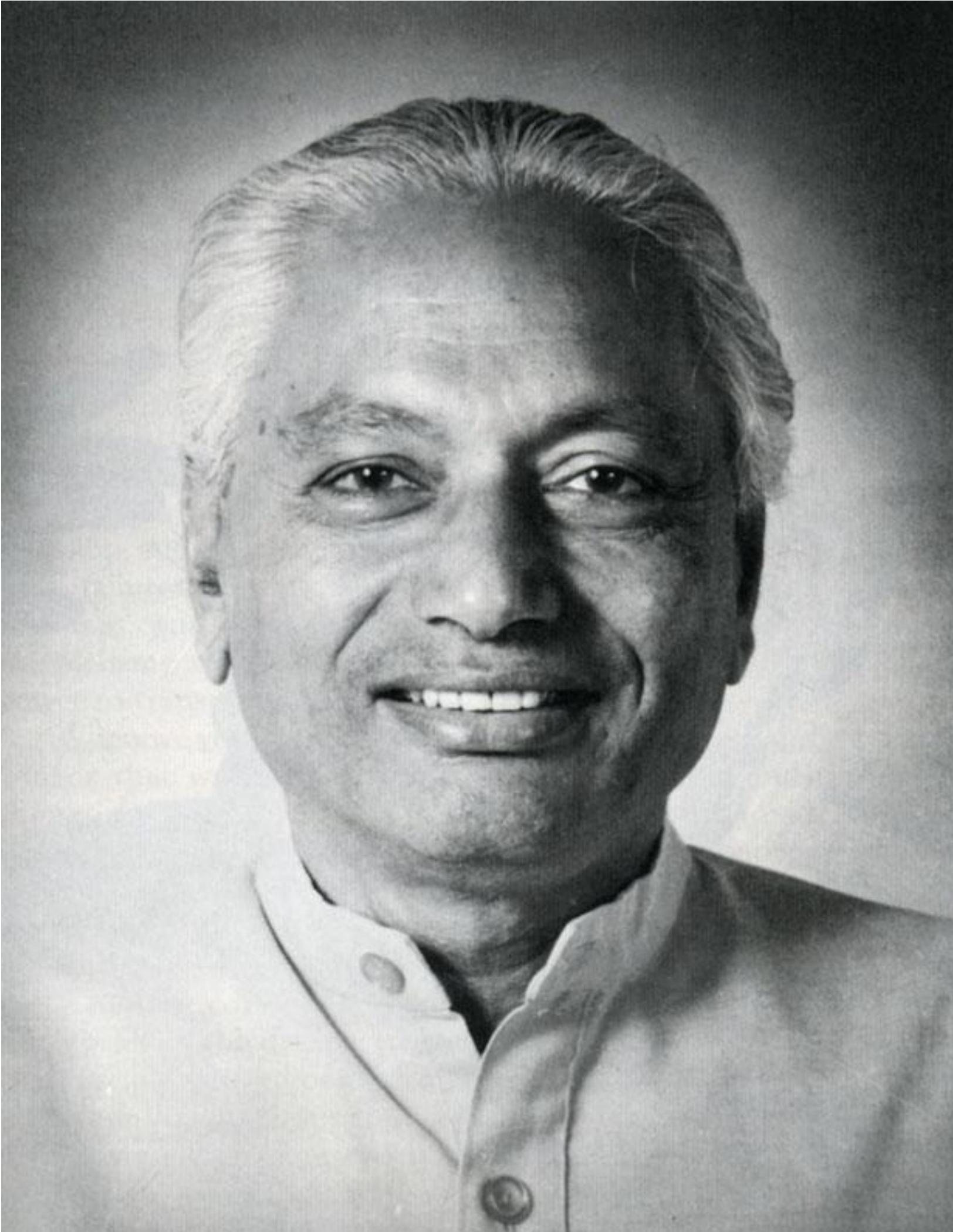
P.O. SHIVANANDANAGAR—249 192

Distt. Tehri-Garhwal, Uttaranchal, Himalayas, India

ISBN 81-7052-087-8

First Edition: 1976  
The Chiltern Yoga Trust  
P.O. Elgin 7180, South Africa

Second Edition: 1991  
Thrid Edition: 1995  
Fourth Edition: 2003  
(3,000 Copies)



This publication is dedicated to my Gurudev Swami Sivananda. His life was a symphony whose constant refrain was: "In all conditions I am Knowledge - Bliss Absolute." Sage Vasistha incarnated as Swami Sivananda to embody the Supreme Yoga. In Gurudev Yoga Vāsistha was alive.

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On top of each page you have:

Section of the Book ( there are 6 sections) and the number of the Chapter(s) in that section

example: section I chapter 1

One verse from the relevant chapter is given in transliteration. This verse is 'freely' translated and is in **brown** in the body of the story on the same page.

On each page is given a faithful summary of the Chapter. Every effort has been made not to ignore any important teaching. Only non-essential repetition has been omitted.

## Preface

The Yoga Vasishtha has always been considered as perhaps the most elaborate exposition of Philosophy and Religion ever written under the sun. The work, which is voluminous in its nature, has been abridged by several scholars subsequently to make the treatise accessible to people who would not have the time and patience to wade through this large literature.

Sri Swami Venkatesananda, a direct disciple of His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, has, however, excelled the earlier precis writers on this subject in His brilliant two volume presentation of this Scripture under the title 'The Supreme Yoga'.

The first edition 1976 was published under the auspices of The Chiltern Yoga Trust, Cape Province, South Africa, in two excellently printed volumes.

Now, this second edition 1991 of this veritably standard work is being published by The Divine Life Society for the benefit of all seekers of Truth and the general readers of spiritual teachings.

We have a firm hope that this well-known, towering teaching will provide to everyone the requisite inspiration and solace.

The Divine Life Society

## Introduction

Scholars speculate about the author of this monumental scripture and such other academic matters. May God bless them with success.

The Yoga-Vasistha is the greatest help to the spiritual awakening, and the direct experience of the Truth. This is certain. If this is what you want, you are welcome to Yoga-Vasistha.

The text abounds in repetitions which are, however, not repetitious. If you do not like (or need) repetition, then read just this one verse:

This world-appearance is a confusion: even as the blueness of the sky is an optical illusion. I think it is better not to let the mind dwell on it, but to ignore it. (I.3.2)

This verse occurs several times in the scripture and it seems to be the very essence of the teaching.

If that is not quite clear to you now, read the scripture. The numerous ways in which this truth is revealed will help open your mind.

It is wise to read just one page a day. The teaching is revolutionary. The biased mind does not readily accept it. After the daily reading, meditate. Let the message soak through.

An oft-recurring expression in this scripture is 'kakataliya' - a crow alights on the cocoanut palm tree, and that very moment a ripe cocoanut falls. The two unrelated events thus seem to be related in time and space, though there is no causal relationship.

Such is life. Such is 'creation'. But the mind caught up in its own trap of logic questions 'why', invents a 'why', and a 'wherefore', to satisfy itself, conveniently ignoring the inconvenient questions that still haunt an intelligent mind.

Vasistha demands direct observation of the mind, its motion, its notions, its reasoning, the assumed cause and the projected result, and even the observed and the observation - and the realisation of their indivisible unity as the infinite consciousness.

That is the uniqueness of this scripture which hence declares itself to be supreme:

Except through this scripture, one cannot gain what is good, now or at any time. Therefore, for perfect realisation of the supreme truth, one should fervently investigate this scripture alone. (VI.2.103)

It is, however the teaching that is supreme, not a book or a sage. Hence, Vasistha is bold enough to say:

If, however, one thinks it is not authoritative because it is of human origin, one can resort to the study of any other scripture dealing with self-knowledge and final liberation. (VI.2.175)

Whichever be the scripture taught, by whomever, and whichever be the path you choose, stop not till the psychological conditioning ceases entirely. Hence, Vasistha exhorts the seeker:

One should study at least a small part of this scripture daily. The beauty in this scripture is that its student is not abandoned to his despair; if something is not clear in the first instance, a further study of the scripture makes it clear. (VI.2.175)

Dust of Gurudev's Feet  
Swami Venkatesananda

## Prayer before the daily reading

OM TAT SAT  
OM NAMAH SIVANANDAYA  
OM NAMAH NARANAYANA  
OM NAMO VENKATESAYA

yatah sarvani bhutani pratibhanti sthitani ca  
yatrayo pasamam yanti tasmai satyatmane namah (1)  
jnata jnanam tatha jneyam drasta darsana drsyabhuh  
karta hetuh kriya yasmad tasmai jnaptyatmane namah (2)  
sphuranti sikara yasmad anandasya mbare vanau  
sarvesam jivanam tasmai brahmanandatmane namah (3)

Salutations to that reality in which all the elements, and all the animate and inanimate beings shine as if they have an independent existence, and in which they exist for a time and into which they merge.

Salutations to that consciousness which is the source of the apparently distinct threefold divisions of knower, knowledge and known, seer, sight and seen, doer, doing and deed.

Salutations to that bliss absolute (the ocean of bliss) which is the life of all beings whose happiness and unfoldment is derived from the shower of spray from that ocean of bliss.

OM TAT SAT  
OM NAMAH SIVANANDAYA  
OM NAMAH NARANAYANA  
OM NAMAH SHIVAYA  
OM NAMO VENKATESAYA

## section VI.2 - chapter 1

gamyadesaikaanisthasya yatha panthasya padayoh spando vigatasankalpastatha  
spandasva karmasu (15)

Rama asked:

When one abandons action and the will to perform actions, the body falls away. How then is it possible for a living being to live in such a state?

Vasistha replied:

The abandonment of mental conditioning and notions is appropriate only to the living creature, not to one that is dead. What is kalpana (notion or mental activity)? It is only the ego-sense. When that is realised to be void, there is abandonment of the ego-sense. The notion created within oneself by the external object is known as kalpana. When that notion takes on the characteristic of void or space, there is the abandonment of the notion. Memory is kalpana. Hence, the wise say that non-remembering is the best. Memory encompasses that which has been experienced, as well as that which has not been experienced. Abandon 'remembering' what has been experienced and what has not been experienced, and remain established in the self, like a baby who is half-awake.

Even as the potter's wheel keeps revolving on account of past momentum, continue to live and act here, without entertaining any notions, without the operation of the mind which has now been transformed into pure satva. I declare with uplifted arms: "The abandonment of notions is the supreme good." Why do people not listen? How powerful is delusion! Under its influence, one who holds the precious gem of vicara (self-enquiry) on his palm, does not abandon his delusion. This alone is one's supreme good: the non-perception of objects and the non-arising of notions. This should be experienced.

If you rest peacefully in your own self, you will know that in comparison even the state of an emperor is like a blade of grass. **When one has made up his mind to go to a certain place, his feet function without any mental activity. Function like those feet, and perform action here.** Act here after abandoning desire for reward or the fruits of actions, without the motivation of pleasure or profit. Then the objects of the senses will be devoid of attraction, but will be what they are. Even when sensation of pleasure arises on contact with the objects, let it lead you inward to the self. Do not long for the fruits of action; do not be inactive either. Or, be devoted to both or neither, as it might happen. For, it is the will to do or not to do that binds, and its absence is liberation. There is in fact neither a must nor a must-not; all this is pure being. Let your intelligence not recognise any of these. Remain forever what you are in truth. The awareness of 'I' and 'mine' is the root of sorrow; its cessation is emancipation. Do what appeals to you.

## section VI.2 - chapter 2

prabuddhasya 'prabuddhasya dehino dehagehake adeham vidyate cittam  
tyagastasya na vidyate (35)

Vasistha continued:

Just as an army fashioned with clay is nothing but clay figurines, the entire universe is pure self and non-dual. Since this non-dual self alone exists, what is object and by whom is it perceived? Apart from that supreme self, there is nothing which can be referred to as 'I' or as 'mine'.

Rama said:

If that is so, Lord, why should evil action be abandoned, and why should one be devoted to good action?

Vasistha said:

But, first tell me, O Rama, what is action. How does action arise, what is its root, and how is that root to be destroyed?

Rama said:

Surely, Lord, that which has to be destroyed must be completely uprooted, and its very roots destroyed. As long as the body lasts, there is action. It is rooted in this samsara, world-appearance. In that body, actions spring from the limbs (organs of action). Vasana or mental habit is the seed for the organs of action. This mental habit functioning through the senses is capable of comprehending that which is at a great distance. These senses themselves are rooted in the mind, the mind is rooted in the jiva, which is conditioned consciousness, and this in turn is rooted in the unconditioned, which is therefore the root of all. Brahman is the root of this unconditioned, and Brahman has no roots. Thus, all actions are based on consciousness, which objectifies itself, and thus generates actions. If this does not happen, that itself is the supreme state.

Vasistha said:

In that case, O Rama, what is to be done, and what is to be abandoned? **The mind continues to exist as long as the body continues to live, whether the embodied person is enlightened or ignorant.** How can one abandon what is known as the jivahood (individuality). But, one should abandon that wrong notion of 'I do', and be engaged in the performance of appropriate action. On the awakening of the inner intelligence, the world-perception ceases, and there arises psychological freedom or non-attachment. That is known as emancipation. When the objective or conditioned perception is abandoned, there is peace which is known as Brahman. Perception or awareness of objects is known as action which expands into this samsara or world-appearance. Cessation of such awareness is known as emancipation. Therefore, O Rama, abandonment of action is inappropriate as long as the body lives. Such abandonment gives action a value. That which is valued cannot be abandoned.

## section VI.2 - chapter 3

atyage tyagamiti ye kurvate vyarthabodhinah sa bhuktte tan pabunajnan  
karmatyagapisacika (26)

Rama asked:

Since that which is cannot cease to be, and since what is not cannot exist, how can awareness (experience) be made non-awareness or non-experience?

Vasistha replied:

It is true that that which is, ceases not, and that which is not, does not exist. Experience and non-experience are also that simple and easy of accomplishment. For the word 'experience' and what is indicated by it, are born of falsehood or delusion. Hence, they give rise to sorrow. Abandon this awareness of 'experience', and remain established in the awareness of the highest wisdom. The latter is nirvana.

Good and evil actions cease when it is realised that they do not exist in reality. Hence, one should enquire into the root of action till that root is destroyed. For just as everything that springs from the earth is non-different from the earth, even so all that arises out of consciousness is non-different from consciousness. Liquidity is non-different from liquid; in the same way, in Brahman there is no division even between the mind and consciousness. The activity known as awareness arises without a cause in that consciousness; hence it is as good as non-existent, being non-different from consciousness.

Action is rooted in the body, which is rooted in the ego-sense. If the apprehension of the ego-sense is abandoned, it ceases. Thus is the root of action destroyed. They in whom action has thus ceased, are eager neither to renounce nor to possess. They remain established in what is and their actions are spontaneous; in fact, they do nothing. As objects borne down by a flood move non-volitionally, they work merely with their organs of action. When the mind abandons its conditioning, the objects lose their temptation.

Such an understanding or awakening of intelligence alone is the abandonment of action. What is the use of 'doing' or of 'desisting'? It is the cessation of the awareness of action and of experience, the giving up of conditioning, and thus the attainment of peace and the state of equilibrium that is known by the expression 'abandonment of action'. **When non-abandonment (or false abandonment) is mistaken for abandonment, the deluded ones, who are like ignorant animals, are possessed by the goblin of abandonment of activity.** For, they who have rightly understood the truth concerning abandonment of action, have nothing whatsoever to do with activity nor with inactivity. They enjoy supreme peace, whether they live in their house or in a forest. To the peaceful, a house is like a forest, and to the restless, even a forest is like a crowded city. To one who is at peace, the entire world is a peaceful forest. To one who is restless with a thousand thoughts, it is an ocean of sorrow.

## section VI.2 - chapter 4

yo yo bhava udetyantastvayi spanda iva 'nile nahamasmiti cidvvttya  
tamanadharatam naya (20)

Vasistha continued:

O Rama, when the ego-sense is quieted, the world-appearance vanishes. There is then spontaneous abandonment of objective perception, even as a lamp without fuel goes out. Renunciation is not of activity. True renunciation is based on understanding. When the lamp of understanding is not fed with the fuel of the ego-sense and possessiveness, what remains is self-knowledge. One who has not thus abandoned the ego-sense and mine-ness, knows neither renunciation nor wisdom nor peace. One can easily give up the notion of I-ness by replacing it with the understanding 'The ego-sense is not', without any hindrance. Where is the need to doubt this?

All these notions like 'I am this' and 'I am not this' are not independent of consciousness. Consciousness is like space, a void. How can delusion exist in it? Hence, there is neither delusion nor the deluded, neither confusion nor the confused. All these seem to arise because one does not clearly perceive the truth. See this. Remain at peace in silence. This is nirvana.

The very thing with which you entertain the notion of ego-sense, enables you in the twinkling of an eye to realise the non-existence of the ego-sense. Then you will go beyond this ocean of samsara. He attains the highest state who is able thus to conquer his own nature. He is a hero. He who is able to overcome the six enemies (lust, anger, greed, etc.) is a great man; others are donkeys in human garb. He who is able to overcome the notions that arise in the mind is a man (purusa). He is a man of wisdom.

As and when the perception of an object arises within you, meet it with the understanding 'I am not this'. Such ignorant perception will immediately cease. In fact, there is nothing to be known in all this; there is need only to get rid of confusion or deluded understanding. If this delusion is not repeatedly revived, it ceases to be. **Whatever notion arises in you, even as movement arises in wind, realise that 'I am not this', and thus deprive it of support.**

He who has not gained a victory over greed, shame, vanity, and delusion, derives no benefit by reading this scripture; it is a useless waste of time.

The ego-sense arises in the self, just as movement arises in wind. Hence, it is non-different from the self. The ego-sense seems to shine on account of the self, which is the reality or the substratum. The self does not arise at any time, nor does it set. There is nothing other than the self. Hence, how can one say that it is or that it is not? The supreme self is in the supreme self, the infinite in the infinite, the peace in peace. That is all there is - neither 'I', nor 'the world', nor 'the mind'.

## section VI.2 - chapter 4 5

nirvana eva nirvanam santam sante sive sivam nirvanamapyanirvanam  
sanabhortham na vapi tat (4/ 26)

Vasistha continued:

Nirvana (emancipation) is nirvana. In peace there is peace. In the divine there is divinity. Nirvana (emancipation) is also anirvana (non-emancipation) associated with space, and also not so associated. When the right understanding concerning the unreality of the ego-sense arises, there is no difficulty in enduring attacks with weapons or illness, etc. For, when the seed for the world-appearance (which is the ego-sense) has been destroyed, the world-appearance goes with it. Even as the mirror gets misted by moisture, the self is veiled by the unreal ego-sense. This ego-sense gives rise to all the rest of this world-appearance. When it goes, then the self shines by its own light, even as the sun shines when the veiling cloud is blown away. Just as an object thrown into the ocean dissolves in the ocean, the ego-sense which enters the self is dissolved in it.

As long as the ego-sense lasts, the same Brahman or the infinite consciousness shines as the diverse objects with different names. When the ego-sense is quieted, then Brahman shines as the pure infinite consciousness. The ego-sense is the seed for this universe. When that is fried, there is no sense in words like 'world', 'bondage', or 'ego-sense'. When the pot is broken, only the clay remains; when the ego-sense goes, diversity is dissolved. Just as the objects of the world are perceived when the sun rises, the diversity of world-appearance arises with the rising of the ego-sense. O Rama, I do not see any alternative to self-knowledge which is the realisation of the unreality of the ego-sense. Nothing else can ensure your true welfare. Hence, first abandon the individualised ego-sense and behold your self as the entire universe. Then realise that the entire universe is the self or Brahman and naught else. Be free from all agitation caused by worldnotions.

He who has not conquered this ego-sense, does not reach the supreme state. However, if his heart is pure, then instruction concerning spiritual understanding is able to penetrate it, like a drop of oil on clean cloth. In this connection, I shall narrate to you an ancient legend. Long, long ago I questioned Bhusunda: "Whom do you regard as ignorant and deluded in this world?"

Bhusunda replied:

There was a celestial who lived on a hill-top. He was ignorant and devoted to sense-pleasure, but he had adopted such a righteous life-style as would ensure a very long life. After a very long time, the understanding arose in him that he should attain that state in which there was no birth nor death. Having thus made up his mind, he came to me. Having duly worshipped me, the celestial asked me: "These senses, O Lord, are constantly agitated with craving for gratification, and they are the source of endless pain and suffering. I have realised this, and hence I take refuge in your feet."

## section VI.2 - chapter 6

indriyottamaroganam bhogasavarjanadrte nausadhani na tirthani na ca mantrasca  
santaye (45)

The Celestial continued:

Please tell me of that which is limitless, and which is free from growth and decay, and which is pure and beginningless and endless. For up to this time, I have been asleep, as it were, and now, by the grace of the self, I have been awakened. Kindly save me from this terrible fire of delusion.

Beings are born and they die after being worn out here; all this is neither for dharma nor for emancipation. There does not seem to be an end to this wandering in delusion. The pleasure-centres in this world only intensify this delusion and are ever changing. I do not delight in them. I have seen and enjoyed all the pleasures of the heaven. The desire for such enjoyment has been reduced to ashes by the fire of discrimination now. I clearly understand the havoc caused by the senses of sight, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touch. What shall I do with these repetitive enjoyments? Even after a thousand years of their enjoyment, no one is really satisfied. Even if one enjoys the sovereignty of the world with all the pleasures that come with it, what is so extraordinary about it? For all these are subject to destruction and death. Pray, tell me, what there is to gain from which I shall attain eternal satisfaction.

I have now clearly understood the poisonous nature of these sense-experiences, which only intensify my suffering here. 'He alone is the real hero in this world who is determined to give battle to this formidable army known as one's senses. This army is commanded by the ego-sense. It is endowed with horses known as sense-experiences. It has completely encircled the city known as this body. Even the holy ones have to battle with these senses. Only they who come out victorious in this are truly great; the others are fleshy automatons (machines).

**There is no remedy for the disease known as sense-craving other than the firm abandonment of desire for pleasure; no medicines, no pilgrimage, no mantras, are of any use.** I have been waylaid by these senses as robbers waylay a lone traveller in a dense forest. These senses are filthy, and they lead to great misfortune. They generate greed. They are difficult to overcome. They bring about rebirth. They are the enemies of the men of wisdom, and the friends of the foolish. They are resorted to by the fallen ones, and they are shunned by the noble men. They roam about freely in the darkness of ignorance like goblins. They are empty and valueless, and like dry bamboo, fit only to be burnt.

Lord, you are the sole refuge of the supplicant. You are his redeemer. Pray, save me from this terrible ocean of samsara by your enlightening admonitions. Devotion to sages like you in this world is the surest destroyer of sorrow.

## section VI.2 - chapter 7 8

kimajnatvajjagajjatam jagato 'tha kimajnata vicaryapiti no vidma  
ekatvadalametayoh (7/8)

Bhusunda replied:

You are indeed blessed, O celestial, that you are spiritually awake and you wish to uplift yourself. Your intelligence is fully awakened. Hence, I feel that you will understand my instruction effortlessly. Please listen to what I am about to say. What I say is born of long experience.

What appears to us as 'I' and 'the other' is in truth not your self. For, when you look for these, you cannot see them. The conviction that neither 'I' nor 'you' nor 'the world' exists, is conducive to happiness, not to sorrow. The origin of ignorance cannot be determined. **Even after considerable enquiry, we are unable to determine whether the world-appearance arises from ignorance, or ignorance is born of the world-appearance. The two are in fact two aspects of the same thing.** Whatever exists, is the one infinite consciousness or Brahman. The world-appearance is like a mirage, of which it can be said 'It is' and 'It is not'.

The seed for this world-appearance is the ego-sense, for this tree of world-appearance grows from the ego-sense. The senses and their objects, the various forms of conditioning, heaven and earth with its mountains, oceans, etc., the divisions of time, and all the names and forms, are different parts of this tree of world-appearance.

When that seed is burnt, it gives rise to nothing. How is this seed burnt? When you enquire into the nature of the ego-sense, you realise that it is not to be seen. This is knowledge. By this fire of knowledge is the ego-sense burnt. By entertaining the notion of ego-sense, it appears to be and to give rise to the world-appearance. When this false notion is abandoned, the egosense disappears, and self-knowledge arises.

In the very beginning of this world-appearance, the ego-sense did not exist as a reality. Then, how can we believe in the existence of the ego-sense, in the reality of 'I' and 'you', and in duality or non-duality? They who seriously and earnestly strive to realise the truth, after having duly received it from the lips of a preceptor, and having studied it in the scriptures, easily attain this self-knowledge.

What appears to be the world, is the expansion of one's own notions or thoughts (sankalpa). It is based on consciousness. It is an optical illusion which has consciousness for its substratum. Hence, it is regarded as both real and unreal. In the bracelet, gold is the truth, and bracelet is but an idea or notion. Thus, both the appearance and the disappearance of this world illusion are but the modifications of the idea. He who has realised this, is disinterested in the delights of this world or heaven; this is his last incarnation.

## section VI.2 - chapter 9 10

brahmanyasesagakttitvadacittvam vidyate tatha aksudhe vimale toye  
bhaviphenalavo yatha (10/3)

Bhusunda continued:

O celestial, give up thinking of the objects of this world-appearance as being the manifestation of the infinite consciousness. Remain in the pure self. Inertia arises in consciousness because of its own manifestation, though such inertia seems to be dissimilar to consciousness. Just as the same wind that fans the fire can also put it out, the same consciousness promotes consciousness as well as inertia. Hence, let your consciousness or your awakened intelligence realise that the ego-sense ('I') is not, and then be what you are. Then your consciousness merges in consciousness absolute, without giving rise to the object of consciousness; that is Brahman, which is incomparable.

The whole universe is filled with this infinite and undivided consciousness. Realise this, and do as you please. It is only when the eyes are blinded by ignorance that one perceives the world of diversity. But, in truth, all these diverse objects are as real as a tree seen in space by one with defective vision.

This inert universe is non-different from the infinite consciousness, even as fire reflected in water is non-different from it. Even so, there is no real distinction between knowledge and ignorance. **Since Brahman is endowed with infinite potencies, inertia or unconsciousness manifests in consciousness. This inertia exists as a potentiality in Brahman, even as future waves and ripples exist on the calm surface of water.** Water has no motivation to throw up ripples. Nor does Brahman have any motive in creating the world. Hence, it is right to say that, in the absence of a valid cause, creation has not taken place. It is but an appearance, like the mirage. Brahman alone exists. Brahman is peace and untreated; nor does Brahman create anything.

O celestial, you are that Brahman which is homogeneous and undivided and indivisible, like space. You are a knower. Whether you know something or do not, remain free from doubt. When you realise that you are the unborn, infinite consciousness, then all ignorance and foolishness cease, and this world-appearance ceases. Wherever the supreme Brahman exists (and it is infinite and exists everywhere) there arises this world-appearance. In a blade of grass, wood, water, and in all things in the universe, the same Brahman, the infinite consciousness, exists. The nature of Brahman is indescribable and undefinable. In it, there is no other, and hence it is incomparable. Hence, it is inappropriate even to talk of the nature of Brahman. That which is experienced when this ego-sense ceases, is the same Brahman which is attained by one in whom the ego-sense prevails when that one enquires into the nature of the ego-sense. It thereupon dissolves in consciousness.

## section VI.2 - chapter 11 12

na kenacitkasyacideva kagciddoso na caiveha gunah kadacit sukhena duhkkena bhavabhavena na casti bhoktta na ca kartrta ca (11/15)

Bhusunda continued:

He in whom the contact of sharp weapons and the contact of a naked woman produce the same experience - he is established in the supreme state. One should diligently engage oneself in spiritual practice until one reaches the state in which one's contact with the objects provokes the same reaction that it would if one were asleep. The knower of the self is totally unaffected by mental illness or psychological distress.

Just as poison, when swallowed by one, produces physical ailment without losing its identity as poison, the self becomes the jiva without abandoning its nature as the self or undivided consciousness. Even so, consciousness takes on the nature of unconsciousness or inertia. Something seems to have arisen in Brahman, though it is in fact non-different from Brahman. Poison, without ceasing to be poison, becomes poisonous in the body. In the same way, the self is neither born nor does it die - and from another point of view it comes into being and dies.

Only when one's intelligence does not get drowned in objective perception, is one able to cross this ocean of samsara, as if it were the footprint of a calf - it is not achieved with the help of god or by other means. In the self, which is omnipresent, and which dwells in all, how can the mind or the ego-sense arise at all? **There is neither good nor evil anywhere, to anyone, at any time, there is neither pleasure nor pain, neither adversity nor prosperity. No one is the doer and no one is the enjoyer of anything.**

To say that the ego-sense has arisen in the self is like saying that space (distance) has been brought into being in space. The ego-sense is but a delusion, and unreal. In space, there is only spatiality; even so, consciousness alone exists in consciousness. That which is called the ego-sense ('I') - I am neither that nor not that. This consciousness exists like a mountain within every atom, because it is extremely subtle. This extremely subtle consciousness entertains notions of 'I' and 'this' and these notions appear to exist as the respective substances. Even as a whirlpool, etc., are but notional forms of water, the ego-sense and space, etc., are notions that arise in consciousness. The cessation of such notions is known as cosmic dissolution. Thus, all these worlds, etc., come into being, and cease to be as notions and nothing more. Consciousness does not undergo any change in all these. In consciousness, there is no experience of pleasure or pain, nor does a notion arise in it as 'This I am'. Consciousness does not entertain qualities like courage, pleasure, prosperity, fear, memory, fame, or resplendence. They are not perceived in the self any more than the feet of a snake are perceived in darkness.

## section VI.2 - chapter 12

ardham sajjanasamparkadaavidyaya vinasyati caturbhagastu  
sastrarthaiscaturbhagam svayatnatah (37)

Bhusunda continued:

There is a shower of nectar from Brahman, and this is considered creation. However, since time and space do not exist in reality, such creation is unreal, and what appears to be, is non-different from the Lord. Just as it is water that appears as a whirlpool, and just as smoke seen from a distance has the appearance of a cloud, even so, when consciousness becomes aware of itself, thus giving rise to a notion (which is inert), between the two (consciousness and notion) there arises the third factor, which is known as creation. This creation is but an appearance, like a plantain tree reflected in a pillar or crystal. But, when rightly investigated, this notion of reality in the unreal appearance vanishes.

This world-appearance is like an empire painted on a canvas. Just as the canvas is made attractive by the use of different colours, this world appearance seems to be attractive with diverse sense-experiences. This appearance is dependent upon the seer, the ego-sense, which itself is unreal. Hence, it is non-different from the supreme self, even as liquidity is inseparable from water.

The light of consciousness is the self. It is when the notion of 'I' arises in it that this creation comes into being. Other than this notion, there is neither a creation nor a creator. Motion being the inherent nature of water, there is no flow of water in relation to itself (it is as it is - flowing water). Even so, consciousness is vast and stable like space, and is therefore not aware of a space within itself. When the same water is seen at a different time and place, the notion of motion arises. Even so, the awareness that arises in consciousness, in conjunction with the notions of time and space, gives rise to the notion of creation. (Though in fact, since time and space are unreal, such creation is impossible, and the comparison of consciousness with water is inadequate.) Know that all that you experience in the name of mind, ego-sense, intellect, etc., is nothing but ignorance. This ignorance vanishes through self-effort. Half of this ignorance is dispelled by the company of the holy ones, one-fourth of it is destroyed by the study of scriptures, and the other one-fourth by self-effort.

In response to Rama's question, Vasistha explained:

One should resort to the company of the wise and, in their company, one should examine the truth concerning this creation. One should diligently search for the holy one and adore him. For, the very moment such a holy one is found, **half the ignorance ceases in his company. Another one-fourth is dispelled by the study of scripture, and the last part by self-effort.** The company of the holy one puts an end to craving for pleasure; and when it is firmly rejected by self-effort, ignorance ceases. All these may happen together or one after the other.

## section VI.2 - chapter 13

yam pratyudetī sargo 'yam sa evainam hi cetati padarthah sannivesam svamiva  
svapnam pumaniva (4)

Bhusunda continued:

A mansion visualised in space does not need the support of real pillars. Even so, the imaginary or illusory world-appearance does not depend upon real time and space. Time, space, and world-appearance, are all but notional. This world-appearance is extremely subtle, and it is built merely by mental activity or the movement of thought. It is like scent in the air. However, unlike such scent in the air, this world-appearance is experienced only by the mind that conceives it, whereas scent can be experienced by others also. **Just as one's dream is experienced only by the dreamer, this creation is experienced only by the one in whose mind it arises.**

In this connection, there is an ancient legend which tells how Indra, the king of the gods, hid himself within the bowels of a sub-atomic particle.

Somewhere, at some time, some kind of an imaginary wish-fulfilling tree existed. On one of its branches, there appeared a fruit which is this universe. This fruit was unique and completely different from all other fruits. Like worms within this fruit, dwelt all types of beings - gods, demons, etc. It contained the earth as well as the heaven and the netherworlds. It was enormous in size, because it was a manifestation of the infinite consciousness, and it was attractive, because it contained in itself the infinite potentialities of diverse experiences. It was radiant with intelligence, and in its core was the ego-sense. In it were all kinds of beings - from the dullest and the ignorant to the one that was closest to enlightenment.

Indra, the king of the gods, was also in that fruit. Once, when the lord Visnu and others had retired, this Indra was assailed by powerful demons. Pursued by these demons, Indra ran in the ten directions. He was eventually overcome by the demons. When the attention of the demons was distracted for a moment, Indra, taking advantage of the situation, assumed a subtle and minute form (by abandoning the notion that he was huge and by entertaining the notion that he was subtle and minute), and entered into a sub-atomic particle.

In it, he found rest and peace. He forgot the war with the demons. In it, he visualised a palace for himself, then a city, then a whole nation with other cities and forests, and then he saw in it the whole world - an entire universe, with heaven and hell. He thought that he was Indra, the king of that heaven. To him was born a son, whom he named Kunda. After sometime, this Indra abandoned his body, and attained nirvana, like a lamp without fuel.

Kunda became Indra, and ruled the three worlds. He too was blessed with a son, equal in valour and radiance. Thus, his progeny multiplied, and even today one of his descendants rules the heaven. Thus, in that sub-atomic particle, there are many such kings ruling their own kingdoms.

## section VI.2 - chapter 14

iti mayeyamadirgha prasrta pratyayonmukhi satyavalokamatrativilayaikavilasini  
(26)

Bhusunda continued:

In that family was born one who became the ruler of heaven, but who was determined to put an end to the cycle of birth and death. He gained wisdom from the instructions of the preceptor of the gods (Brhaspati). He engaged himself in the performance of appropriate actions, in situations which arose without his seeking. Thus he performed religious rites, and even fought with the demons.

In his mind there arose a wish: "I should perceive the reality concerning Brahman the absolute." He entered into deep meditation. He was at peace within himself, remaining in seclusion. There he saw the supreme self or Brahman, omnipotent, all-pervasive all, who is everything, everywhere at all times, to whom all feet and hands belong, that Brahman whose eyes and heads and faces are everything, free from the senses, yet the very essence of all the senses, totally free (unattached), though upholding everything, simultaneously free from and endowed with all the qualities, within and without all creatures (moving and non-moving), that Brahman who is far and near, yet unknown because of its extreme subtlety. He is the sun and the moon and the earth-element everywhere, the reality in the mountain and ocean - the very essence of all. That Brahman is of the nature of this creation and world, yet the emancipated self, the primordial consciousness. Though he is the all, he is yet devoid of all these things.

He (Indra) saw Brahman in the pot, cloth, tree, monkey, man, sky, mountain, water, fire, and air, manifesting differently and functioning variously. He realised that that is the reality in this world-appearance. Thus contemplating Brahman with his own pure and purified consciousness, this Indra became immersed in meditation. Realising that Brahman was the celestial sovereignty in Indra, he ruled the universe.

Just as this Indra ruled the whole universe while remaining within the subatomic particle, even so there have been countless Indras and Universes. As long as one experiences the perceived object as something real and substantial, this world-appearance continues to flow. **This maya (world-appearance) will continue to flow with ever-changing appearance until the truth is realised, and only then will maya cease operate.** Whenever this maya malfunctions in whatever manner, remember it is only because of the existence of the ego-sense. Immediately the truth concerning the ego-sense is investigated and understood, this maya vanishes. For the reality or the infinite consciousness is totally free from the subject-object division, from the least trace of gross substantiality; it is pure void, with the infinite, unconditioned consciousness alone as its reality.

## section VI.2 - chapter 15 16

jagadastyahamarthe 'ntarahamasti jagaddhrdi anyonyabhavini tvete  
adharadheyavatsthite (15/12)

Bhusunda continued:

Just as the whole universe came into being in the very heart of the sub-atom, on account of Indra entertaining the notion of such a creation, wherever the ego-sense arises, there the world manifests itself. The ego-sense is the first cause of this world-illusion, which is comparable to the blueness of the sky.

This tree of world-appearance grows in space on the hill known as Brahman, on account of the latent tendencies or notions. Its seed is the ego-sense. The stars are its flowers. The rivers are its veins. The mountains are its leaves. The very essence of notions and limitations is its fruits. This world is but the expansion of the notion of its existence.

This world-appearance is like the vast expanse of water. The worlds appear in this ocean like ripples and waves. It expands on account of delusion, which obstructs self-knowledge, and therefore emancipation. It seems to be attractive and beautiful, on account of the constantly changing panorama of beings coming into existence, and perishing in it.

O celestial, this creation can also be compared to the movement of wind. Ego-sense is the wind, and its movement is the world. Just as such movement is non-different from the wind, as scent is inseparable from the flower, even so this ego-sense is inseparable from the world. **The world exists in the very meaning of 'ego-sense'; and the ego-sense exists in the very meaning of the word 'world'. They are thus interdependent.** If one is able to remove the ego-sense by means of one's awakened intelligence, he cleanses from his consciousness the impurity known as world-appearance.

O celestial, in fact, there is no such thing as ego-sense. It has somehow mysteriously arisen, without any cause and without substantiality. Brahman alone pervades everything. The ego-sense is false. Since the ego-sense itself is false, surely the world which appears to be real to the ego-sense is unreal, too. What is unreal, is unreal; what remains, is eternal and peace. You are that.

When I said this to the celestial, he entered into deep meditation. He attained the supreme state.

Vasistha said to Rama:

If the teaching falls on qualified heart, it expands in that intelligence. It does not stay in unqualified heart. From the ego-sense arises the notion 'This is mine', and this expands into the world-appearance. Thus, O sage, in this manner, sometimes even an ignorant person becomes immortal like this celestial. Immortality is attained only by the knowledge of the reality. There is no other means.

Vasistha continued:

O Rama, after this, I returned to the place, where the other sages had gathered in a conference. Thus have I narrated to you the story of the celestial's easy emancipation. Since I heard this from the lips of Bhusunda, eleven world-cycles have passed.

## section VI.2 - chapter 17 18

khavate 'ntarmrtapranah prananamantare manah manasa 'ntarjagadviddhi tile  
tailamiva sthitam (18/10)

Vasistha continued:

This mighty tree, known as creation, which yields the sweet and bitter fruits of happiness and unhappiness (or good and evil), ceases the moment the ego-sense is known to be false. He who knows the ego-sense to be false, and who thereby gains the state of perfect equanimity, never again comes to grief. When self-knowledge dispels the ignorant notion of the ego-sense, the ego-sense, which till then was believed to be a solid reality, disappears, and one does not know where it goes. Neither does one know where the prime mover of the body, which had also been assumed to be a solid reality, goes. The leaf (body) draws to itself the moisture (ego-sense) from the earth, but the sun (self-knowledge in which the ego-sense is seen to be false) evaporates it, and turns it into subtle water-vapour (Brahman). In the absence of the self-knowledge, however, the seed of ego-sense expands into a mighty tree in the twinkling of an eye, for in the seed is hidden the entire tree, with all its innumerable branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits. The men of wisdom perceive that the entire creation is hidden in the ego-sense.

Even death does not put an end to all this. When the notion of reality is transferred from one substance to another, that is known as death. Behold right in front of you now countless creations of countless beings which exist within those beings. There is mind within prana or life-force, and the world exists in the mind. At the time of death, this prana leaves the body, and enters into space. It is wafted here and there by the cosmic air. Behold these pranas (jivas) with all their notions (worlds) hidden within them, filling the entire space. I see them here in front of me with my inner eye of intelligence.

**The air in the entire space is filled with the pranas of the departed ones. Mind exists in those pranas. And the world exists within the mind like oil in seeds.** Just as the life-force (prana) is wafted in the wind in space, all these worlds are wafted in the mind, like the scent of flowers is wafted by air. These are seen only by the eye of intelligence, not by these physical eyes, O Rama. These worlds exist everywhere at all times. They are subtler than even space, for they are of the nature of the essence of notions. Hence, in fact, they are not wafted nor moved from one place to another. But, to each jiva (which is composed of the prana, mind, and notion combined), the notion it entertains of the world of its own creation is real, for that jiva firmly believes in the substantiality of that creation. When the objects on the bank of a fast-flowing river are seen reflected in the water, these objects appear to be agitated, too, though in fact they are not. Even so, these worlds within the jivas may be said to be in motion or unmoving. But, in the self, which is infinite consciousness, there is no such movement at all, even as when a pot is moved from one place to another, the space that is in it does not move from one place to another. So, this world only appears to be on account of the deluded belief in its existence. In reality, it is Brahman only, and it is neither created nor destroyed.

## section VI.2 - chapter 18

sacetano 'yah pinco 'ntah ksurasucyadikam yatha buddhyate buddhyate  
tadvajjivo 'jnastrijagadbhramam (28)

Vasistha continued:

Even if it is considered that this world arises in cosmic space, it is not experienced as such by those who dwell in it. The passengers in a boat move with it; but one who is seated in the boat, does not see another moving. Just as an efficient artist creates the illusion of distance in his painting or carving, even so, within a subatomic particle, the mind entertains the notions of immeasurable distance. Again, there is perversion of experience in regard to the smallness or largeness of objects. Similarly, there is the unreal experience of this world and what is known as the other-world, though all these are false. Out of all this arise false notions, such as 'This is desirable' and 'This is undesirable'.

A sentient being experiences the existence of his own limbs within himself by means of his own inner intelligence. Even so, the jiva (the cosmic being in this case) perceives the existence of the world of diversity within itself. The infinite consciousness is unborn and undivided like space; all these worlds are its limbs, as it were. **A sentient ball of iron may visualise within itself the potential existence of a knife and a needle, etc. Even so, the jiva sees or experiences within itself the existence of the three worlds though, this is no more than a delusion or false perception.** Even in the insentient seeds there is the potential tree with all its numerous branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits - though not as such diverse objects. Even so, all these worlds exist in Brahman - though not as such, but in an undifferentiated state. In a mirror (whether you regard it as sentient or insentient), the city is reflected (though you may also truthfully say that there is no such reflection in the mirror), and it is seen and also not seen; such is the relationship between the three worlds and Brahman. What is known as the world, is nothing but time, space, motion, and substantiality, and all these are non-different from the ego-sense, on account of their mutual interdependence.

What is seen here as the world is but the supreme self, which appears as the world without undergoing any change in its own true nature. It appears to be that which one conceives it to be at a particular time and place. All these apparent appearances arise in the mind as notions. Mind itself is nothing but consciousness. Hence, the appearance is false and not real. Concepts or notions (sankalpa), latent conditioning (vasana), and a living being (jiva) are non-different from the infinite consciousness; even if they are experienced, they are still unreal, except as the one reality which is the infinite consciousness. Therefore, when the unreal notion is done away with, there is emancipation or moksha. However, one cannot truly say that these worlds are wafted in air here and there, for all these are but false notions, with the infinite consciousness as their substratum and sole reality.

## section VI.2 - chapter 19

svasankalpena cetyokttam cidityaparanamakam anantam cetanakasam jivasabdena  
kathyate (2)

Rama asked:

O sage, kindly tell me the form, the nature, the location of the jiva, and its relation to the supreme self.

Vasistha replied:

O Rama, it is the infinite consciousness that is known as the jiva when it becomes aware of itself as the object on account of the notion it entertains of itself. It is also known as cit or pure consciousness. This jiva is neither a sub-atomic particle, nor is it gross and physical, nor void nor anything else. The omnipresent pure consciousness is known as jiva when it experiences its own being. It is more minute than an atom, and larger than the largest. It is all, and it is pure consciousness. That is known as the jiva by the wise. Whatever object is experienced here is but its own reflection so experienced by it. Whatever it thinks of from moment to moment, that it experiences then and there. Such experiencing is the very nature of the jiva, even as motion is the nature of wind. When such experiencing ceases, the jiva becomes Brahman.

On account of its nature as consciousness, when the jiva entertains the notion of ego-sense, it builds time, space, motion, and substance, and functions in and through the body. It then perceives all these unrealities within itself as if they were real, even as a person dreams of his own death. Forgetting its true nature, it then identifies itself with its own false notions. It assumes an accidental relationship with the five senses, and experiences their function as if such experience were its own. It shines as the purusa (indwelling presence) and virat (cosmic person), endowed with these five faculties. This is still the subtle and mental being, and this is the first emanation from the supreme being.

This person arises of his own accord, grows, decays, expands, and contracts, then ceases to be. He is of the nature of mind (notion or thought), and being subtle is known as the puryastaka (the eightfold city). This subtle being is small and large, manifest and unmanifest, and pervades everything inside and out. His limbs are eight - the five senses and mind for the sixth, the ego-sense and being-cum-non-being. All the vedas have been sung by him. By him have the modes or rules of conduct been laid down. All these prevail even today.

His head is the highest of all, his feet are the netherworld, space is his belly, all the worlds his sides, water his blood, the mountains and the earth are his flesh, the rivers are his blood vessels, the directions are his arms, the stars are his hairs, the cosmic winds his prana, his life-spark is the lunar sphere, and his mind is the aggregate of all notions. His self is the supreme self.

From this cosmic person or jiva, other jivas arise and are distributed throughout the three worlds. Brahma, Visnu, Rudra, and others are its mental creations. The manifestations of its thought-forms are the gods, and the demons, and the celestials. The jiva arose from consciousness, and that is its location. Thousands of such virat have arisen, and will arise in the future.

## section VI.2 - chapter 20 21

atra 'harartham karma kuryadanindyam kuryadaharam pranasamdharanartham pranah  
samdharyastattvajijnasanartham tattvam jijnasyam yena bhuyo na dunkham (21/10)

Vasistha continued:

The cosmic person is himself of the nature of a notion (or concept, thought, etc.). Whatever notion is entertained by him, appears to be embodied in the five elements in the cosmic space. Hence, O Rama, whatever appears to have been created, is regarded by the wise as the expansion of notions. The cosmic person is the original cause for all this world-appearance; the effect is of the same nature as the cause.

However, all this takes place in consciousness, not in unconsciousness. All these diverse creatures (from a worm to the god Rudra) have arisen from the original notion, just as a mighty tree grows out of a small seed. Though the universe has thus expanded from a minute sub-atom, the expansion or evolution is rooted in intelligence, not inertia. Just as the cosmic person has come to be manifest as this cosmos, even so have all things come into being, right down to the minutest atom.

But, in truth, there is nothing large nor minute. Whatever notion arises in the self, is experienced as if it were real. The mind arises in the lunar element, and the moon is created by the mind. In the same way, one jiva gives rise to other jivas. The wise consider jiva to be the essence in the sperm. In it hidden the bliss of the self which it experiences as if independent of itself. There arises in it its identification with the five elements for no apparent reason. Yet, the jiva continues to be jiva, not really limited by these elements. It is inside and outside these elements and their composition known as the body. But, veiled by its identification with the elements, it does not see its true nature, even as a man born blind does not see his way. Emancipation or moksa is the destruction of this ignorance, and the realisation of the independence of the jiva from these elements and the ego-sense.

O Rama, one should strive to be a jnani (man of wisdom or direct experience) and not a jnanabandhu, a pseudo-jnani. Who is a pseudo-jnani? He who who studies the scripture for pleasure or profit, like a sculptor studying art, and who does not live up to the teaching, is a pseudo- jnani. His scriptural knowledge is not reflected in his daily life. He is more interested in applying scriptural knowledge to promote his physical welfare and sensual happiness. Hence, I regard an ignorant man as superior to the pseudo- jnani.

Jnana or wisdom is self-knowledge; other forms of knowledge are but its pale reflections. **One should work in this world as much as is needed to earn an honest living. One should live (eat) in order to sustain the life-force. One should sustain one's life force only for the sake of acquiring knowledge. One should enquire into and how that which frees him from sorrow.**

## section VI.2 - chapter 22

asatah sasasrngadeh karanam margayanti ye vandhyaputrasya pautrasya  
skandhamasadayanti te (9)

Vasistha continued:

He is a jnani who is unaware of (or oblivious of) the consequences of actions, because he is established in self-knowledge, and ignores both the individualised mind and its objects. He is a jnani whose psychological conditioning has been utterly removed. His intelligence is free from perversion. His knowledge is such as does not lead to rebirth. He engages himself in the simple acts of eating and dressing, and in such spontaneous and appropriate actions which are free from desire and mental activity. He is known as a pandita.

The diverse creatures have no purpose for coming into being, or for their continued existence. They are not real entities, though they appear to be so. The causal relationship is brought in later on, in order to rationalise this unreal creation. Is there a purpose for the appearance of a mirage? **They who try to find the reason for the appearance of these optical illusions, are trying to ride on the shoulders of the grandson of the barren woman's son.** The only cause for these optical illusions or illusory appearances is non-perception, for they disappear when looked into. When rightly investigated and perceived, they are found to be the supreme self; but when they are perceived through the mind, the conditioned jiva arises. This jiva, when correctly investigated and looked into, is in fact the supreme self. When it is grasped by the mind, then it appears to be the jiva subject to all sorts of change, birth, decay, etc. They who have the direct experience of the cosmic being, do not perceive the diversity, even when their eyes behold the world. In their mind, even while it functions, there is no disorderly movement of thought or movement in different directions. Their mind is therefore no-mind, in which there is non-movement of thought. Their behaviour is non-volitional, like a dry leaf in wind.

The ignorant fool, who is bound to psychological conditioning, extols scripturally-enjoined action, because he is not spiritually awakened. His senses prey upon their objects. The wise one, however, restrains the senses, and remains centred in the self. There is no formless gold nor Brahman totally devoid of manifestation. However, emancipation is the removal of the concept of creation or manifestation. At the conclusion of this cosmic world cycle, there is, during the period of dissolution, one utter darkness, covering the entire creation. Even so, in the eyes of the wise ones, the whole universe is enveloped by the one reality of Brahman. The ocean is one homogeneous unit, in spite of diversity and motion within itself. There is but one Brahman which includes all this diversity and motion. There is the world within the ego-sense, and ego-sense within this creation; the two are inseparable. The jiva sees this creation within itself, without any cause or motivation. The bracelet is gold; when the bracelet is not seen as bracelet, it ceases, and gold alone is. Thus, the seers of truth do not live though living, do not die though dying, do not exist though existing. Their actions are non-volitional functions of the body.

## section VI.2 - chapter 22

tajjnajnayorasesesu bhavabhavesu karmasu rte nirvasanatvattu na vigeso 'stikascana (53)

Vasistha continued:

In every body, the jiva exists like a snowflake, apparently heavy and lunge in heavy and large beings, and light and subtle in small beings. The 'I' enters into the triangle in its own conception; and because it is aware of itself, it believes itself to be a body, though this is unreal and only appears to be real. In that triangle, which is the sheath of karma, the jiva, which is of the very essence of the sperm, exists in that body, just as fragrance exists in a flower. Even as the sun's rays spread throughout the earth, this jiva which is in the sperm, and which has entered the triangle, spreads itself throughout the body.

Though this jiva is everywhere, inside and outside, yet it has a special identification with this vital energy (sperm), which is therefore considered its special abode. Thus it exists in the very heart of beings; whatever it conceives of while thus existing in the beings, is the very experience it experiences. But, until it abandons all movement of thought in consciousness, and until it becomes of no-mind, it does not attain peace, and it does not cease to entertain the false notion of 'I am this'. Hence, O Rama, though you may still continue to entertain thoughts and feelings, if the I-ness or egosense ceases in you, you will remain like the space, and there will be peace.

There are sages of self-knowledge, who live and function in this world as if they were sculptured images. Their organs of action function here, though the world does not produce the least disturbance in their consciousness. He who lives like space here (which is unaffected by the activity that goes on within it), is freed of all bondage, and is liberated.

He who does not abandon his confirmed conviction in the existence of diversity, is not abandoned by sorrow. He who is happy with whatever dress is put on him, with whatever food he is fed, and with whatever resting place is offered to him, shines like an emperor. Though he appears to live a conditioned life, he is really unconditioned, for inwardly he is free and void. Though appearing to be active, he does not strive, but functions like one in deep sleep. **There is really no difference between the ignorant and the wise (the knower of the truth), except that the latter is free from the conditioned mind.** What appears as the world to the conditioned mind, is seen by the unconditioned as Brahman.

Whatever appears to be here, exists, perishes, and comes into being again. But you are that, O Rama, that has neither birth nor death. Once self-knowledge has arisen in you, this world-appearance is powerless to make any impression in you, even as a burnt seed does not give rise to a plant. Such a one rests in the self, whether he is active or inactive. Only he in whom the craving for pleasure has utterly ceased, experiences supreme peace, not one who has gained peace of mind by other means.

## section VI.2 - chapter 23

varamandhaguhahitvam silantah kitata varam varam marau pangumrgo na  
gramyajanasangamah (20)

Vasistha continued:

O Rama, devoid of desire or mental colouring, and free from mental conditioning, arise and proceed towards the supreme state, even as Manki did.

Your forbear Aja had invited me to a religious ceremony. As I descended from the air to attend this ceremony, I entered a dense forest which was dusty and hot. Whilst I was trying to go through that forest, I heard a wayfarer wail: "Alas, just as this sun burns everything, the company of the wicked is productive only of sorrow and sin. Let me go to that village yonder, and find some relief from fatigue."

As he was thus about to enter the next village, I said to him: "Welcome, O wanderer, who has not found the right path! You cannot find eternal satisfaction in this place inhabited by the ignorant, any more than you can quench your thirst by drinking salty water, which will only worsen your thirst. The ignorant wander aimlessly, and take to the wrong paths. They do not engage themselves in self-enquiry, nor do they disengage themselves from wicked action. They function like machines here. **It is better to be a snake in a dark cave; it is better to be a worm in a rock; it is better to be a lame deer in a desert (mirage) than to remain in the company of ignorant people.** Their company gives rise to momentary pleasure, but it is destructive of self. It is poisonous."

On my saying so, he said to me: "Lord, who are you? You are radiant like an emperor, though you do not have anything. Have you quaffed nectar? You are devoid of everything, and yet you are perfectly full. What is this form of yours, O sage, which seems to be nothing and yet everything, transcendental though seeming to rest on the earth? You are free from all desire and hope, and yet you appear to entertain desire and hope. In your consciousness, different concepts or notions arise, in accordance with your own wish, and this entire universe rests in you like a seed in a fruit. I am a pilgrim, by name Manki. I have wandered far, and I desire to return to my own abode. But I do not have the energy needed to return home. Lord, the great ones cultivate friendship at first sight. I feel that I am unable to overcome this world-illusion; pray, enlighten me."

I replied to him:

"O pilgrim, I am Vasistha. Do not fear. You have indeed reached the door to emancipation. You have sought the company of Man (who is characterised by self-enquiry), and therefore you have almost reached the other shore of this world-appearance. Hence, in your mind, dispassion has arisen, and there is peace. When the veils that hide the truth are removed, the truth shines by itself. Pray, tell me what you wish to know. How do you propose to destroy this world-illusion?"

## section VI.2 - chapter 24

avasyam bhaviparyantatadukhatvatsakalanyapi sukhinyevatidhukhani varam  
dukhanyato mune (5)

Manki said:

Lord, I have searched in the ten directions for one who could remove my doubts, but till now I have not found such a person. Today, by your company, I have obtained the highest blessing that falls to the lot of the most fortunate among beings.

In this world, all things come into being and perish, and therefore there is repeated experience of sorrow. **All the pleasures of the world inevitably end in sorrow. I therefore consider that sorrow is preferable to pleasure which leads to sorrow.** Being subjected to the repeated experience of pleasure and pain, my mind is filled with perverse notions, and it does not reflect the inner light of awakened intelligence. Tied to the latent tendencies born of such an ignorant life, the mind only leads me to sinful existence and activity. Thus have I wasted my days. This craving for pleasure never attains fulfilment, never finds satisfaction and, though all its aspirations end in failure, it (the craving) itself does not come to an end. In autumn, the leaves dry up and fall away, but the desire for pleasure does not - nor does the anxiety that arises in the heart and which subjects me to terrible calamities. Even he who is endowed with many blessings, and who enjoys prosperity, is reduced to a miserable state of existence. Such prosperity is often seen to be a bait to trap the unwary one in the pit of sorrow.

Since my heart is thus tainted with sinful tendencies and restlessness, the wise ones, seeing that I am only interested in sense-gratification, take no notice of me. In spite of all this, my mind still pursues its destructive course, since it has not been overcome by death. The darkness of my ignorance, in which the ego-sense thrives, has not yet been dispelled by the moonlight of the study of scriptures and company of enlightened beings. The elephant of ignorance in me has not yet met with the lion of knowledge. The grass of my karma has not encountered the fire of its destruction. The sun of self-enquiry has not risen in me to dispel the darkness of mental conditioning.

O sage, that which I intellectually understand to be nothing, yet appears to me to be a real entity or substance. My senses are eating me away. Even the knowledge of the scriptures seems to form one more veil, instead of helping me destroy the existing veils.

Thus, I am besieged by ignorance and confusion. Lord, tell me what is truly good for me.

## section VI.2 - chapter 25

vedanatma na so 'styanya iti ya pratibha sthira esa 'vidya bhramastvesa sa ca  
samsara atatah (8)

Vasistha replied:

Experience, thinking (entertaining notions, etc.), mental conditioning, and imagination, are meaningless, and are productive only of psychological distress. All the sorrows and misfortunes of life are rooted in, and rest in, sense-experience and thinking. This path of life or samsara is twisted and tortuous to the one who is ruled by psychological conditioning or latent tendencies. In the case of the awakened one, however, this samsara ceases along with the cessation of his mental conditioning.

There is nothing other than pure consciousness, even as there is nothing but pure void in space. **That there is something known as experiencer other than this pure consciousness is ignorance whose expansion is this samsara (world-appearance).** That which arises in the absence of observation disappears when the light of observation is directed towards it. Even so, this fictitious experiencing-self, which is but the reflection of the true self, vanishes when its true nature is examined.

The division created by objective consciousness ceases when the knowledge of the indivisibility of consciousness arises. Pots do not exist independently of clay, for pots are but modifications of clay. Objects are of consciousness; they are not different from consciousness as 'objects of consciousness'. That which is known through knowledge is non-different from that knowledge; the unknown is not known! Consciousness is the common factor in the subject, the predicate (knowing) and the object. Hence, there is nothing other than knowledge or consciousness. If it were otherwise, there could be no comprehension (i.e., of two totally different substances). Hence, even wood and stone are of the essential nature of consciousness, otherwise they could not be apprehended. Whatever there is in this world is pure consciousness. Though the objects (like wood and wax) may appear to be different, they are non-different from the observer's viewpoint, since it is the same observer that observes both of them, and the observer is consciousness.

The ego-sense that perceives the diversity is the creator of the division. The ego-sense is bondage, and its cessation is liberation. It is so simple. Where is the difficulty? The division 'has arisen' just as the vision of two moons arises in diplopia. In that case, how can it be said to have 'arisen'? It is false. Consciousness and inertness cannot be related to each other. Consciousness cannot become unconsciousness. It is consciousness alone which somehow thinks it is inert, and then the limitation bounces down into the conception of materiality, like a rock from a hill-top.

## section VI.2 - chapter 26

apekṣaiva ghaṇo bandha upekṣaiva vimukttata sarvasabdanvita tasyam visrantena  
kimipsyate (36)

Vasistha continued:

When one thus falls into this illusion of world-appearance, he is at once preyed upon by countless other illusions, which arise in the original illusion, just like insects arise after the rain. The mind is like a forest in spring. It is so dense with very many notions and concepts, that dense darkness prevails in it. On account of self-limitation or ignorance, people undergo countless experiences of pleasure and pain in this world.

There is no difference between the sage and the moon - both of them radiate joy. They are peaceful, cool, and tranquil, full of immortalising nectar, and they enable one to see. There is no difference between the ignorant and the child: they are motivated in their lives by whims and fancies, they do not reflect what was nor what will be, and they are devoid of right conduct.

No one, from the Creator down to the smallest insect, can attain supreme peace unless he acquires perfect control of the mind. By the mere investigation of the nature of bondage, it ceases to bind, even as the obstacles on the path do not hinder one who examines them carefully. Ghosts do not haunt one who is careful and who is awake. If you close your eyes, the vision of the external world is blotted out. If you remove the notion of the world from your consciousness, pure consciousness alone exists. This pure consciousness alone exists even now; the world is an unreal appearance, brought about by just a little agitation in it. It is the creation of the cosmic mind, as it were. This cosmic mind merely entertains the notion of such a creation, for it does not have the material substances needed for material creation! The world is a painting on the Brahman-canvas, without colours and without instruments. How then can it be said that this world has really been created - by whom, how, when, and where?!

The notion 'I am happy' experiences happiness, and the notion 'I am unhappy' experiences unhappiness. All these notions are but pure consciousness. As notions, they are false. Since the self or the infinite consciousness is unlimited and unconditioned, there is no agitation or movement in it. There are no desires, no attachment (dependence), and therefore no restlessness or movement in the self. **Dependence alone is bondage; non-dependence is freedom or emancipation. He who rests in what is indicated by the 'All', 'Infinite', or 'Fullness', does not desire anything.** When the physical body is as unreal as the body seen in a dream, what will the wise man desire for its sake?

In the spiritually awakened and enlightened state, the sage rests in the self; all his desires reach their fulfilment. O Rama, Manki heard all this, and entered into deep contemplation, having abandoned his delusion. He lived performing spontaneous and appropriate actions (pravahapatitam karyam - inevitable action; lit: the action of one fallen in a stream.)

## section VI.2 - chapter 27 28

athava vasanotsada eva 'sanga iti smrtah yaya kayacidyuktya 'ntah sampadaya  
tameva hi (28/25)

Vasistha continued:

In the self is unity and diversity, yet not unity or diversity as opposed to each other. How can one assert diversity in it? The one self exists - subtle and omnipresent, like space. It is undivided by the birth and death of bodies. 'I am the body' is delusion, not truth. You are the pure self or undivided consciousness. The subject (observer), the object (observed), and the predicate (observation), are but the modifications of the mind. The truth or the self is undivided by this division, and hence it is beyond contemplation (dhyana). All this is one indivisible Brahman, and there is no such thing as the world. How can illusion arise or exist at all? The deluded feeling that there is a world (either as a reality or as an illusion) has been dispelled by my instruction; there is no reason now for you to suffer bondage. In prosperity and adversity, be free, and live without ego-sense and desire.

Rama said: I wish to hear from you once again the truth concerning karma, or what is known as the divine will (fate).

Vasistha replied:

Divine will (fate - daivam) and karma are but concepts; the truth is that they are movements in consciousness. When there is such movement, the world-appearance arises; when the movement ceases, the world-appearance also ceases. There is not the least distinction between the movement and consciousness. There is not the least distinction between a person and his karma (action). A creature is known by its characteristic action, and such action reveals the character of the creature: they are inseparable. Hence, the words or concepts 'divine' (daiva), 'action' (karma), and 'person' (nara), are but expressions which denote movement in consciousness.

This movement in consciousness, along with the self-limitation in consciousness, serves as the seed for everything, but there is no cause or seed for the movement in consciousness. There is no distinction between the seed and the sprout; therefore, all this (body, etc.) is but movement in consciousness. This movement is obviously omnipotent, and hence is able to manifest the gods and the demons and other creatures, mobile and immobile, sentient and insentient. They who assert that a person and his actions (karma) are different and distinct, are animals in human semblance; salutation to them.

The seed which sprouts as the world, is the self-limitation or conditioning in consciousness. Burn that seed by non-attachment or freedom. Non-volitional action (non-action in action) is known as non-attachment or freedom. **Or, the uprooting of conditioning (vasana) is known as non-attachment or freedom. Attain this freedom by any means.** That means, by which you are able to destroy the seed of vasana, is the best. In this nothing but self-effort is of any avail.

## section VI.2 - chapter 29

yathakramam yathadesam kuru dukkhamadukkhitaḥ baspakrandadiparyantam  
dvandvayuktasukhani ca (4)

Vasistha continued:

O Rama, regard all actions everywhere as pure consciousness, and live with your vision introverted. In sorrow and in calamity, in dire distress and in pain, **remain free from sorrow within yourself, but behave as if in sorrow, in accordance with propriety, and in accordance with local etiquette, even shedding tears and wailing, and seemingly experiencing pleasure and pain.** While enjoying the company of your wife and participating in festivals, etc., manifest delight as if you were subject to mental conditioning. Engage yourself in funeral rites, and even in war, as one with limited understanding and ignorant. Acquire wealth and destroy your enemies, as ignorant people of limited understanding do. Be compassionate towards the suffering. Adore the holy ones. Rejoice in happiness. Grieve in sorrow. Be a hero among heroes. With your gaze turned inward, swimming in the bliss of the self, and with your heart and mind at peace, what you do, you do not do.

When you thus rest in the self, even the sharpest weapon cannot cut you (the self-knowledge). This self-knowledge is not cut by weapons nor burnt by fire, neither wetted by rain nor dried by wind. Cling to the pillar of self-knowledge, knowing the self to be free from old age and death. Thus rooted in self-knowledge, though active externally, you will not once again fall into the error of self-limitation, *vasana*. Lead an active life, though remaining inwardly as if in the deep sleep state.

Abandon all notion of division. Rest in self-knowledge with your awareness extending just a little outside. Thus, you are utterly at rest as if in deep sleep within yourself, whether you are active externally or not so active, whether you hold on to something or abandon something. You will then be totally free from all disharmony, since you realise the non-distinction between the waking and the deep sleep states. Thus, by the practice of self-awareness, which is beginningless and endless, you will gradually reach that supreme state of consciousness, in which there is no duality, and which is beyond all materiality. In it, there is neither unity nor diversity, but supreme peace.

Rama asked: If such be the truth concerning the ego-sense, O sage, how do you appear here, being called Vasistha? When Rama said this, Vasistha became totally silent. The members of the assembly were concerned.

Seeing this, Rama asked again: Why are you silent, O sage? There is nothing in the whole world which a holy sage is unable to answer.

Vasistha replied: I was silent not because I could not answer, but because silence is the only answer to your question.

## section VI.2 - chapter 29

dvividho bhavati prasta tattvajno 'jno 'thavapi ca ajnasya 'jnataya deyo  
jnasya tu jnatayottarah (32)

Vasistha continued:

**There are two types of questioners: the enlightened and the ignorant. One should answer the ignorant from the point of view of the ignorant, and the wise from the point of view of wisdom.** Till now, you were ignorant and, hence, you deserved only intellectual answers. Now you know the truth, and you rest in the supreme state, hence, intellectual and logical answers will no longer do for you. O Rama, all verbal statements (whether they are verbose or brief, whether their purport is subtle or transcendental) are all limited by logic, by duality and division.

Such tainted answers are not worthy of you, my dear one; and words are incapable of forming a pure and untainted statement. To one such as you, one should transmit the purest truth; and the purest truth is expressed only by complete silence. That silence, which is free from rational enquiry and mental activity, is the supreme state; hence, that alone was the appropriate answer to a question by a wise one like you. Again, all expression is the expression of the nature of one who expresses it. I am firmly established in the pure non-dual and indivisible consciousness which is the supreme state. How can I subject myself to the imperfection of expressing the inexpressible? Hence, I did not attempt to reduce the infinite to words which spring from mental activity.

Rama said:

I realise that all expressions are tainted with duality and limitation. Making due allowance for this, tell me who you are.

Vasistha replied:

I am the pure space-like consciousness, devoid of objective experience, and beyond all mental activity or thought. I am the pure and infinite consciousness. Even so are you. The whole world is that, too. Everything is the pure, indivisible consciousness. I am pure consciousness and nothing but that. Since there is nothing apart from that, I do not know how to describe that. It is when one endeavours to give expression to one's self that the ego-sense and all the rest of it arise, even if one's attempt is to attain total freedom. They call it the supreme state, in which one, though alive, behaves as if he were dead.

It is absurd for the ego-sense to seek this emancipation, for it can never comprehend the truth. The infinite consciousness surely stands in no need of realising the infinite consciousness! Either way, it is like the born blind, endeavouring to see a painting. That is nirvana (emancipation or freedom), in which one stands firm like a rock, whether or not there is agitation or movement in consciousness. He sees no 'other'. He is free from all desires and cravings. In him there is no 'I', 'you', or the 'other'. It is alone (all+one).

## section VI.2 - chapter 29

jnatvena jnatvamasadya munirbhavati manavah ajnatvadajnatametya prayati  
pasuvrksatam (66)

Vasistha continued:

The awareness of the infinite consciousness of itself is the mind. This itself is samsara and bondage, which lead to psychic distress. When the infinite consciousness remains itself as if unaware of itself, that is moksa or liberation. Mind, intellect, etc., are but modifications of pure consciousness, for they are mere words. In fact, the pure undivided consciousness alone exists. When pure consciousness alone exists, pervading everything inside and out, how does the notion of division arise, and where?

Is there a difference between pure consciousness and utter void? Even if there is, it is impossible to put it into words. I am the pure (space of) consciousness, if the notion of self-limitation (mental conditioning) ceases. However, since such limitation is but a notion, it cannot limit the infinite. When this understanding arises in one, though there is self-awareness, even that ceases, for there is no division between the observer and the observed. It is as if void is the ultimate truth!

Ignorance points to the hidden wisdom. Wisdom then destroys that ignorance and eventually that, too, comes to rest. That is the supreme state. **The wise muni (one who is inwardly silent), becomes a manava (Man) by self-knowledge. (Or, man becomes mumi.) Being ignorant, the ignorant become animals and trees.** I am Brahman' and 'This is the world' are deluded notions. They are not seen on enquiry or investigation. When light goes in search of darkness, darkness vanishes. The peaceful man of right understanding possesses all the senses, but since he is not swayed by false notions, he does not subject himself to their experiences. He lives as if in deep sleep.

All dreams end in deep sleep; similarly deep sleep ends in samadhi. All the objects of perception merge in knowledge, and everything is then seen as the one self. One who sees that all these objects are experienced only in the conditioned state of the mind, realises instantly that the self is unconditioned. Since, in the unconditioned, there is neither doership nor enjoyership, there is in reality no sorrow and no pleasure, no virtue, no sin, there is no loss to anyone. All this is pure void. Even the notion of ego-sense and mine-ness is void. All appearance is illusion, and it does not exist in us. One who sees this, engages himself in non-volitional action, or remains in complete silence (katha-mauna or the silence of a log of wood). He is Brahman. For the attainment of supreme peace, the embodied being has no other means.

## section VI.2 - chapter 30

citrasangarayuddhasya sainyasya ' ksubdhata yatha tathaiva samata jnasya  
vyavaharavato 'pi ca (5)

Vasistha continued:

The notion of 'I' is utter ignorance. It blocks the path to nirvana or liberation. Yet, the foolish man endeavours with the help of this darkness of ignorance to find the light of truth! The investigation of the ego-sense reveals its limitation and conditioned nature, or its total absence. It is found only in the ignorant, and not in the knower of truth. The knower of truth, on the other hand, exists in the embodied or disembodied state, without the least anxiety or sorrow, having totally abandoned the notion of the ego. **There is no fear of destruction in the battle painted on a canvas. Even so, when the knower of truth is established in inner equanimity, activity does not affect him.** In the case of the liberated sage, even the manifestations of conditioned behaviour are apparent, not real. As in the case of the mantle of a gas-lamp, which retains its form and shape though it has really been burnt to ashes, the liberated sage's personality is no-personality, his mind is no-mind, and his conditioning is truly unconditioned. It is Brahman and naught else. He who rests in total peace within, though apparently engaged in diverse activities externally, is a liberated one.

The elephants and chariots which float in the sky are but the cloud-formations which are cloud. The worlds that seem to exist are similarly nothing but the supreme self or Brahman. The cause of sorrow is therefore the acceptance of the unreal as the real, which arises from misunderstanding or deluded understanding of the real. The truth is that, on account of the ego-sense, the ignorant person experiences the existence of the world within it, though in reality he is the infinite consciousness. Just as a firebrand, when it is whirled around, creates illusory forms in space, whereas the only reality is the single spark of fire at the end of the stick, even so all these diverse forms are but the apparent appearances of the one indivisible Brahman or infinite consciousness. Let all this (the beginning and the end, the rising and the falling, space and time) exist as it pleases. One should rest in the inner peace.

The inert water is able to sustain the ship that carries a load across the water, and thus overcome the obstacle created by itself (the water). Even so, this inert world itself enables a man to cross this apparent world-appearance. That which is created by thought can also be destroyed by thought. Hence, attain fearlessness by realising that there is neither 'I' nor 'the other'. For, nothing called 'I' is discovered when one investigates the body, mind, etc. Abandon the pursuit of pleasure, engage yourself in enquiry, and be devoted to self-effort.

## section VI.2 - chapter 31

vasanaiveha purusah preksita sa na vidyate tam ca na preksate kascittatah  
sansara agatah (16)

Vasistha continued:

The infinite consciousness reflects itself as the infinite and unconditioned consciousness in all, and that alone is truly experienced in all. But when the notion of an object arises, and when that notion is confirmed by repetition, this consciousness manifests as the object, like the dream-objects which, though within oneself, appear in that dream to be objects. When a dream-object perishes, nothing is lost; when 'the world' or 'the I' is lost, nothing is lost. There is no sense even in condemning this world and the ego-sense. Who will extol or condemn an hallucination? Investigation alone is appropriate here. What remains is the truth. Remain firmly established in it.

This world-appearance is but a notion, and it is utterly dispelled by enquiry. What remains then is Brahman. To accept the reality of this world-appearance is like trusting the words of the barren woman's son. **The individual personality is vasana or mental conditioning, which disappears on investigation. However, in a state of ignorance, when one fails to observe it, this world-appearance arises.**

The body is the result of the permutation and combination of the five elements, and is inert. Even the mind, the intellect, and the ego-sense, are also of the same elements. When one is able to abandon the inert materiality of the mind, the intellect, and the ego-sense, one attains the pure unconditioned being. This is liberation.

The 'object' arises in the 'subject' but has no independent existence. Hence, even 'the conditioned state or being' is but a notion; it is not real. Therefore, it vanishes when enquired into. It is best to reject the notion and stop it from arising again by never thinking of it again. There is neither the subject (seer) nor an experiencer, neither the real nor the unreal. There is the supreme peace alone. One who is established in this peace, is free from likes and dislikes, though engaged in activity. Or, he may not engage himself in activity. When the mind is freed of all notions that limit the unconditioned consciousness, how does the sage act in a dualistic way? Free from love, hate, and fear, he exists as the immutable self, firmly established in the supreme peace.

The notion of 'object' which arises in the 'subject' is then experienced by the latter as different from it. In fact, the two (like the dreamer and the wuhful person) are indistinguishably one, like milk that is kept in two cups. The supreme self is free from all notions. Notions give rise to objects, and when the notions are abandoned, the objects cease to be.

## section VI.2 - chapter 32

ko 'ham kathamidam drsyam ko jivah kim ca jivanam iti  
tattvajnasamyogadyavajjivam vicarayet (18)

Vasistha continued:

When there is movement in the infinite consciousness, the notions of 'I' and 'the world' arise. These in themselves are harmless if one realises that in fact they are non-different from the self or the infinite consciousness. But, when they are considered real in themselves, and the world is perceived as real, then there is great misfortune.

Even this movement in the unconditioned is not a real entity. If it is unreal, how much more unreal are the notions that arise on account of such movement! It is as true as the dancing of the barren woman's son. Such movement arises in ignorance; it is ignorance. In the light of right understanding, it ceases.

In the same way, the ego-sense arises when its existence is conceived. When that concept is rejected, the ego-sense ceases to be. This is known as dhyana (meditation) and samadhi (super-conscious state). It is the unconditioned consciousness. Pray, do not fall into the net of duality and non-duality, etc. All such controversy and polemics only lead to sorrow and despair. When one pursues the unreal or impermanent, there is sorrow. When the conditioning of consciousness drops away, there is no sorrow, even as in sleep there is no sorrow. The consciousness that abandons conditioning realises its unconditioned nature. That is liberation.

With the help of my instructions, if you realise that the 'I' does not exist, then your understanding is firm and unshakable. The world and the 'I' exist only as notions, not as fact, nor as reality. They cease to be when one enquires "Who am I?" and "How has this world arisen?". The realisation of the non-existence of the 'I' is nirvana or liberation. The light of this realisation dispels the darkness of ignorance. **Therefore, one should enquire till the end of one's life: "Who am I?", "How did this world arise?", "What is jiva or the individual personality?", and "What is life?", as instructed by the knowers of the truth.** When you betake yourself to the company of the knowers of truth, the light of their self-knowledge dispels the darkness of ignorance and its retinue, including the ego-sense. Hence, keep their company.

Resort to these knowers of truth in privacy, not in public. For, when different people express different points of view, your understanding may be stunted or perverted. The wise man should approach the knower of truth in privacy, learn the truth, and contemplate that truth. This contemplation dispels the cloud of concepts and notions which cast a shadow on consciousness.

## section VI.2 - chapter 33

vacasa manasa cantah sabdarthavavibhavayan ye aste vardhate tasya kalpanopasamah sanaih (4)

Vasistha continued:

When one has attained wisdom through self-effort and with the help of the company of the holy ones, this world-appearance does not expand in his consciousness. Notions arise in one's consciousness and, when a counter-notion is raised, the former undergo radical mutation. The total abandonment of all notions or ideas is liberation, and such an abandonment is possible when the pursuit of pleasure is abandoned. **Notions and ideas gradually cease to arise and to expand in one who resolutely refrains from associating words with meanings, in his own mind - whether these words are uttered by others, or they arise in one's own mind.**

The abandonment of ego-sense is the cessation of ignorance; this and nothing else is liberation. Whether this world exists or does not exist, its apprehension or recognition by the mind leads to sorrow; its non-recognition is bliss. For all embodied beings there are two forms of disease: the first relates to this world, and the second relates to the other world. For illnesses which are related to life in this world, ignorant people try to find a remedy before their lives come to an end. But there are no such remedies for the problems connected with the life beyond. One cannot hope to remedy them in the other world, for such remedies do not exist in the other world. If one is unable to find a remedy for the dreadful disease known as ignorance here in this world, one can surely not find a remedy after leaving this world. Therefore, do not waste your time in trying to find futile remedies for the problems connected with your life in this world. By self-knowledge, rid yourself of the problems connected with the life hereafter. There is no time to lose, for life is ebbing away all the time.

If you do not uplift yourself from the mire of pleasure, you cannot find any other remedy. The fool who revels in pleasure invites sorrow and misfortune. Just as the strength of manhood manifests in the energy of childhood, the fullness of perfection (nirvana) begins with the effectiveness of self-discipline, or the abandonment of the pursuit of pleasure. The life stream of the knower of truth flows in harmony, while the life stream of the ignorant is full of whirlpools.

Universes arise in the infinite consciousness, like bubbles on the surface of the ocean. But they are non-different from the unconditioned existence. Brahman is beyond all description, and does not even have a 'nature' which can be conceived of. Hence, it is unwise to suggest that the manifestation of the universes is its nature! Creation, world, movement, of consciousness, etc., are mere words without substance. When such ideas are abandoned, the 'world' and the 'I' cease to be, and consciousness alone exists, pure and immutable. This unconditioned consciousness alone is, naught else is - not even the nature of diverse objects here. All such notions (concerning the nature of diverse objects) are the offshoots of delusion.

## section VI.2 - chapter 34

brahmaiva 'ham jagaccatra kuto nasasamudbhavau ato harsavisadanam kintveva  
kathamaspadam (22)

Vasistha continued:

That which is annihilated by happiness or unhappiness in life, is so annihilated; but that which is not annihilated, is not annihilated. This is the essence of the scriptural teachings. One who has desires undergoes pleasant and unpleasant experiences. If one wishes to get rid of the disease of such experiences, the only thing to do is to get rid of the desires.

There is no delusion in the supreme self that the 'I' and 'the world' exist. Who has invented these expressions and superimposed them on the pure void which is supreme peace? There is neither an 'I', nor the 'world', nor even 'Brahman'. All these are words. The only reality is supreme peace. Since this is the all, there is no division in it, nor a doer, nor an experiencer. For the sake of instruction, definitions are coined. That is the only truth that the self and the self alone is. But, just as the dream experiences of two people sleeping side by side are not the same, and one does not know what the other is dreaming about, one's understanding and inner experience are personal and unique.

Surely, it is consciousness as the self that is aware of everything in the universe. Hence, I am that consciousness; I, the world, and all things in it, are non-different from it. It is the one self that appears as the many, but because of ignorance, and because of the extreme subtlety of the self, this is not seen as such. It is the self that sees this universe within itself as if the universe had a form, though in fact it has no form. All distinctions, like sentient, insentient, etc., though they are not real, are intended only for the instruction of seekers.

The notion 'I' arises in Brahman accidentally (like the crow alighting on the cocoanut tree and the cocoanut falling down without causal relationship). In truth, **I am Brahman, the world is Brahman, there is neither a beginning nor a ceasing. Hence, where is the reason to rejoice or to grieve?** Because the Lord is omnipotent, some things appear to be sentient and others insentient. But there are no such divisions in Brahman. This creation appears to be a limb of the Lord, and there appears to be a causal relationship, but this is not true, for in Brahman there does not exist anything which can be referred to as its nature.

Dualistic experience is bondage, and liberation is its abandonment. If such experience is abandoned, all divisions between the seer (subject) and the seen (object), the observer and the observed, cease. Movement in consciousness is considered creation; and when that movement is seen to be false and non-existent, there is nirvana. Brahman is unconditioned and unmodified. The entire universe is absolute Brahman, without any division whatsoever.

## section VI.2 - chapter 35

udyatsvapi jagatsvesa santameva 'vatisthate aniccha eva mukurah  
pratibimbatesviva (38)

Vasistha continued:

The infinite consciousness, O Rama, is everywhere, and hence it seems to go from one part of the universe to another in the twinkling of an eye. Whatever be the activity you are engaged in, remain established in the unconditioned self. The characteristic of ignorance is that it is not found on enquiry or investigation. If it can be seen or observed, then it will become knowledge. When, thus, ignorance does not exist, then surely there is no division in consciousness.

Brahman alone exists as if it were the world, the one as if divided, the pure as if impure, the full as if void, the void as if full, movement as if stable and vice versa, the unmodified as if modified, the tranquil as if restless, the reality as if non-existent, consciousness as if inert, the self as if the object, the not-self as if the self, the eternal as if perishable, the unknowable as if knowable, the obvious as it shrouded in darkness - and though it is all existence, it is difficult to see it.

The infinite is unconditioned, and therefore it does not seem to exist anywhere in particular. In it, there is no division as doer, action, instrument, and cause. It exists as all, everywhere, at all times. It is invisible, but ever in front of you. There is no distinction in it between consciousness and inertia. I am, and I am even the notion 'I am not'; if there is another, that too I am.

All these universes appear to be in the infinite consciousness, though no such appearance or division is possible in it. It is as if this consciousness wished to see itself, and thus became its own mirror, in which it reflected itself, without any such intention. Thus, the pure being becomes its own toert reflection - the universe. The infinite consciousness itself is known as the world.

All the substances or material creatures arise in it; they shine in it, and they are absorbed into it. The whole world is a painting, and this consciousness itself is the pure and colourless paint with which the world has been painted. The objects seem to be subject to creation and destruction, but consciousness is eternal and unconditioned. **Though thousands of worlds appear to arise in this consciousness, it remains at peace, for in it there is no intention to create, even as a mirror remains unaffected by the many reflections seen in it.** This infinite consciousness is the unintentional and non-volitional (non)cause of the appearance of the world, now and of the world to come. When it opens its eyes, the worlds arise, and when it closes its eyes, the worlds disappear.

## section VI.2 - chapter 36

sastropadesaguravah preksyante kimanarthakam  
kimicchananusandhasamadhiraadhigamyate (34)

Vasistha continued:

Just as a child's hallucination is not experienced by me, but is real for the child, there is no creation in my consciousness. Since the forms, the vision, and the intelligence, which comprehends them are pure consciousness, only that exists, not the universe. I do not perceive the ego-sense, etc., but I realise the existence of the pure consciousness or absolute peace. Know that even these words of mine are pure consciousness, and that this dialogue exists in the plane of your own consciousness.

That is known as the supreme state in which no desire arises. The sage who is free from desire, functions here as if he were made of wood. He experiences pure void within and pure void without; to him the world is like an empty reed. He who is not enamoured of this world, and whose heart delights in the cosmic being alone, is at peace, and he has overcome this ocean of samsara. Having overcome desire and abandoned latent tendencies or mental conditioning, speak what is to be spoken, touch what is to be touched, taste diverse flavours, see diverse scenes, and smell diverse scents.

It is only by thus understanding the essencelessness of the objects of experience that one becomes free from the disease of desire. The arising of desire is sorrow, and the cessation of desire is supreme joy; there is no sorrow and no joy comparable to them, even in hell and in heaven. The mind is desire, and the cessation of desire is moksa (liberation) - this is the essence of all scriptures. If this desire cannot be overcome by self-effort, then surely it is powerful, and no other remedy is of any use! If you cannot overcome desire completely, then deal with it step by step. The wayfarer does not despair at the sight of the long road ahead, but takes one step at a time. Desire alone is samsara or the world-appearance which is an extension or projection of one's desire; its non-cognition is liberation. Hence, one should diligently strive to overcome desire; all else is vain. **Why does one vainly study the scriptures and hear the instructions of the preceptors? There is no samndhi without the cessation of desire!** If one finds that it is impossible to overcome desire by his own wisdom, then of what use is the study of scriptures or the instruction of the preceptor? Once this restlessness caused by desire is restrained, then very little effort is needed to attain self-knowledge. Hence, let everyone strive by every means to overcome desire, which is the seed for birth, old age and death. With the arising of desire, bondage arises; and with the cessation of desire, bondage ceases. Let, therefore, the seed of desire be burnt in one's own heart, by the fire of peace, equanimity, and self-control.

## section VI.2 - chapter 37

grahyagrahakahasambandhah svanistho 'pi na labhyate asatastu katham labbah kena labdho 'sitah sasi (6)

Vasistha continued:

Yoga is getting rid of the poison of desire. I have already dealt with it, and I shall tell you again, so that it may be very clear.

Even if you desire to have something, there is nothing other than the self. What would you desire? Consciousness is subtle, like space, and indivisible; that itself is this world. How do you desire and what? There are no objects which can be desired. **We do not see, either, if there is a distinction and relationship between gain (of an object) and its possessor. How is an unreal substance gained? Who has obtained a black moon?** When thus the nature of the gain and its possessor is clearly understood, we do not know where they disappear!

When the distinction between the seer, sight, and the scene, is also seen to be non-existent, the ego-sense, etc., are merged in the self or consciousness. In nirvana or liberation, there is no seer, nor sight, nor scene; when the latter exist, there is no nirvana. The illusory appearance of objects is of no practical use: a shell that looks like silver has no cash-value. When you affirm the reality of the illusory appearance, you invite unhappiness; when its unreality is realised, there is great happiness.

There is not even a cause-and-effect relationship between any two things here, because the one infinite consciousness alone is real. 'Cause' and 'effect' are words which indicate nothing. What is the cause of the liquidity of water or movement of air? There is no sorrow, no happiness, since the whole world is the Lord. There is nothing other than unconditioned consciousness. How then can desire arise?

Rama asked:

If all that is, is Brahman, or the infinite consciousness, then surely desire is also that! Where is the justification for injunctions and prohibitions?

Vasistha replied:

Once the truth is realised, then desire is Brahman, and nothing else. But, O Rama, as and when self-knowledge or the knowledge of the truth arises, at that very moment desire ceases, even as darkness vanishes at the very moment the sun rises. When the sun of self-knowledge arises, the sense of duality ceases along with vasana or mental conditioning. How can desire exist in that state? In the man of self-knowledge, there is neither an aversion to objects, nor attraction, nor desire for them; the absence of taste for them is natural.

## section VI.2 - chapter 37

pratishedhavidhinam tu tajjno na visayah kvacit santasarvaisanecchasya ko 'sya  
kith vaktti kimkrte (31)

Vasistha continued:

If the man of self-knowledge entertains any desire at all, it is accidental and causeless, or it is at the request of others. Such desire is Brahman. However, this much is certain: a desire does not arise in the wise man. **Injunctions and prohibitions do not apply to the man of self-knowledge. Who will wish to give what instruction to one in whom all desires have ceased?** In fact, these are the signs by which one recognises the knower of truth: in him desire has been greatly weakened, and he is devoted to the happiness and joy of all.

When the objects are understood to be essenceless, and there is no taste for pleasure, desire does not arise - and that is liberation. When the enlightened person goes beyond the notions of unity and duality, he treats desire and non-desire as equal and divine. He is free from agitation, and rests in the Lord in peace. He is not interested in doing anything, nor is there anything for him to gain by refraining from doing something. Nothing matters any more: desire or non-desire, truth or falsehood, self or another, life or death. In such a person, no desire arises; and if a desire does arise, it is Brahman.

He to whom there is neither joy nor sorrow, who rests in peace, and who is inwardly unagitated, he is enlightened. He is able to transform even sorrow into joy. When one is firmly established in the realisation of the truth, then space rests in space, peace in peace, auspiciousness in suspiciousness, void in void, the world in Brahman. The false ego-sense vanishes.

If the world appears to be, it is surely like the city which appears in the imagination of someone else. It is an illusory appearance. The ego-sense is unreal, though it appears to be real. This world-appearance is neither real nor unreal; it is indescribable. Hence, though it is true that the knower of truth is not affected by desire or by non-desire, I think it is preferable that, even in his case, the desire does not arise. For the mind is movement in consciousness as it becomes aware of itself; that itself is samsara and also desire. To be free from it is liberation. Knowing it thus, let desire be abandoned.

In truth, however, whether there is desire or no desire, whether there is creation or cosmic dissolution, there is no loss of anything to anyone here. Desire and non-desire, truth and falsehood, existence and non-existence, happiness and sorrow - all these are but notions which arise in space, but which do not give rise to anything. But he is regarded as a candidate for liberation in whom desire is weakened day after day. No other remedy in the world can remove the dreadful pain caused in the heart by desire.

## section VI.2 - chapter 37

kalo jaganti bhuvananyahamaksavarga stvam tani tatra ca tatheti ca sarvamekam  
cidvyoma santamajamavyayamisvaratma ragadayah khalu na kecana sambhavanti (84)

Vasistha continued:

No remedy other than self-knowledge or the knowledge of the truth is effective in getting rid of desire. It is vain to deal with it with the help of remedies which are themselves based on falsehood (like the ego-sense, etc.).

Consciousness appears to become inert matter on account of the ego-sense. Thus arise the mind and the body. Yet, because it is consciousness, it experiences itself (though now as the body) without abandoning its reality as consciousness. Hence, this creation (of the world, the body, etc.) is neither true nor false.

The earth is void, the mountains are void, the solid substances are void, the worlds are void, movement is void, and even the experience of this creation is void. Hence, this world-appearance does not arise nor cease. In this ocean of infinite consciousness, worlds are like waves and ripples, non-different though appearing to be different, arising without any reason or cause whatsoever, and yet not arising in truth, nor ever ceasing to be. In the infinite consciousness, it is impossible for an object other than itself to arise at all.

The yogis or the perfected beings can make the whole world a void, and also convert the void into the world in the twinkling of an eye, with the help of the magic potion known as consciousness. There are countless such worlds created by these siddhas (perfected beings) in space, countless creations, all of which are but pure, infinite consciousness. Enlightened yogis even travel from one such creation to another.

All such creation is non-different from consciousness, like fragrance and flower, yet they appear to be different. Their appearance in the infinite consciousness is illusory. Since they are apprehended by the notions that arise in every observer, they are experienced in accordance with those notions. In the yogis, these notions are greatly weakened and, therefore, they see the truth, and their statements are close to truth. In the case of the others, their declarations are coloured by their own notions or mental conditioning.

O Rama, time sets the worlds in motion, and in them the fictitious 'I', 'you', 'they', 'there', and 'thus'. All this is one pure infinite consciousness, which is supreme peace, uncreated and undecaying. This is the Lord, the self. How and in whom do desire and all the rest of it arise?

## section VI.2 - chapter 38

cinmayatviccитай cetyam jalamapsviva majjati tenanubhuvati nanyatha  
kasthayoriva (10)

Vasistha continued:

Consciousness sees in itself its own self as if it were its own object. Though creation is regarded as twofold - the creation by Brahma, and the creation by one's mind - they are essentially the same, because both of them spring from the self or infinite consciousness. It is the awareness inherent in consciousness that makes this notion of creation appear to be outside of consciousness. Hence, we see no difference between subjective idealism and absolute idealism.

All these diverse objects arise in the infinite consciousness, exist in it, and are non-different from it. It is because of this truth that experience of these diverse objects arises. **Since both the subject and the object of experience are consciousness, the object merges in the subject, like water with water. Thereby, experience arises. Otherwise, if this were not so, there could be no experience, as between two pieces of wood.** In the object, there exist the various elements - earth, water, etc. In the subject, there exist life-force, mind, jiva, etc. But these are not pure consciousness. They are the apparent appearances that arise in consciousness. Hence, they are in fact unreal. Since the unreal can have no existence, it is clear that the reality or the infinite consciousness or Brahman alone exists.

When the dream-objects of the person sleeping next to you come to an end on account of the dreamer waking up, you do not lose anything. To the one who has risen above the ego-sense, the whole universe appears to be worth less than a blade of grass. Such a person is not tempted by anything in the three worlds, and to him the status of even the gods is worth less than that of a piece of hair. Unto him, duality or diversity is unreal and false.

When thus the whole universe is void in the eyes of the wise man, how does desire arise in his heart? To him even life and death are non-different. On examination, even the body, etc., are seen to be unreal and false. When even the mind has ceased with the cessation of notions concerning the body and the world, the self or the infinite consciousness alone remains.

The ego-sense seems to arise only in the absence of such investigation into the nature of truth. When one enquires into it, the ego-sense ceases, and there is pure infinite consciousness. The mind is freed from objectification. Daily life is transmuted into divine life. Whatever you do, whatever you enjoy - all that becomes divine. Desireless and free from delusion, remain established in self-knowledge. Since there are no other motivations, let the scriptures guide your conduct.

## section VI.2 - chapter 39

taistu yo vyavaharo 'me tadbrahma brahmani sthitam te yatpasyanti pasyantu  
tattairalamalam mama (29)

Vasistha continued:

He in whom the veil of ignorance has been rent asunder, and in whom there is no desire, shines with the light of pure intelligence. All his doubts are at rest, and he illumines all around him. He who comes into contact with him who is free from doubt, and who is independent (free from all dependence), is also purified and illumined.

The notion of the reality of the objects of this world arises only in ignorance. If it is realised that the objects are unreal, how does desire for them arise? Even 'creation' and 'liberation' are words without meaning. But this world is consciousness; if that were not so, neither 'I' nor 'that' could be comprehended.

Real peace is attained when one does not apprehend ego-sense, and all the rest of its retinue, including sorrow. In deep sleep, there are no dreams; and the state of deep sleep is not experienced during dreams. Even so, the apprehension of ego-sense, sorrow (born of the notion of world- appearance), and peace (born of nirvana), do not exist at the same time. All these are but notions; in truth, there is neither creation nor nirvana, neither sleep nor dreams. When all these are rejected, there is real peace.

Confusion or delusion is unreal, and the unreal does not exist. That which is not found on investigation does not exist. What is realised on investigation is one's true nature, which alone exists, and there is no diversity in it. When one moves away from one's real nature, there is great sorrow; when one rests in the self, there is great peace and self-control.

The elements (the senses, mind, etc.) act only with the help of their own other counterparts (light, space, etc.). The self or the infinite consciousness does not do anything, and is not involved in activities. They who consider this world real, do not have self-knowledge, and to them we are 'unreal'. In me, there is pure awareness of the one cosmic consciousness, and even the activities of the world appear non-different from it - just as movement is non-different from the wind. In their mind, my body seems to be real; but to my illumined intelligence, their physical existence is unreal, as it is to a sleeping person. **My relationship with them is also Brahman, which exists in Brahman. Whatever be their vision, let it be so; that is all right for me.** Since all this is pervaded by Brahman, I do not exist as 'I'. Even these words apparently arise, for your sake. In the heart of such a knower of truth, there is neither desire for pleasure nor desire for liberation. Neither liberation, nor wealth etc., is of any use to him who is established in the realisation that 'I am not, nor is the world'.

## section VI.2 - chapter 40 41

yajjagrati susuptatvam bodhadarasavasanam tam svabhavam vidustajjna  
mukttistatparinama (41/14)

Vasistha continued:

O Rama, that is called the self (svariiipain) which knows external forms and internal psychological states. When the not-self is weakened and self-nature expands, in the light that then arises, the world is realised as a mere experience. When one is fully established in the self, then this world-appearance ceases, like a dream during deep sleep.

Knowing that pleasures are dreaded diseases, that relatives are bondage and wealth (artha) is the source of unhappiness (anartha), one should rest in the self. The not-self is samsara, and resting in the self is supreme good. Hence, one should be oneself, as the void of consciousness. I am not the self, nor the objects, nor the world-appearance; I am Brahman, the supreme peace into which I have entered. You alone are aware of the 'you'; I see only the supreme peace. The Brahman-consciousness does not know the creation-consciousness and vice versa, even as the dreamer does not know the sleep state and one asleep does not experience the dream-state. The enlightened person sees both Brahman and the world as the waking and the dreaming states. Hence, he knows all these as they are.

As surely as it is a certainty that, where there is sunlight, there is illumination, where there is experience of the essencelessness of the worldly objects, there occurs spiritual awakening. The only reality here is that the supreme essence of cosmic consciousness dances in every atom of existence. Who can measure the immeasurable or count the infinite? This delightful cosmic dance that you see in front of you, O Rama, is but the play of the infinite consciousness. The sleeping person, when he is not in deep sleep, becomes the field for the play of dreams; in the same manner, the self when it is not in self-knowledge, appears to become the seed for this world-appearance. Contemplate the self, and live in the waking state as if fast asleep, free from psychological distress.

**When one is spiritually awakened, and when one lives with his wakeful state resembling deep sleep, the state in which he is, is known as svabhdva (self-nature), and this state leads one to liberation.** One who is established in Brahman, and who does not see a distinction between Brahman and the 'world', lives in this world, too, without creating a division between subject, object, and predicate, and therefore without a sense of doership. In his eyes, everything appears as it is, and there is neither unity nor diversity.

An imaginary city is imagination, not a city. This world-appearance is appearance, not the world. The reality is infinite consciousness or Brahman.

## section VI.2 - chapter 42

vicarasamasatsangabalipuspaikapujitah sadyo moksaphalah sadho svatmaiva  
paramesvarah (30)

Vasistha continued:

The world-appearance arises in ignorance, and wisdom puts an end to it. But all this is meaningless to the reality itself, which neither arises nor ceases. That reality is the indivisible, infinite consciousness, apart from which nothing is. That seems to undergo polarisation within itself, thus becoming aware of itself as its own object; this seems to create a division and partial knowledge, which is ignorance. Such awareness is inherent in consciousness, but it is non-different from consciousness.

The distinction between the world and its Lord is verbal and false. In the indivisible, infinite consciousness, no such distinction is meaningful. On account of the illusory notions of time and space, somewhere at some time, gold appears to have become a bracelet; even so does the notion of a creation arise in consciousness. When thus even duality is non-existent, investigation into the causal relationship between the Creator and this creation becomes meaningless.

When what exists is realised as it is (i.e., as the indivisible consciousness), the world-appearance ceases. Remain firmly established like a rock in the realisation of this truth, while functioning as an intelligent being here. Worship the self which is the supreme Lord with all your natural actions and experiences, including your wisdom. Worshipped with these articles, the self instantly bestows upon you the boon of spiritual unfoldment; in comparison, the worship of gods like Rudra and Visnu is worthless. **The self, which is the Lord, immediately confers moksa or final liberation when worshipped with enquiry into the nature of self, with self-control and satsanga (company of the wise).**

Perception of the reality is the best form of worship. When the Lord exists as the self, only a fool worships others. Worship of the gods, pilgrimage, austerity, etc., are said to confer their blessings if they are performed with wisdom or viveka. Surely, it is this wisdom that is vital in all these. Is it not sufficient then to worship the self with viveka itself? With this wisdom, get rid of body-consciousness, and along with it, shame, row, despair, pleasure, and pain. Wisdom reveals consciousness as the self, but in the absence of objects like body, etc., this consciousness enters into supreme peace, which is indescribable. To describe it is to destroy it. And to rest content with the knowledge gained from the scriptures, considering oneself to be enlightened, is like the vain imagination of the born-blind. When the unreality of the objects is understood, and it is realised that consciousness is not the object of knowledge, then there is enlightenment, which is beyond description.

## section VI.2 - chapter 43

ajnavabuddhah samsarah sa hi nasti managapi avakistam ca yatsatyam tasya nama  
na vidyate (21)

Vasistha continued:

The characteristic of one who is free from the fever of ignorance, and whose heart is calm and cool on account of self-knowledge, is that he is not tempted by pleasure. Enough of all this talk about knowledge and wisdom, which are words and the notions indicated by those words, without a corresponding truth. Nirvana or liberation is the non-experience of ego-sense. Let this truth be clearly understood.

Just as the man who is awake does not derive any pleasure from the objects he saw during his dream, we do not derive any pleasure from the objects of this world-appearance. Just as vampires and goblins arise in a dark forest, all these fourteen worlds arise in the darkness of ignorance and delusion. When the truth is investigated, the goblin is seen not to exist; and when the truth concerning these fourteen worlds is investigated, they are seen to be pure consciousness. The objects surely do not exist independently, and hence they are unreal; they are pervaded by the consciousness which is the subject. But, then, since there is no object in relation to which consciousness can be considered the subject, the latter too can be said to be non-existent as the subject. Something which cannot be described exists.

Remain as the pure consciousness. Drink the essence of self-knowledge. Rest free from all doubts in the garden of nirvana or liberation. Why do you, O men, roam this forest of samsara, which is devoid of any essence? O deluded people, do not run after this mirage known as hope and desire for happiness in this world. Pleasures are pain in disguise. Why do you not see that they are the sources of your own destruction? Do not be deluded by this illusory world-appearance. Behold this delusion, and enquire into it. You will then rest in your own self, which is beginningless and endless.

**The ignorant regard this samsara as real. In reality, it does not exist at all. What does exist after this appearance is rejected, is in fact the truth. But it has no name!** Like a lion, break away from this cage of ignorance, and rise above everything. To abandon the notions of 'I' and 'mine' is liberation; nothing else is liberation. Liberation is peace. Liberation is extinction of all conditioning. Liberation is freedom from every kind of physical, psychological, and psychic distress.

This world is not seen by the ignorant and by the wise in the same light. To one who has attained self-knowledge, this world does not appear as samsara, but as the one infinite and indivisible consciousness. The man of self-knowledge is awake to that which is non-existent to the ignorant. That which is real to the latter is non-existent to the enlightened.

## section VI.2 - chapter 43

tajjnasyakrstamuktasya samam dhyanam vinga sthithi nimnam vinaiva toyasya na sambhavati kacana (36)

Vasistha continued:

The knower of truth experiences the world just as the man born blind 'sees' the world in his dreams and sees nothing in deep sleep. His heart and mind are cool with the extinction of the fire of desire. **Since the mind of the knower of truth is freed from attraction, it is in a state of perfect equilibrium, even when he is not 'practising meditation', even as the waters of a pool remain undisturbed when there are no outlets.**

The object is (externalised) mental activity, and mental activity is the impression formed in intelligence by the object. Just as the same water flows in different streams with different names till it reaches the ocean, the same consciousness is both the diverse objects and the corresponding mental action. The object and the mind are thus non-different. When either is not, both of them cease. Both of them are essenceless. Therefore, when they cease, there is peace. The knower of truth abandons them, though by this he loses nothing, for 'object' and 'mind' are but words without corresponding entities. What is, 'is' the infinite consciousness.

To the man of self-knowledge, what the ignorant man thinks real (time, space, matter, etc.) are non-existent. Just as in the eyes of a brave man there is no goblin, in the eyes of the wise man there is no world. But to the ignorant man, even the knower of truth is ignorant.

O Rama, do not get involved in notions of matter and mind, for they are false. Rest in your own self. It is consciousness alone which assumes these apparent 'forms', like the seed which grows into the diverse parts of the tree. When these objects are dropped, what remains (consciousness) is indescribable, for, to call it 'consciousness', is to limit it.

Matter and mind are identical; and both are false. You are deluded by this false appearance. Self-knowledge will dispel this delusion. Both self-knowledge and the cessation of world-appearance are the characteristics of wisdom (bodham or awakening). The ego-sense, which arises in the absence of the extinction of desire, is conducive to sorrow.

Right from the roots, the entire tree with all its branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits, is but one and the same tree. In the same way, consciousness alone is all, indivisible, and unmodified. Just as ghee, by its very nature, hardens like stone (when frozen), consciousness 'freezes' into matter. However, in the infinite and unmodified or unconditioned consciousness, such modification is impossible; the conditioning is but a false notion. Therefore, it melts away in the heart of one who has self-knowledge, and who is free from delusion and ego-sense.

## section VI.2 - chapter 44

samadhibijam samsaranirvedah patati svayam cittabhuma vivikttayam  
vivekijanakanane (5)

Vasistha continued:

I shall now describe the tree known as samadhana (equanimity), which grows in the forest known as the heart of the wise.

Its seed is a turning away from 'the world', whether this is caused naturally or otherwise by the experience of sorrow. Mind is a field. It is ploughed by right action, it is watered day and night by right feeling, it is nourished by the practice of pranayama. **On this field, known as the mind, the seed known as samadhi (turning away from the world) falls of its own accord when one is alone in the forest known as wisdom.** The wise man should endeavour constantly to keep this seed of meditation watered and nourished, by intelligent methods.

One should seek the company of the wise who are one's own real wellwishers, and who are pure and friendly. Then, one should water the seed of samadhi or meditation by means of hearing, reflecting on, and contemplating the scriptures, which bring about total inner emptiness, and which are full of wisdom, pure and cool like nectar. Being aware of the precious seed of meditation or samadhi that has fallen in the field of one's mind, the wise man should carefully cherish and nourish it by means of austerities, charity, etc.

When this seed begins to sprout, it should be further protected by peace and contentment. At the same time, one should guard it against the birds of desire, attachment to family, pride, greed, etc., with the help of contentment. With the broom of right and loving action, the dirt of rajasic restlessness must be swept away, whereas the darkness of tamasic ignorance must be driven away by the light of right understanding.

The lightning known as pride of wealth, and the thunderstorm known as pursuit of pleasure, strike the field, and devastate it. These should be prevented with the trident of magnanimity, compassion, japa, austerity, selfcontrol, and contemplation of the significance of the pranava (Om).

If it is thus protected, this seed grows into wisdom. With it, the entire field of the mind shines beautifully. The sprout grows two leaves. One is known as study of scriptures, and the other is satsanga (company of the men of wisdom). Soon it will grow the bark, known as contentment, with the sap known as dispassion or uncolouredness of mind. Fed by the rain of scriptural wisdom, it will soon grow into a tree. Then it is not easily swayed, even if it is shaken by the monkeys known as raga-dvesa (attraction and aversion). Then there arise in it the branches known as pure knowledge, which reach out far and wide. Clarity of vision, truthfulness, courage, unclouded understanding, equanimity, peace, friendliness, compassion, fame, etc. , are its other branches that arise when one is fully established in dhyana or meditation.

## section VI.2 - chapter 44

kadacinnirvrtim yati sa samam ca tarau kvacit manoharinako rajannajivamiva  
bhasvati (49)

Vasistha continued:

The tree of meditation casts a cool shade in which all desires and cravings come to an end, and all the burning distress ceases. Meditation expands the shade of self-control, which promotes steadiness of the mind.

A deer known as the mind, which had been wandering in the wilderness of countless concepts, notions, and prejudices, and which somehow finds the right path, takes shelter under this tree. This deer is pursued by its many enemies, who covet its hide or covering. It hides itself in thorny bushes, known as the body, in an attempt to save itself. All this effort wears out its energies. Running hither and thither in the forest of samsara, harassed by the winds known as vasana or latent tendencies, and scorched by the heat of egosense, the deer is afflicted by interminable distress.

This deer is not easily satisfied with what it gets. Its cravings multiply, and it continues to go out far, in search of satisfaction of those cravings. It gets attached to the many pleasure-centres, known as wife, children, etc., and it wears itself out in looking after them. It is caught in the net of wealth, etc. , and it struggles to free itself. In this struggle, it falls down again and again, and injures itself. Borne down by the current of craving, it is carried far away. It is haunted and hunted by innumerable ailments. It is also trapped by the different sense-experiences. It is bewildered by its alternate rise to the heavenly regions, and its fall into the hell. It is crushed and wounded by the stones and rocks, known as mental modifications and evil qualities. To remedy all these, it conjures up by its own intellect various codes of conduct, which prove ineffectual. It has no knowledge of the self or the infinite consciousness.

This deer, known as the mind, is made insensible by the poisonous exhalation of the snake, known as worldly pleasure and craving for such pleasure. It is burnt by the fire of anger. It is dried up by worries and anxieties. It is pursued by the tiger known as poverty. It falls into the pit of attachment. Its heart is broken by the frustration of its own pride.

**At some stage, this deer turns away from all this, and seeks the refuge of some tree already described (the tree of meditation); and there it shines brightly.** Supreme peace or bliss is not attained in any other condition but the unconditioned state of consciousness, and this is attained only in the shade of the tree known as samadhi or meditation.

## section VI.2 - chapter 45

iti vigrantavanesa manoharinako 'rihan tatraiva ratimayati na yati  
vitapantaram (1)

Vasistha continued:

**Thus having obtained rest, the deer (mind) delights itself there, and does not seek to go elsewhere.** After some time, the tree known as meditation or samadhi, begins to yield its fruit, which is the revelation of the supreme self. The mind-deer beholds that fruit above itself on the tree of meditation. Thereupon, it abandons all other pursuits, and climbs that tree, to taste its fruits. Having ascended that tree, the mind-deer abandons the worldly thought-patterns, and it does not contemplate the baser life again. Even as the snake abandons its slough, this mind-deer abandons its previous habits, so that it might ascend the tree of meditation. Whenever memory of its own past arises, it laughs aloud, "How was it that I remained such a fool till now!" Having discarded greed, etc., it rests on that tree like an emperor.

Day by day, its cravings decrease. It does not avoid what it gets unsought, nor does it long for what it does not obtain effortlessly. It surrounds itself with the knowledge of the scriptures that deal with the infinite consciousness or the unconditioned being. It perceives inwardly its own past states of ignorance, and laughs. It sees its own wife and children, etc., and laughs at them, as if they were either relatives in a previous life-span, or people seen in a dream. All the activities that are based on attachment and aversion, fear and vanity, pride and delusion, appear to it as if they were all play-acting. Looking at the momentary experiences in this world, it laughs derisively, knowing that they are like the experiences of a madman.

Being established in that extraordinary state, it (the mind-deer) does not entertain any worry or anxiety concerning wife, children, etc. It beholds with an enlightened vision that which alone is (the reality) in that which alone is (the infinite). With its vision fully concentrated, it ascends the tree of samadhi. It rejoices even in what it previously considered misfortunes. It engages itself in the necessary activities, as if it had just been awakened for doing just that work, after which it returns to the state of meditation. But, naturally it seeks to be in the state of samadhi all the time. It is totally free from ego-sense though, because it is also breathing like others, it appears to be alive to the ego-sense. Even in the case of such pleasures that seek it unsought, it entertains no zest; its heart naturally turns away from all pleasure. It is full. It is asleep to worldly activities and pursuits. Who knows in what state it exists! It draws closer and closer to the supreme fruit of moksa or liberation. Lastly, it abandons even the buddhi or intellect, and enters into the unconditioned consciousness.

## section VI.2 - chapter 45

bhedabuddhirvilinartha 'bheda evavasisyate suddhamekamanadyantam tadbrahmeti  
vidurbudhah (30)

Vasistha continued:

That is known as the attainment of the highest, in which one abandons the notions of the existence of objects, and in which one rests in one's own pure self. **When all divisions are given up, the indivisible alone remains. It is pure, one, beginningless, and endless. This is known as Brahman.** One who has given up desires for wealth, wife, and worldly objects, rests in the supreme self. When even the division between the mind and the infinite consciousness drops away, then all division melts into nothingness. After this, one exists in the supreme being, even as the unsculpted image exists in the marble slab.

The ignorant person cannot meditate: nor is it desirable for him to do so. The enlightened person is already established in the self! He is an enlightened person who is totally disinterested in the objects of perception, but this is not possible for an ignorant person. When the awareness of the object is seen as the pure consciousness, which is eternal, it is known as samadhana, the state of equanimity. When the subject and the object merge, the mind is said to be in the state of samadhana. Resting in the self implies the disinterestedness of the self in the objects. On the other hand, ignorance is the movement of the self towards the objects. Surely, such movement takes place only in the ignorant. No one who has tasted nectar, is interested in bitter things. Hence, in the case of the wise, meditation becomes natural and effortless. When there is no craving, the self is never abandoned. Or, when the mind expands to include the entire universe, again, the self is not abandoned. This much is certain: until one attains self-knowledge, there is need to strive for samadhi. He who is established in samadhi, is Brahman in human form. Salutations to him.

When there is disinterestedness in the objects, not even the gods can disturb one's meditation. Hence, one should cultivate firm meditation (vajra-dhyanam). The means to this are (1) scriptures, (2) company of holy, and (3) meditation. Ignorance is not dispelled by half-knowledge, even as there is no relief from cold when one sits near a painting of fire. The ignorant sees the world as a physical reality, the wise as consciousness. To the wise, there is neither ego-sense nor the world. His vision of the world is indescribably wonderful. To the ignorant, the world is one of dry wood and stone. One who is enlightened, sees the world as one self; the ignorant does not see it as the one self. The ignorant engages himself in endless arguments. The enlightened is friendly with all. Turya or samadhi is the natural state, which is what exists in and through the wakeful, dream, and sleep states. Conditioning alone is the mind, which ceases when enquired into.

## section VI.2 - chapter 46

kevalam drsyate yogi gato dhyanaikanistatham sthito vajrasamadhane vipaksa  
iva parvatah (9)

Vasistha continued:

When the fruit of the supreme truth has been gained, and it has become liberation, even awareness becomes non-existent, as it were, since the mind is absorbed in the supreme truth. The deerness of the deer-mind vanishes, like a lamp without fuel. The supreme truth alone remains. The mind which has attained the fruit of meditation, which is self-knowledge, is firm like a thunderbolt (vajra). The characteristic motion or restlessness of the mind goes away, who knows where. Illumination alone remains as pure consciousness, without disturbance or division.

In that state, there is effortless dropping away of all desires, and effortless meditation alone remains. Unless and until Brahman is realised, one cannot rest in the self. Until then, meditation is impossible merely by thinking about the self, etc. When the supreme truth is realised, the mind goes away, who knows where; and who knows how vasana or mental conditioning, karma, as also joy and despair, disappear. **The yogi is then seen to be in a state of continuous and unbroken meditation, firmly established in amandatine meditation or samadhi (vajra-samadhana) like a mountain.**

When the yogi is disinterested in pleasure, when his senses are utterly peaceful and controlled, when he rests delighted in the self, when all his mental modifications have ceased - what else is there to be done in the name of samadhi? When the yogi is unaware of the world as an object of observation, on account of the absence of mental conditioning, he cannot help remaining in vajra-samadhi (adamantine meditation), as if compelled by some other power. The mind is not distracted from it. When the mind is at peace, because it is disinterested in worldly objects (having known the truth), that is samadhi, not else. Firm rejection of pleasure is meditation; when it reaches fruition, it is vajra-sara (adamantine). Since this is also the state of perfect knowledge, it is known as nirvana or the blissful state.

If there is craving for pleasure, what is the use of something called meditation? If such craving does not exist, what is the use of something called meditation? When there is perfect knowledge, and at the same time disinterestedness in pleasure, unconditioned consciousness (nirvikalpa samadhi) follows naturally and effortlessly. He who is not swayed by craving for pleasure, is known as perfectly enlightened (sambuddha). Such perfect enlightenment arises from complete turning away from the pursuit of pleasure. He who rests in the self, does not experience craving at all. Desire for pleasure-experience only arises when there is movement away from the self. At the conclusion of the study of scripture, japa, etc., one enters into samadhi. After the practice of samadhi, one should study, do japa, etc. O Rama, rest in the state of nirvana at all times.

## section VI.2 - chapter 47

nanvartha vitatanarthah sampadah santatapadah bhoga bhavamaharoga viparitena bhavitah (39)

Vasistha continued:

When one is knocked about by the troubles and tribulations of earthly existence, and is 'tired of all this', he seeks refuge from all this. I shall describe to you the progressive stages by which such a person reaches rest and peace. Either on account of an immediate cause or without one, he tamps away from worldly pursuits (the pursuits of pleasure and wealth), and seeks the shelter of the company of a wise person. He avoids bad company from a very great distance.

The blessings that flow from the company of holy men are incomparable to any other blessings. The holy man's nature is cool and peaceful; his behaviour and actions are pure. Therefore, his company promotes peace and goodness in everyone who seeks it. In his company, one loses fear. Sinfulness comes to an end, and one grows in purity. Even the love and affection that the gods and the angels possess are nothing compared to the limitless love that flows from the holy ones.

When one engages oneself in the performance of right action, his intelligence rests in peace, and reflects the truth like a perfect mirror. It is then that the meaning of the scriptural declarations becomes abundantly clear. The wise man radiates wisdom and goodness. Then, seeking to free himself from the cage of ignorance, he flies away from pleasure towards the unconditioned bliss.

It is a great misfortune to pursue pleasure. Although the wise man rejects them, they create some uneasiness in his heart. He is supremely happy, therefore, when he does not find himself in pleasurable situations. The gages or yogis and perfected ones approach such a wise man. But the wise man does not value even the gifts of psychic powers or knowledge that they bestow upon him. He seeks the company of enlightened beings. In their company, he dives into the truths of the scriptures. It is the characteristic of these enlightened ones to raise others to their own level.

The wise person gradually abandons all selfish actions, and the endeavour to gain wealth or pleasure. He gives everything away in self-sacrificing charity. O Rama, remember that even hell is not so painful as the suffering caused by selfish activity. **Wealth is the source of endless misfortune, prosperity is perpetual adversity, enjoyment of pleasure is enduring disease. All these are misunderstood by the perverse intellect.** In this world contentment alone is the best medicine, the best tonic, and the greatest good fortune. The contented heart is ready for enlightenment. First, turn away from worldliness, then resort to satsanga, enquire into the truth of the scriptures, and cultivate disinterestedness in pleasure, and you will attain the supreme truth.

## section VI.2 - chapter 48

purvam yathabhimatapujananasuprasanno datva vivekamiha pavanadutammatma jivam  
padam nayati nirmalamekamadyam satsangasastraparamarthaparavabodhaih (40)

Vasistha continued:

When the mind is established in dispassion and in holy company, and when, through the study of the scriptures, there is disinterestedness in the pursuit of pleasure, one does not long for wealth, and treats even the wealth that one has as dry dung. He treats his relatives and friends as co-pilgrims, and serves them appropriately at the proper times. He is not attached to seclusion, gardens, holy places, or his own home, to fun and frolic with friends, or scriptural discussions, and he does not spend too much time in any of these.

He rests in the supreme state. The supreme state is that which is. Division in it is created by ignorance, and this ignorance is false and non-existent! He who is firmly established in the self, and who is undisturbed like a sculpted figure, is not swayed by sense-objects. 'I' and 'the world', time and space, knowledge or void - these, though they may continue to be, are not experienced by the knower of truth. One should salute that sun in human form whose personality is devoid of rajas (restless action or impurity), who has transcended even satva or purity, and in whom the darkness of ignorance has no place at all. The state of one who has transcended all division, and whose mind has become no-mind, is beyond description. Adored by him day and night, the Lord bestows upon him the supreme state of nirvana.

The Lord is neither far nor inaccessible. One's own illumined self is the Lord. From him are all things, and to him they return. All things here worship and adore him, at all times, in their own diverse ways. By thus being adored in diverse forms by someone, birth after birth, the self is pleased. Thus pleased, the self sends a messenger for one's inner awakening and enlightenment.

The messenger thus sent by the self is viveka or wisdom. It dwells in the cave of one's heart. It is this wisdom that brings about the gradual awakening of one who is conditioned by ignorance. The one that is thus awakened is the inner self, that is the supreme self whose 'name' is Om. He is the omnipresent being. The universe is his body, as it were. All heads, eyes, hands, etc., belong to him. He is pleased with japa, charity, ritual worship, study, and such practices. When this self awakens with the help of wisdom or viveka, there is an inner unfoldment, the mind vanishes, and the jiva disappears, too. In this terrible ocean of samsara, wisdom (viveka) alone is the boat which enables one to cross it.

**The self is highly pleased with the diverse (do as you please) forms of worship one adopted before. It bestows on one the pure messenger known as viveka (wisdom). By means of holy company, study of scriptural truth, and illumination, it brings the jiva closer to the pure, primordial state of oneness.**

## section VI.2 - chapter 49

ativahikadeho 'pi nitva jivapadam tatha drdhena bodhabhyasena netavyo  
brahmatamapi (37)

Vasistha continued:

When this viveka or wisdom is strengthened and confirmed, and when the impurity of conditioning is washed away, the holy one shines with an extraordinary radiance. Both the inner notion and the external perception of the world cease for him. But, then, since all these were born of ignorance, which is false, nothing real ceases to be. The world is but an appearance: it is neither not-self, nor is it gross and physical. These elements are unreal; neither the world nor the void is real. Brahman alone is spread out, and Brahman alone shines.

The world is not material; the void is not seen. The mind has come to naught. What remains is the truth, indescribable, but not non-being. The intellect is baffled by conflicting statements, but when the truth is investigated by proper methods, it is realised. He whose intelligence is awakened is known as the knower of truth. He is established in non-dual consciousness, and he does not perceive the world as 'the world'.

The world-appearance arises only when the infinite consciousness sees itself as an object; it were better that this did not happen. But once this has arisen, it is externalised and materialised. The awareness of the matter is the mind, and the mind binds itself to the body. But all these are but notions and verbal descriptions, and these distinctions are notional and imaginary. The self which is consciousness does not ever become an object or material. When one is established in self-knowledge, even 'consciousness' and 'unconsciousness' become meaningless words.

The material body arises from the subtle mental body, on account of persistent thinking. Hence matter is unreal. By constantly thinking "I am confused, I am mad", one becomes mad; by realising "I am not mad", one regains his mental balance. When the dream is realised as dream, one is not fooled by it. Just as the subtle body becomes a gross material body by persistent thinking, the process can be reversed by right knowledge. **One should lead, by persistent right contemplation, even the subtle body to its real state, as the jiva, and then to Brahman.**

Unless and until both these (matter and mind, the gross and the subtle) are realised to be the one infinite consciousness, the wise seeker should endeavour to purify them and to investigate their real nature. He who is established in self-knowledge is unshaken by the worst calamities - even if there were a shower of fire and brimstone, or the earth disintegrated and vanished into thin air, or the great flood swallowed everything. One who is endowed with supreme dispassion, enjoys the adamant samadhi (vajra samadhi). The inner peace that ensues from such dispassion is incomparable to that which arises from austerities, etc.

## section VI.2 - chapter 50

sarvajnatvat sarvagasya sarvam sarvatra vidyate yena svapnavatam tesam vayam svapnanarah sthitah (9)

Vasistha continued:

All these diverse beings seen in the ten directions belong to one or the other of the following categories: some are in the dream-wakeful state; others are in a notional-wakeful state; some are in a pure wakeful state; others are in a long wakeful state; some are in a gross wakeful state; others are in the state of wakeful-dream; yet others are in a decreasing wakeful state.

O Rama, in a certain previous world-cycle, in a certain corner of creation, some beings remained in a state of deep sleep, though alive. The dreams that they dream are what appears as this universe. They are in what is known as the dream-wakeful state. We are all their dream-objects. On account of the fact that theirs is a very long dream, it appears to be a real and wakeful state to us. And the dreamers continue to be the jivas in all this. **Because the omnipresent is omniscient consciousness, everything exists, everywhere. Therefore, we exist as the dream-objects of the dreams of those original dreamers.**

In this dream-world, if one rejects delusion, one is liberated; or, in accordance with one's idea of oneself, one considers oneself to be another body. The world-appearance that arises by such a notion is experienced by them.

In a certain previous world-cycle at some place, some beings lived in the wakeful state, entertaining different notions which gave rise to diverse creatures. These are in the notional-wakeful state. Because of the perseverance of the notions that gave rise to them, they are firmly established in it. Even when the notions cease, they continue to exist on account of their own past notions.

They who arose in the beginning in the expanded consciousness of Brahma, when there was neither sleep nor dream, are known as those who exist in the pure wakeful state. They themselves, when they continue to exist in subsequent embodiments, are in the long or continued wakeful state. When they are in a dense state of consciousness, which is unconsciousness, they are said to be in a gross wakeful state.

After listening to the scriptural expositions, they who look upon the wakeful state as dream, are in the state of wakeful-dream. When they are fully awakened, and when they rest in the supreme state, their perception of the world in the waking state decreases in grossness, and they who are in such a decreasing wakeful state, reach the turya or the fourth state of consciousness.

These are the seven states in which diverse beings exist. In fact, even as the seven oceans are but one mass of water, all these are but one ocean of consciousness.

## section VI.2 - chapter 51

na kascideva kurute sarirani kadacana na mohayati bhutani kascideva kadacana

(6)

Rama asked:

Lord, how does the pure wakeful state arise, and how do beings exist in such a state without any cause or motivation whatsoever?

Vasistha replied:

O Rama, without a cause, no effect is produced. Therefore, the pure wakeful state does not happen, nor does all the rest of this apparent creation come into being at all. Nothing is created and nothing perishes; all these descriptions are incidental to instruction.

Rama asked again:

Who is it that creates the bodies, the mind, etc. , and who deludes all these beings with bondage known as friendship, likes, etc.?

Vasistha replied:

O Rama, **no one creates these bodies at any time, and no one deludes beings at any time.** Consciousness is beginningless and eternal, and it alone exists as all these diverse beings. Nothing is outside of this consciousness, though it appears to be outside itself. This appearance, too, arises within itself, like a sprout from a seed. This universe exists within consciousness, even as a figure exists in a marble slab. This consciousness which is everywhere, within and without, spreads itself as the world-appearance, on account of time and space, just like the fragrance of a flower spreads out. 'This' itself is 'the other world'. Let there be an end to the mental conditioning that creates the other world. When the notion of the other world has been given up, from where do such notions arise?

The self alone is real, devoid of the concepts of time, space and such other notions; the self is not a void. This truth is realised only by those who are established in the supreme state, not by those who rest in the ego-sense. To one who has realised the truth, the fourteen worlds are his own limbs. In his vision, the division between dream-state and wakeful state ceases to exist. When this world-appearance is seen to be pure consciousness, it becomes similar to a dream. Just as all that is thrown into the fire becomes one (ash), all the states and the world-appearance are reduced to oneness by the fire of wisdom.

Consciousness alone appears as this gross universe. When this is realised, the belief in the existence of matter ceases. With it ceases desire to possess such matter. Then one remains in one's own inner peace. When the self is realised as neither the world nor the void, everything remains as it truly is. The sage of self-realisation has crossed this samsara, and has reached the end of all karma.

## section VI.2 - chapter 52

iyam dreyabharabhrantirnanvavidyeti cocyate vastuto vidyate naisa tapanadyam  
yatha payah (5)

Vasistha continued:

The notion of the existence of the world arises in the ignorant, just as the awareness of its various limbs may arise in the 'mind' of a tree! **This illusory apprehension of the objective world, which goes by the name 'avidya' or 'ignorance', does not in fact exist; it is as real as water in the mirage (sound without substance).** However, just for the sake of clear understanding, take this ignorance as real, and listen! Then you will yourself understand that it does not exist in fact.

Whatever appears to be here, perishes at the end of the world-cycle. No one can avert this total destruction. Brahman alone exists then. This realisation is not like drug-induced experience; we know with certainty that the body is like a dream-object, and that consciousness alone is real. This world-appearance perishes again and again. What has perished, and how does it come into being again and again? If it is said that all these objects remained hidden in space, then one has to admit that they were not destroyed even in the cosmic dissolution.

There is similarity between cause and effect. Since there is no cause for this world-appearance, it is not an effect. One alone is. The numerous branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits of a tree, are but the expansion of the single seed. There is no need to invent a causal relationship. The seed alone is the reality. When the truth is investigated, we realise that the one consciousness alone remains as the truth.

At the end of the world-cycle, all these objects of perception cease to be. The one self which is consciousness alone remains, and this is indescribable, being beyond thought and description. Only the sage of self-knowledge experiences this; others merely read these words. For it is neither time nor mind, neither being nor non-being, neither consciousness nor unconsciousness. I have thus described it negatively, because the scriptures have done so. In my vision, it is pure and supreme peace. In this, there are infinite potentialities, like figures in an uncut marble. Thus the supreme self is at the same time diverse and non-diverse. It is when you do not have direct self-knowledge that there arises in you doubt concerning this.

The perception of diversity is due to the division that arises in the self. However, the self is devoid of any division into time, space, etc. The self is the very substratum and undivided reality of time, space, etc., just as the ocean is of the waves. Hence, the reality is undivided and divided, it is and it is not. The uncut images in the marble may be carved out of it, but it is not possible to carve the world out of the infinite consciousness. Hence, divided though undivided, it merely appears to be different from the totality, though really non-different from it.

## section VI.2 - chapter 53 54

samudragirimeghorvivisphotamayamapyajam kasthamaunavadevedam  
jagadbrahmavatisthate (54/3)

Vasistha continued:

The reality is the infinite, undivided consciousness which, not being an object of observation, is unknowable. Brahma, Visnu, Rudra, etc., are names which have, by repeated use, come to be regarded as real. Creation, not having a cause or a reason, is non-existent. But one cannot assert that there is non-existence, or that there is something.

When one's mind rests in perfect tranquillity, what it is is the reality. In that reality, this world appears to be. The world-appearance does not arise out of nothing! Hence, one has to conclude that Brahman alone is, even in the form of this creation. Creation is but a word, a name. The reality is Brahman. 'I', 'you', and 'the world', are names that exist in Brahman as Brahman.

**The ocean, the mountain, the clouds, earth, etc., are all the unborn and untreated. This universe exists in Brahman as the Great Silence** (kastha mauna - silence of a log of wood). The seer exists in the scene as seeing, on account of his own essential nature. The doer exists as the deed, since there is no reason for him to do anything. In it, there is neither a knower nor a doer, neither inertness nor experiencer, neither void nor substance. Life and death, truth and falsity, good and evil - all these are of one substance, like waves in the ocean. The division between the seer (subject) and the scene (object) is fanciful.

However much one may try, the cause for this creation is not found. That which shines without reason or cause, is surely non-existent, except as an illusion. It exists as itself, and it shines because it is it, without creator-creation relationship.

Rama asked:

One sees that the whole tree is hidden in the banyan seed. Why should we not accept that even so is the world hidden in Brahman?

Vasistha replied:

Where such a seed exists and where co-operating causes exist too, there is the possibility of a creation. When all the elements are dissolved during cosmic dissolution, where is the seed-form, and where are the co-operating causes? When the infinite, indivisible consciousness alone is the truth, there is no scope for the existence, even of the subatomic particle, much less the seed for this creation. Whatever is the supreme being, that itself is this universe. The one infinite consciousness conceives of itself as the false in the false, and as pure consciousness in pure consciousness. Just as space (distance) exists in space, all this exists in Brahman.

## section VI.2 - chapter 55

adisarge hi citsvapno jagradityabhisabdyate adyaratrau citeh svapnah svapna  
ityapi sabdyate (9)

Vasistha continued:

Since, right in the very beginning, there was neither a cause nor a motivation for creation to arise, there is neither being nor non-being, neither gross matter nor subtle mind, neither moving objects nor immobile objects. Consciousness is without form, and cannot create this world of name and form, since cause and effect are identical, and only that which has form can create or change into some other form. The self remains the self all the time, fancying within the undivided consciousness all these diverse objects. Whatever that consciousness experiences as if within itself, that and that alone is 'called' the world or this creation.

Before all this happened (that is, when one realises that all this is unreal and non-existent), know that the one Brahman alone existed, utterly peaceful and homogeneous. Infinite consciousness is infinite consciousness, water is water: and since this 'creation' is conjured up by consciousness, it appears to be so created. Just as the world, one dreams of is an illusory appearance in one's consciousness, even so in the wakeful state, this world appears in consciousness, as consciousness.

In the original creation, the dream of the undivided consciousness is known as the wakeful state (the world which is experienced in the wakeful state). The dream that rises in the consciousness of the beings that arise in that ignorance, is known as the dream state. This fanciful dream has 'materialised' into this world order by constant repetition. The river is but the movement of water; creation is the fancy of the infinite consciousness.

It is not right to consider that 'death' is a state of bliss on account of the total destruction of the self. It is a state of void (like space). This vision of samsara will arise again. If there is fear on account of evil actions, the consequences are the same here or 'there'. Hence, there is no vital distinction between life and death. Knowing this, one attains peace of mind. When thus perception of division ceases, the vision of oneness arises. This is known as liberation. Whether this creation is or is not, there is then both a total understanding of the absence of objects and the experience of the indivisibility of the infinite. When thus the object and therefore the subject is unrealised, then there is great peace. In the supreme self, of course, there is neither bondage nor liberation.

One who thus realises the truth, attains nirvana. This very world-appearance, which is but the slight movement in consciousness, is also realised as nirvana by him. He realises that this creation is not diversity, but is pure Brahman only.

## section VI.2 - chapter 56

tacchatam tatra varsanam nimesamiva me gatam bahvyo 'pi kalagatayo  
bhavantyekadhiyo manak (41)

Vasistha continued:

The pure void exists everywhere in every way at all times in this space which is consciousness. Consciousness exists here and there in the form of this creation; there is no unconsciousness anywhere, because all this is but pure consciousness. Even that which appears to be matter is but pure consciousness. In this connection, O Rama, listen to the following story of the rock which was seen by myself.

Once upon a time, I desired to renounce all the activities of the world, having clearly understood whatever there was to know. I wished to meditate, in total seclusion, without ceasing, and without interruption. Resorting to a secluded spot, I contemplated as follows:

The entire world is devoid of any worth or value. Nothing in this world is capable of giving me the least happiness. What am I seeing and who am I? In order to find the right answers, I must go away to that place which is beyond the reach of even the demons and the gods, and there, meditate in total seclusion, without fear of distraction.

Where shall I find such a spot? The forests are full of the noise of flowing water and of roaming lions. Just as the city, full of people, is distracting, the ocean is also full of various sources of distraction. Even the caves are not free from distraction; they resound with the movement of wind, and they are full of creepers. etc. The lakes are often the sport grounds for people as well as the celestials, and are therefore full of distractions. Having thus examined all the spots on earth, I decided to go away into the outerspace. But even there I found distractions caused by the clouds, by the celestials and the demons, by the celestial bodies and the departed souls.

Having abandoned all these, I went to a lonely spot far, far away, where even the natural elements could not reach. In that empty place, I fancied the existence of a hermitage. In my own mind, I made it inaccessible to any being. I sat in the lotus posture. I made my mind tranquil. I resolved that I would sit in samadhi for a hundred years. In accordance with the rule that what one contemplates for a long time, my fanciful wishes materialised, and were spread out in front of me. **These one hundred years passed as if the twinkling of an eye, because when one's mind is perfectly concentrated, the passage of time is not noticed.**

When this period came to an end, my mind began to expand and spread out. All the goblins of 'I' and 'you' reached me slowly with the help of the life-forces, which began to move in me. Immediately, desire entered my heart; I do not know from where it came, and how it came into me.

## section VI.2 - chapter 57

ahambhavam vina dehasthitistajjnajayoriha adheyasya niradhara na  
samsthehopapadyate (2)

Rama asked:

O sage, how is it that, even in the case of a person who is established in nirvana, the ego-sense could thus arise?

Vasistha replied:

**Whether one is a knower of the truth or ignorant of it, without the ego-sense, the body cannot exist. That which needs to be sustained cannot exist without a support.** But there is a vital difference, which I shall presently explain to you.

The little boy, known as ignorance, has created this goblin, known as ego-sense, which seems to exist within oneself unperceived. This ignorance is a non-entity, too, because it is not seen to exist when investigated; darkness does not exist when it is seen with the help of a lamp. When one looks for this goblin known as ignorance, it does not exist. But, in the absence of such investigation, when it is taken for granted, and when one is under its influence, it expands and gets established. This world is created by that ignorance, which is real only to the ignorant; it is not real. That (infinite consciousness or Brahman) which is beyond the mind and the senses, cannot be the seed nor the cause for the coming into being of that which is the object of the mind and the senses. When there is no seed, how can there be a sprout?

In this infinite consciousness, it is a mere fancy that appears to be the created universe. This consciousness alone is known as isvara or god, and also as this creation. It is like one's own dream-creation, which is everybody's daily experience. Because the dreamer is a conscious being, the dream-objects appear to have an intelligence and a mind of their own. Even so, this non-creation, known as the universe, seems to possess independent existence and intelligence, as if it had been created. There is no creation as such; the one Brahman exists as Brahman. Whatever notion arises in this Brahman, is experienced by Brahman, as if it were an object of experience. That Brahman itself fancies that all this is 'creation'. But then, the experiencer, experiencing, and experience, are one and indivisible; even so, Brahman, the notion of creation, and creation, are only Brahman. Such being the case, how can ego-sense or the false notion of 'I' arise?

Thus have I told you how to lay this ghost of ego-sense, which vanishes on being rightly understood. The ego-sense has thus been clearly understood by me. Hence, even though the ego-sense seems to arise in me, it is inoperative, like a painting of fire. Thus have I abandoned the ego-sense. I exist in space as if outside it, in creation as if out of it. I do not belong to the egosense, nor does it belong to me, or exist in me. I am not, nor is there another in my vision; all is and nothing is.

## section VI.2 - chapter 58 59

nirvanamevamakhilam nabha eva drsyam tvam cahamadrinicayasca surasurasca  
tadrgjagatsamavalokaya yndrganga svapne 'tha jantumanasi vyavaharajalam (58/23)

Vasistha continued:

In the story of the rock that I am going to narrate to you, O Rama, it will become clear that, within the core of the rock, there are thousands of creations. In this physical space, too, there are similarly countless creations. In fact, in every element or object, there are countless creatures. But all these exist only in the indivisible infinite consciousness, not as real substances or entities. Nothing has ever been created right from the beginning. Brahman alone exists in Brahman, as space, air, fire, water, earth, mountains, etc. There is no division or duality between Brahman and creation, which are but two words without meaning. Even unity and duality are words without meaning. That which creates these notions of unity and diversity also creates the notions of Brahman and creation. When these notions have ceased, there is great inner peace, even if one is engaged in activity. **Everything is nirvana. The perceived creation is like the sky (void though appearing to have a form and colour). Behold the entire universe composed of you, I, mountains, gods and demons, etc., as you would behold the creations and the happenings of a dream.**

After having remained in samadhi for one hundred years, I returned to body-consciousness, and heard a sigh. I listened to it, and tried to guess what it might be. I was far, far in the outerspace; so, how could any person or even a bee exist so near me there? Moreover, I could not see anyone. I decided to investigate it further. I decided to enter into samadhi again. I silenced the mind and the senses. I merged in the infinite consciousness. I saw reflected in that consciousness the image of countless universes. I was able to go anywhere and to see everything. I saw countless creations, though they did not know of one another's existence. Some were coming into being, others were perishing; all of them had different shielding atmospheres (from five to thirty-six atmospheres). There were different elements in each; they were inhabited by different types of beings, in different stages of evolution, with different natures and cultures; some had other universes within them; in some there were creatures you would not believe possible to exist; in some there was apparent natural order, and in others there was utter disorder; in some there was no light and hence no time-sense. All these are but the fruits of the one indivisible infinite consciousness. How and when they arose, it is impossible to say; but this much is certain that they are the creations of ignorance. In this creation, there are gods and demons numerous as mosquitoes. Whether one regards these universes as the creations of the supreme Creator or as false notions, it is certain that they are in fact the infinite consciousness, non-different and not independent of it. They rest like inert realities in the descriptions found in the scriptures. Thus did I behold all these infinite creations.

## section VI.2 - chapter 61 62

esa hi paramarthasamvidacchedya adahya 'kledya 'sosya sa hyatadvidamadsaya  
tasya yaddhrdayam tattadeva bhavati yatha 'sau na nasyati  
tadantarvartijagadadyanubhavo na jayate na nasyatyeveti kevalam  
smaranavismaranavasena svabhavarupenanubhavananubhavau kalpayativa (61/10)

Vasistha continued:

Brahman is one, and all these are appearances, which the light of Brahman makes manifest, without intending to do so. On account of this, there arises great diversity of experience. For instance, in some universes, moonlight is hot and sunlight cool, there is sight in darkness and blindness in daylight, good is destructive and evil constructive, poison promotes health and nectar kills, in accordance with the notions that arise in consciousness. In some universes, there are no women, and therefore no sexuality, and in others, people have pitiless hearts. In some universes, people do not possess one or more of the senses. In some, only one or two of the elements exist, though they, too, are inhabited by living creatures, adapted to suit local conditions.

All these arise as consciousness in consciousness through consciousness; and this is known as the mind.

Rama asked:

Since everything attains liberation at the end of a world-cycle, during the cosmic dissolution, how does the notion of the next creation arise?

Vasistha replied:

O Rama, Brahman is an indescribable mass of cosmic consciousness. The creation is its very heart, and therefore non-different from it. It is apprehended as creation mysteriously, not really. Since its creation is false, how can one say that it perishes at some time? Even cosmic dissolution, etc., are the limbs of Brahman, as it were. Such divisions appear only in ignorance. Therefore, nothing perishes at any time, nor does anything come into being. **The supreme truth or consciousness is indestructible by weapons, fire, wind, and water. It is not realised by those who do not know it. The universe, which is the heart of this truth, is also like it; it is neither born, nor does it die. Experience of its existence and non-existence arises with the rising and cessation of the appropriate notion.** Hence, even words like 'world-cycle', 'cosmic dissolution', etc., are sound without substance. The ghost exists or disappears only in the heart of one who thinks of it. What are seen as birth, death, pain, pleasure, form, and formlessness, are all limbs of the one being. There is no division among them, even as there is no division in the several parts of the one tree. When this truth is not realised, then the apparent divisions seem to arise. In Brahman, there is neither knowledge nor ignorance; it is beyond bondage and liberation. Realising this is liberation.

## section VI.2 - chapter 62

naikasthanasthitamayo naham gatimayo 'bhavam tadanena sva evasmin  
drstametanmayatmani (3)

Rama asked:

Did you see all this from one spot where you were, or did you roam about in space?

Vasistha replied:

I had attained infinite consciousness then. In it, there is no coming or going. **I did not remain in one spot, nor did I roam about. I witnessed all this within the self, which had assumed the form of what I witnessed.** Just as you see your body from head to foot with even closed eyes, thus I saw everything with the eye that is consciousness. This is like the dream: whatever is experienced in the dream, is pure space (dimension) of consciousness. Even now, on account of enlightenment, I behold all this. I am now one with all the enlightened beings; I know them all as my own self, without the division of subject, object, and observation, since the one consciousness alone exists indivisibly.

In answer to the question concerning the lady, Vasistha said: She, too, with a space-body, stood with me in space. I had not noticed her earlier. Though she was endowed with a space-body, she was able to communicate with me (who also had a space-body) in a cultured voice and diction, even as in dream one speaks to another. What sort of certainty do you have to assert the existence of the inner senses? We had bodies similar to them. This is true in my case, yours, hers, and everything else. Just as one experiences warfare in one's dream, even so do people experience the events in this creation as if they were real. However, all illustrations are inadequate, and truth is beyond words. If one were to ask, "How do you see a dream?", the answer would be, "As you see it". All this is for your understanding. The truth is that this universe, as well as all that you see in your dream, is but Brahman.

There is no essential difference between the dream state and this visible creation. That experience which immediately precedes the waking state is known as a dream; that experience or knowledge which arose in the beginning of this world-creation is known as the waking state. The experience of the existence of the world is a long dream, or it is a void. It is pure consciousness, because it is established in the eternal reality. You are the witness or observer of your own dream; even so, the infinite consciousness is the observer of the long dream known as creation. Even as the observer and the observed are consciousness, that which is in the middle (the observation) is also pure, indivisible, and unmodified consciousness. Such being the case, how can this creation be considered solid and substantial or material? Even the dream of embodied (with form) beings like you is immaterial. How can the long dream of infinite consciousness, which has no form, come to have form? Hence, it is untreated Brahman alone.

## section VI.2 - chapter 63

tesamantarjanah santi janam prati punarmanah punarmanah prati jagajjagatprati  
punarjanah (33)

Rama asked:

O sage, how could that formless woman utter words?

Vasistha replied:

Of course, they who are endowed with a space-body, cannot utter audible sounds. If that were possible, then your dream conversation could be heard by another sleeping near you. Hence, it is clear that what is seen in a dream is an illusion, based on pure consciousness alone. What is experienced as the waking life is not entirely different from the dream-experience. It is but the play of consciousness; the notions that arise in that consciousness appear to be clothed in solid reality.

The seeds of past experience are in consciousness, and they sprout new experiences, which are sometimes identical with past experience, and sometimes somewhat different. The worlds that thus sprout from those seeds are not aware of one another. During the course of life in this dream-world, the demons are killed by the gods, and the demons remain in their dream-state. Not being enlightened, they do not attain liberation. Not being insentient, they do not become insentient, but retain awareness. Hence they live in a space-body in a dream-world. Even so is the case with the so-called human beings. Their world, their life, and their mentality are like ours, and vice versa. We exist as their dream-objects. Their own compatriots, though they are also dream-objects, are considered to be real entities by them. In the same way, the objects that appear in every one of my dreams are real to me.

Because of the very nature of the infinite consciousness, these dream-creations seem to exist in the waking state, too. Their reality is of course the sole reality, Brahman. Everything exists everywhere at all times, as the indivisible, pure consciousness; but it is nothing, and nothing is therefore destroyed.

In the eternal space (dimension) of infinite consciousness, in the infinite play of the infinite, there are infinite minds and infinite worlds in them. In every one of them, there are continents and mountains, villages and cities, with houses inhabited by people, who have their own time-scale and life span. When these jivas reach the end of the life span, if they are not enlightened, they continue to exist in infinite space, creating their own dream-worlds. **Within them are other people, within whom are minds; within those minds are worlds in which there are more people, ad infinitum.**

This illusory appearance has no beginning and no end; it is Brahman and Brahman alone. O Rama, in all these diverse objects, there is nothing but pure consciousness. Consciousness alone is this universe. Then, how is it possible to say that there are worlds which seem to exist in the minds of the ignorant?

## section VI.2 - chapter 64

drstani kundamandarakumudani himani ca maya kamagnidagdhanam bhasmaniva disam  
prati (70)

Asked by Vasistha who she was, the Celestial replied:

O sage, in this vast universe, in a corner, you have the world in which you live. Beyond the boundaries of this universe are mountains known as the Lokaloka mountains. That region has every form of climatic and elemental permutation and combination. (The description in the text is elaborate and interesting.) Somewhere in it, only humans dwell, elsewhere, gods dwell; in it, there are goblins as also very long-lived beings. In it, there are self-luminous places and others of utter darkness, fertile fields and deserts, densely populated places and uninhabited areas.

I dwell within a solid rock which lies on the north-eastern slopes of that mountain-range. I am bound by destiny to live within the heart of this rock. I have thus lived in it for countless aeons. My husband, too, is destined to live here. Till today, we have not been able to attain liberation, on account of our intense desire (kema), and on account of our intense attachment for each other. Similar is the fate of our relatives.

My husband, who is thus in bondage, is a brahmana by birth. He is ancient. He does not move from his seat, though he has been sitting there for countless centuries. He is a celibate from birth (brahmacari), educated, and lazy. He lives in seclusion, as he is not moved by craving for pleasure. Being his wife, I lead a miserable life; yet, I cannot live without him even for a single moment.

I shall tell you how I became his wife. When he was young, he was partially awakened inwardly. He desired to have as his wife one who would help him in his spiritual quest. I was born of that wish, a mental creature to be his mental wife. As such, I grew up to be a young woman. I began to delight in hearing good music, and enjoying myself in different ways.

I support not only my husband, but all the three worlds which exist in him. Though I had come of age, and my body was bursting with signs of beauty and youth, my husband remained in the state of deep sleep over long periods of time, or he was engaged in religious activities. He did not consummate our marriage, though I crave for such consummation all the time. I am burning with desire. My attendants do their best to alleviate my suffering, but all such efforts only add to my anguish. Burning with desire, I shed tears constantly. **O sage, there are lovely flowers and cool snow all around here; but because I am burnt by the fire of desire, I experience them as useless ashes.** Lying in the bed, decked with flowers and garlands, which are meant to enhance my delight, I experience a dryness and an emptiness, and my youth is being wasted.

## section VI.2 - chapter 65

varam vaidhavyamabalyad varam maranameva ca varam vyadhirathapadva  
nahrdayaprakrtih patih (3)

The Celestial continued:

After a considerable time, the same attachment and affection I had for my husband, became non-attachment and dispassion. My husband had grown old; he was interested only in seclusion, and was devoid of all attachment and taste for sensual pleasures; he was ever silent. Of what use is life itself to me? **I consider child-widowhood, even death, or disease, or even the worst calamity, preferable to a husband whose nature is not after one's own heart.** Indeed, the greatest blessing and the fruition of the life of a woman are that she obtains a young husband who enjoys life, and whose conduct and behaviour are sweet and agreeable.

A woman whose husband does not enjoy life is frustrated. The uncultivated intellect is destructive. Wealth which falls into the hands of wicked people is misfortune. When one's shame has been extinguished by a prostitute, there is great harm. She is a woman who follows the husband. That is wealth which seeks the good people. That alone is intelligence which is sweet and not limited, noble and endowed with equal vision.

If the husband and wife are fond of each other, then neither diseases of the body nor those of the mind, neither calamities nor natural disasters, afflict their minds. To the woman whose husband is of bad character, or who does not have a husband, the pleasure-gardens of the world are burning sands. A woman can abandon everything in this world for one reason or another, but she cannot abandon her husband.

You yourself see, O sage, what unhappiness I have endured all these yours. But now I have cultivated dispassion. Now I have only one desire: to be instructed by you, so that I may attain nirvana. Death is preferable to life to one whose desires are frustrated here and whose heart is agitated, and who is slowly proceeding towards death. My husband, too, is desirous of attaining nirvana. He is endeavouring to control the mind by the mind. Lord, awaken self-knowledge in both of us with your words of the highest wisdom.

Because my husband had no interest in me, I developed dispassion. The mental conditioning became weak, and I practised yoga which conferred on me control over space, so that I can move in space. Thereupon, I practised such concentration as would bring about my meeting with the perfected ones. All these have borne fruit.

When I flew away from my own world, I saw a rock on the Lokaloka mountains which I had not seen before. We had no desire to see this before. My husband and I now desire to attain self-knowledge. I beg of you to grant this boon, for holy men do not decline such a request. I have seen many perfected ones, but none like you. I take refuge at your feet; do not abandon me.

## section VI.2 - chapter 66 67

istavastvarthinam tajjnasupadistena karmana paunahpunyena  
karanannetaraccharanam mune (67/23)

When asked by Vasistha how she lived in the rock, the Celestial said:

O sage, that world of ours within that rock is just like your world out here! In our world, too, there are heaven and hell, gods and demons, the sun and the moon, the firmament and the stars, the mobile and the immobile creatures, hills and oceans, and the particles of dust that are known as living beings. Come, why don't you bless that rock with a visit; sages are always interested in wonders. (This earth is also a pebble in the vast space!)

Vasistha continued:

Accompanied by her, I coursed the space, and reached the Lokaloka, and saw the rock. I saw it was but a rock, and there was no world in it. I questioned her: where is your world with all its gods and demons, mountains and oceans, the world which you described so graphically?

The Celestial replied:

Truly, O sage, I now see that what I previously saw in the rock is only in me. It was, by repeatedly projecting that vision and experiencing it in the rock, that I thought that I saw it; now that I do not so experience it, that vision has gone. In you, the sense of duality had ceased long ago; hence you do not entertain any false notions. Even in me, the long-standing illusion has been dispelled by right perception; hence I do not see that world clearly. The present realisation of the truth being stronger than the past illusory notion, the latter has become dim.

**O sage, this is the only path to salvation: one should be totally devoted to the one desirable cause, one should be instructed in the right effort for its attainment, and one should again and again engage oneself in such right action.** By the right effort (abhyasa), ignorance is dispelled, and the ignorant become enlightened. It is by right effort that even bitter things are relished. It is by repeated practice that a stranger becomes a friend; and when a close relative is separated from oneself, it is through the absence of such repeated contemplation that the relationship is lost. It is by repetition that the subtle body becomes the physical body. By persistent effort, the impossible becomes possible. False relationships have been forged by persistent effort; they should also be resolutely abandoned by persistent effort till the end of one's life. By persistent effort, one brings the desired object close to himself. Such effort enables him to attain it without obstacle.

Persistent and repeated effort is known as abhyasa. That alone is the greatest goal of man (purusartha), and there is no other path. Only by persistent and determined self-effort, and by one's own direct experience, is perfection attained, not by any other means. It is by such abhyasa that one becomes utterly fearless everywhere in the world.

## section VI.2 - chapter 68

bodhah kalena bhavati mahamohavatamapi yasmanna kiricanapyasti brahma  
tattvadrte 'ksayam (12)

Vasistha continued:

When the celestial said thus, I sat in the lotus-posture, and entered into samadhi or deep contemplation. I abandoned all material and physical concepts, and held on to the vision of the pure consciousness. I had become the infinite consciousness, as it were, and had attained cosmic vision which is of the greatest purity.

On account of this realisation of the truth, the delusion concerning the material or physical ceased in me. In its place, there was the great consciousness which neither rises nor sets. There was awareness in which I saw neither space nor the rock, but I was aware of only the infinite. Whatever was seen before, was but the one self; and now I realised the self alone was all that was seen and experienced. What appeared to be the rock before, was nothing but the (space of) infinite consciousness (cidakasa).

Man is but the dream-object of another, and he dreams he is a man. However, **in course of time, even they who are victims of the worst form of delusion, are enlightened (awakened), because there is nothing but the truth or Brahman, which is eternal.** Therefore, that which I saw earlier as the rock, I knew now to be a mass of pure consciousness. There is no such thing as earth or matter.

The self of the elements or beings is the body of Brahman. That concept alone is now seen as a notion or imagination. The cosmic subtle body appears to be on account of the rising of this notion. The first-arising notion or thought is the body of the jiva. That ignorant thought (viz. , the I-thought) now thinks that the mind is an obvious reality. For no reason or purpose at all, these notions that the mind is an obvious reality (pratyaksa) arise; consciousness thus becomes other than itself. What is called obvious reality now (the body, etc.) is an obvious unreality. Paradoxically, the obvious is unreal, and the unreal becomes obvious. Such is the mysterious power of illusion.

The subtle body is the first among these obvious truths. The truth is omnipresent and matter is but illusion, even though it may be experienced - just as 'the braceletness' of gold is an illusory appearance of gold, though people may point to it and proclaim that it is a bracelet. The subtle cosmic body (ativahika) is not material. It is on account of non-understanding that the jiva falls under the sway of this illusion; what foolishness! The material or physical body is not found on enquiry; and the subtle body exists unchanged, even in the two worlds (the here and the hereafter).

## section VI.2 - chapter 68

yatra pratyaksamevasadanyat kim tatra sadbhavet kva tatsatyain bhavedvastu  
yadasiddhena sadhyate (36)

Vasistha continued:

The gross physical body exists in the ativahika or the subtle body - even as water exists in a mirage. On account of the erroneous perception of the body, this physical body comes to be accepted as an entity - even as a piece of wood is taken to be a man. How mysterious and how powerful is illusion, that it makes the unreal appear real, and the real appear unreal! This illusion exists only because of the non-understanding of the truth.

The activity and the behaviour of beings in this world are governed mainly by the vision of the yogis, and to a small degree by the perception of the mind. Hence, these two may be accepted as true. But, he who abandons the former, and clings to the reality of matter, endeavours to quench his thirst with the water of the mirage.

Momentary pleasure is pain. Real delight is unmodified, beginningless, and endless. Hence, investigate the truth with the help of direct experience; behold the primordial truth by direct experience. One who abandons this experience and runs after illusory 'realities' is a fool.

The subtle immaterial body alone is real; in it, the perception of the material or physical body is unreal and illusory. How can the latter be experienced as real when it is only notional and has never been created? **When you know that what is obviously seen is illusory and unreal, what else can be accepted as real? How can that be accepted as real, which is established by what is unreal?**

When such is the case of the first and foremost proof (pratyaksa or direct experience), what value can be placed in inference?

Hence, the existence of the objective universe said to have been proved by these methods (direct sense-experience, inference, and scientific investigation) is false and unreal. Duality or diversity is false; the one mass of infinite consciousness alone is real. Just as an object seen in a dream is unreal, even so, what was seen by us as a rock is unreal; it is pure consciousness only. Realise that this mountain, this space, the world, and the 'I', are all but the one infinite, indivisible consciousness.

One who is enlightened (awakened) realises this, not the unenlightened. It is because of the false feeling 'I am not enlightened' that this ignorance of the reality has come to be firmly established. He who abandons the realisation of the direct experience of the Lord who is of the nature of the indivisible, infinite consciousness, and clings to other forms of experience, is surely foolish. What have we to do with such people?

## section VI.2 - chapter 69

yadayam tvam mamahante yadidam kathanam mithah tattarangastarangagre  
ranativeti me matih (30)

Vasistha continued:

Then, that celestial entered into the world within the rock. I, too, went with her. There, she went to where the Creator of that world was seated, and sat in front of him. She then said to me: "O sage, this is my husband. He created me in order to have me as his wife. However, he did not consummate that marriage. Now, he and I are both aged. I have attained dispassion. He is not distracted from his meditation. Pray, enlighten both of us concerning the root-cause of this samsara, so that we may be liberated from it." Having said this, she 'awakened' her husband, the Creator, to ordinary consciousness, and said to him: "Lord, behold the sage who has arrived at our abode. He is our guest. He is the son of the creator of another world. It is our duty as householders to honour and worship our guests."

The Creator of the other world (of the rock) opened his eyes. He became aware of his own 'limbs'. These limbs were in fact different 'created' beings, who arose in that awareness. At once, there appeared before him different types of beings - gods, demons, humans, etc. He saw me, and also his wife seated in front of him. He welcomed me, and bade me be seated on a bejewelled seat. I returned the salute, and sat on the seat. There were celestial music and also singing of hymns. We all appropriately greeted one another.

Then I asked the second Brahma: "Lord, this celestial brought me here, and she said to me that I should instruct both of you in a way that you may both be enlightened. Is that right and appropriate? For, you yourself are the Lord of all creatures, and the master of the highest wisdom; she is not overcome by desire. How is it that you created her to be your wife; and, if that is a fact, how is it that you ignored her and did not consummate the marriage?"

The Creator in the rock replied:

O sage, listen and I shall tell you everything as it happened. There is only one consciousness which is unborn and tranquil. There arose in it a little movement, a vibration, or a ripple. That is what I am. I am of the essential nature of pure space. I rest in the self. Since I arose without any cause or material, I am known as self-born. I have not been created at all, and I do not see anything. **What is seen here as you and I, and what is seen as this dialogue between us, are like two waves colliding in the ocean and making a sound.** We are like the waves of the ocean, non-different from the ocean of infinite consciousness. We are but notions that spontaneously arise in it. This lady here, who appears to be different from it, has never been created, has not come into being at all; she is but a notion, a concept, a thought-wave or psychological conditioning. This body is made of the trace of ego-sense which existed in me, and she is but the presiding deity, as it were, of this ego-sense. She is, therefore, neither my wife, nor was she created as one.

## section VI.2 - chapter 70

desakalakriyadravyamanobuddhyadikam tvidam cicchilangakamevaikam  
viddhyanastamayodayam (20)

The other world's Brahma continued:

Now I wish to enter into the plane or space of infinite consciousness; hence, I have manifested this dissolution which signals the cosmic dissolution. Hence, there is this dispassion in us. When I abandon the cosmic mind and merge in the infinite consciousness, the destruction of all vasanas (notions, etc.) is certain. Hence, this woman (who is the embodied vasana) has become dispassionate, and follows me.

Now, the world-cycle comes to an end, and with it, the end of the gods. This is also the moment of cosmic dissolution. It is the end of my own conditioning (vasana) and the utter transmutation of the body into space. Therefore, this vasana is about to perish. The desire for liberation arises in the vasana for no apparent reason; that is how vasana finds its own destruction. She had undertaken the practice of meditation, etc., but could not realise the self. She then saw the world in which you (the enlightened sage) lived.

At that time, she even saw the corner-stone of this my creation. This corner-stone of creation can only be perceived when the mind is ready to abandon perception of diversity, not while it is bound to such perception. There are countless worlds, within worlds, within all these objects and elements at all times, as if in this rock. Its appearance as 'the world' is of course an illusion, for it is pure consciousness. This illusory vision of 'the world' vanishes for one who has understood its true nature; but, it continues to exist in the eyes of others.

By the previous practice of concentration, meditation, etc., she (the vasana) had gained dispassion; then, in order to gain self-knowledge, she sought you.

Thus it is the power of the infinite consciousness alone that exists here as the impassable illusory power or Maya. This power is beginningless, endless, and imperishable. **Time, space, matter, motion, mind, intellect, etc. , are but parts of the consciousness, like parts of the rock.** The infinite consciousness alone exists as the rock of consciousness; its limbs are the worlds. This mass of consciousness thinks of itself as the world. Though it is beginningless and endless, it thinks it has a beginning and an end. Thus it seems to become. This mass of consciousness is formless; yet, it assumes the form of a rock. There are no rivers here. There is no revolving wheel nor matter undergoing change and transformation. All these are but appearances in the space or plane of infinite consciousness (cidambaram). Just as in the cosmic space, there appears to exist the space called house, and another called a pot (though surely space is indivisible and the existence of the space within the house does not diminish the total' space); all these 'worlds' seem to exist in the infinite which is indivisible and which does not undergo any diminution thereby.

## section VI.2 - chapter 71

yavatsankalpanam tasya virasibhavati ksanat tathaiva 'su tathaivorvyah  
sadridvipapayonidheh (5)

Vasistha continued:

Having said this, the Creator (of the world-in-the-rock) entered into the deep and final state of meditation. He uttered 'Om', and contemplated on the last phase of its intonation. His mind was utterly calm. He remained as if he were a painted picture. Vasana (the embodiment of the psychological conditioning in the form of the lady) also followed the Creator, and entered into deep meditation. She attained the form of space. I, too, entered into deep meditation, and witnessed all these, having become the omnipresent, infinite consciousness.

**As the notions in the cosmic mind of the Creator began to die down, at that very moment itself, the earth, with its mountains, continents, and oceans, began to disappear.** The grass and the trees ceased to be. The earth is one of the limbs of the cosmic person, the Creator. Hence, when the cosmic person withdrew his awareness from it, the earth ceased to be, even as in a state of paralysis when our awareness of a limb is withdrawn, it withers away and disintegrates.

The earth was hit at the same time by numerous natural catastrophes. The evil-doers were burnt by fire, and they headed for hell. The earth had lost all its charm and its fruitfulness. The women had become immoral, and men had lost their self-respect. A dense dust-storm arose, veiling the sun. The people were distressed by the pairs of opposites, which, in their foolishness, they subjected themselves to. On account of floods and famine, wars and pestilence, humanity had been decimated. On account of numerous sufferings, people had become uncivilised and uncultured. Because of the suddenness with which all these terrible things happened, the noble people of the earth perished, and there was hue and cry everywhere. There was scarcity of water, and people began to dig deep wells. There was indiscriminate mixing between men and women, and the social order broke down. Everyone lived by trade. Women lived (earned their living) by exhibiting the beauty of their hair. Kings followed the dictum 'might is right'. There was unrighteousness everywhere. The leaders were devoted to intoxicating drinks. They harassed and tortured the learned and the saintly men. People resorted to other ways of living or other faiths than that which was natural to them. The learned men became subject to violence and aggressiveness. Temples were looted. Even the holy ones abandoned the performance of the religious rites on account of laziness.

The cities had been burnt down by the fire that showered from the skies. Seasons became erratic. Thus had the earth-element reached its destruction, since the Creator had merged himself in the infinite consciousness.

## section VI.2 - chapter 71

yada viksubhitatmasittada niyatilanghanat samutsaryaryamaryadamarnava  
vivrtarnasah (27)

Vasistha continued:

Once the earth-element had thus been absorbed in the infinite consciousness and had transcended its limitation, the water-element turned towards its own dissolution. **When the water got agitated, it exceeded its own natural bounds, and the oceans transgressed their bounds, overflowing in all directions.** Making dreadful sounds, the waves lashed at the forests and began to destroy them. These mighty waves mingled with the clouds in the space, and it became one mass of water. All the mountains were submerged under water. The aquatic creatures were in panic, and ran helter-skelter, in an attempt to escape from the calamity. When the waves destroyed the mountain caves, lions ran out of them, destroyed other creatures, and were eventually themselves destroyed. The tumult raised by all this reached even the region of the sun.

It appeared as if the oceans had invaded the regions of the gods themselves, and had occupied them. On account of the destruction of the forests and mountains caused by the power of the tidal waves, it looked as if the whole space were a big forest of trees and mountains. The great mountains were being dissolved in the waters of the ocean. At one stage, it looked as though the mountains were laughing with their teeth bared, because, washed by the tidal waters, the precious and semi-precious stones that remained underground, had become exposed on the mountain sides.

It looked as though even the celestial bodies were affected by this. The earth-mountains fell on some of them, making a loud noise. Even the fires of cosmic destruction appeared to be afraid of being put out by these tidal waves. At one stage, there was terrible warfare between the earth-elephants and sea-elephants! The single ocean shone with a supernatural radiance at that time when so many earthly objects were getting drowned in it.

Then it looked as if the space itself were falling into the waters of cosmic dissolution. The firmament, with all its light and its precious jewels, fell into the flood.

Flames of fire spread out in all directions, consuming all that existed in space. Since the Creator had withdrawn his realisation of the world, the demons and others were let loose to cause what havoc they pleased. All the gods (Indra, etc., who are the deities presiding over the natural elements to maintain order among them) had been overpowered by the demons. There was chaos. Even the abodes of Siva, etc., were shaken and disturbed. The stars and planets collided with one another, and there was cosmic destruction.

## section VI.2 - chapter 72

athakrstavati pranan svayambhuvi nabhobhavah viradatmani tatyaja  
vataskandhasthitah sthitim (1)

Vasistha continued:

When the creator Brahma withdrew his prana (the life-forces), the air which moves in space abandoned its natural function of motion in space. What else can sustain the elements and other beings? When thus the force that held all the heavenly bodies had been withdrawn, the stars began to fall away from their orbits, like flowers from trees. The satellites that were coursing the outer space also disintegrated on account of the time-space continuum being withdrawn when the life-forces were withdrawn. Even the path of the siddhas or the perfected ones was obliterated. Like bits of cotton wool, these siddhas began to fall in space. Even Indra (the chief of the gods) and his heaven began to fall and disintegrate.

Rama asked:

Consciousness is pure, and the cosmic person is but a notion. How does this cosmic person or Brahma come to acquire limbs like earth, heaven, and the netherworld?

Vasistha continued:

In the beginning, O Rama, there was but pure consciousness which could not be said to be either existence or non-existence. Within itself it became aware of itself as its object of awareness. Without abandoning its position as the subject, it seems also to become the object. That is the jiva from which the mind, etc., arise. However, all these are non-different from pure consciousness.

When the mind which is also pure consciousness thinks 'I am space', it experiences space, though such space is non-existent. The self or pure consciousness is void and immaterial. As long as there is the notion of the physical universe, consciousness experiences it as if it were real; when it so wills, it winds up this creation which then comes to an end.

Vasana or psychological conditioning, which gives rise to notions and to experiences of all kinds, ceases to be when the vision of the truth or the understanding of the reality arises. There is egolessness - and therefore oneness. Liberation or moksa alone remains after that.

This is the nature of Brahma. This is how the world exists as the body of Brahma, the cosmic person. The notion that arises in that cosmic person appears to be this universe. It is pure void; in fact, there is no such thing as the world, nor what can be regarded as 'you' or 'I'. In pure and indivisible consciousness, what is the world, how and by whom is it created, and with what materials or co-operating causes? It appears, but it is no more than an illusory appearance. It is neither one with the infinite consciousness, nor different from it. There is neither unity nor diversity. Infinite, indivisible consciousness alone is the reality. Hence, live free from all conditioning, acting spontaneously and appropriately in each situation.

## section VI.2 - chapter 73

sailendrapeksaya suksma yatheme trasarenavah tatha sirksmataram sthulam  
brahmandam yadapeksaya (9)

Rama said:

Lord, I have clearly understood whatever you have been telling me so far, but there is no satiety in your discourse. It is like immortalising nectar. Hence, describe the experience of creation again.

Vasistha continued:

During what is known as the cosmic dissolution, whatever appears to exist now is dissolved. What remains is the eternal. It is beyond description. In comparison with a mustard seed, the Meru-mountain is immense; so, in comparison with that eternal infinite consciousness, the space is like a mustard seed. **In comparison with the greatest among mountains, a subatomic particle is minute; even so are the comparative dimensions of this whole universe and that eternal infinite consciousness.** During the cosmic dissolution, when all world-appearance has ceased, the eternal infinite consciousness remains aware of every subatomic particle that exists in the cosmic space. It sees them (though they are unreal) as if in a dream; then it imagines itself to be 'Brahman'. It even conceives of itself as the infinite consciousness. Considering itself as the atomic particle of consciousness, it exists as the subject, apparently seeing the atomic particle which becomes the object. This is like a man seeing himself dead in a dream. Thus, consciousness apparently polarises itself into the subject and the object, without ever abandoning its own indivisibility.

At that moment, the following principles arise spontaneous: time, space, action, matter, the seer (subject), sight, and the scene (object). However, the forces that restrain or obstruct these do not arise. Where the consciousness-particles shine, space manifests there; when this happens, there is time; and the way in which it happens becomes action; whatever is experienced as existing becomes matter; the experiencer becomes the subject; the experiencing or the seeing of this matter is the sight; and that which is responsible for this seeing or experiencing becomes the object. Thus do all these apparently come into being, though they are all false. Space alone appears in space, without any particular order of sequence or principle.

Similarly, that material in which this consciousness shines is known as the body; that by which it sees is known as the eye. Even so with regard to the other senses, etc. That state in which this consciousness shines without name and form is known as the tanmatra (pure element), which is of the nature of space or void alone. This radiance of the atomic particle of consciousness itself becomes gross, and comes to be known as the body; then there arise the five senses in it. That which is aware of all this, is known as buddhi or intelligence. With thinking arises mind in which the ego-sense is rooted.

## section VI.2 - chapter 73

evam sampadyate brahma tatha sampadyate harih evam sampadyate rudra evam  
sampadyate krmih (37)

Vasistha continued:

As the particle of consciousness moves in space, it does 'there' what it did 'here' earlier. Thus, sequence of time arises, as well as spatial distinctions like 'above', 'below', and the directions. Though it is of the nature of space or void, it seems to become time, space, action, matter, and awareness of the meaning of words, etc. Thus the ativahika (subtle) body comes into being. This itself, by continued awareness of itself, seems to condense into the material body.

Consciousness becomes embodied, though it is truly like space, incapable of being contained. In it, there arise the ideas of 'head' and of 'feet', and it sees these as existing organs. Even so with the other limbs of the physical body. The same consciousness considers itself to be being and non-being, taking and rejecting, order and all the rest of it. It sees these notions as if they were real. **Even so does it become Brahma the creator; even so does it attain (to the state) of Hari or Visnu; even so does it attain (or seemingly become) Rudra or Siva; even so does it seemingly become a worm.** In truth, however, it has not become any of these; it is as it is, pure void in void, consciousness in consciousness.

That is the seed of all bodies in the three worlds. It is the seed of even the samsara (world-illusion), which bars the gate to liberation. It is the cause of all, and it is the leader of time and action. It is the first person who, though unborn, seems to be born. It does not have a material or physical body; hence it cannot be caught. Just as a man who is fighting with a lion in a dream shouts in that dream, though in truth he is silent and asleep, the infinite consciousness which entertains all these notions is at peace and silent within itself. The universe which extends to millions of miles in all directions, exists in the minutest subatomic particle, and the three worlds exist within one strand of hair (in comparison to the infinite consciousness).

Even Brahma the creator, though he presides over the universe, which is unimaginably vast and which is his body, exists in an atom; in fact, he does not occupy any space at all, just like the mountains seen in a dream. The cosmic person has been called svayambhu Brahma (the self-born creator), also as virat (cosmic person); but in truth, O Rama, he is but pure consciousness. Because this consciousness becomes aware of motion, it experiences such motion or life-force. This is the prana and the apana, whose whirling motion comes to be known as wind in the universe, which is the very heart of the universe. The exudations, as it were, of this prana, are known as vata or wind, pitta or heat, and slesma or moisture (the three humours of the body), and their cosmic counterparts - wind, sun, and the moon.

## section VI.2 - chapter 74

jagadbrahma virat ceti sabdah paryayavacakah samkalpamatramevaite  
suddhacidvyomarupinah (25)

Vasistha continued:

The cosmic person (virat) has two bodies: the superior body is pure consciousness, which is without beginning, end, or 'middle', and the other body is this world. Hence, he is able to view the world (like an egg) from outside it (as a hen does). He divided the egg into two: the upper part he called the sky or the heaven, and the lower part he called the earth. The upper part is known as the head of the virat, the lower part is his feet, and the middle (atmosphere) is his back or buttocks. The upper part, because it is so far away, is seen as the blue and empty sky.

The firmament is the palate of the virat, and the stars are drops of blood. The 'particles of air' that course the body are gods, demons, and humans. The germs and viruses in the body are the ghosts and goblins. The holes in the body are other worlds. His loins are the oceans. The nadis are rivers, and the continent known as jambudvipa is his heart. The empty space is his stomach. The mountains are his liver and spleen. The clouds are his flesh. The sun and the moon are his eyes. The world of Brahma is his face. Soma is his energy. The snow-bound mountains are his phlegm, the subterranean fire is his bile, the winds are his prana and apana. All the trees and the snakes are his hairs.

Since he is himself the cosmic mind, he has no mind. Since the infinite self alone apparently becomes the experience which is but pure consciousness, there is no experiencer apart from it. In the same way, since he is the experiencer in all the senses, there are no indriyas or senses in him. Therefore, the distinctions among the senses are but notions. The concept that indriyas (senses) stand in relation to the mind as the limbs to the body, is erroneous; there is no such distinction - even the body and the limbs are one unit. Whatever actions take place in this world, originate in him. On account of him, the world is seen to be real; if he ceases to be, the world ceases to be. **The world (creation), Brahma the creator, and virat (the cosmic person) are figures of speech; they are but notions that arise in the pure, infinite consciousness.**

Rama asked:

When this cosmic person is a mere notion, how does He exist in that body.

Vasistha replied:

In exactly the same way as you exist in your heart when you are in meditation. Just as the jiva exists in the bodies of all beings, and just as a reflection exists in the mirror, this cosmic person exists in his own cosmic body. Though he appears to have all these limbs, etc., there is no division in him, and he exists as a rock exists - whole and undivided, pure, infinite consciousness.

## section VI.2 - chapter 75

akrandarodanasrantamurdhanihsaranamaram  
nakalokajjalajjalapatalottaptabhutalam (24)

Vasistha continued:

When Brahma the creator was thus meditating, I looked around. I saw a sun rising in every direction. While I was looking at this extraordinary phenomenon, a sun arose right from the bowels of the earth, like a subterranean fire. There were eleven in all, with three more satellite-suns, like the three eyes of lord Siva, which together formed the twelfth sun. It was getting too hot there. So, I left that place, and went away to a far-off place. The entire firmament was ablaze with the light of these suns. There was 'kat kat' and 'cat cat' sound everywhere.

Living beings were everywhere, being scorched by the heat. Even the aquatic creatures were not exempt. The destruction was colossal and complete. Mountains fell on burning cities, grinding them into a paste. **At that time, people were weeping and wailing aloud. Others (yogis) who were able to make their life-force depart through the crown of their head, attained immortality. The earth was scorched by the fire that arose from above and below.**

The entire world with all the beings in it was set ablaze by the fire that emanated from the eyes of Rudra. There was the sound 'bhum bhum bhum' everywhere, and it looked as if the demonesses were playing by throwing streams of fire at one another. Meteors began to fall on the mountain-tops, and began to 'dance' - the dance of death and destruction. The fire that arose in the earth seemed to link the earth with the heaven or the entire universe. Even the Sumeru mountain, which was made of solid gold, began to melt. The snow-bound mountain (Himalaya) melted away. Only the Malaya mountain remained unharmed. Like the heart of a noble man who, even in his own suffering seeks to promote the happiness of others, that mountain stood spreading joy and peace - just as sandalwood gives of its fragrance, even to one who burns it.

Only two objects remained unaffected: space, being all-pervading, could not be destroyed, and gold, being pure, could not be destroyed. Hence, I believe that only satva (purity) is good and desirable, not rajas (activity or impurity) and tamas (inertia, stupidity).

When thus everything else had been destroyed, not even the ashes were seen. Even as when ignorance and its consequences are destroyed by the fire of the sage's wisdom, only the absolute purity remains without even the 'ashes' of past ignorance. For some time, these fires could not reach Kailasa, the abode of lord Rudra; but then he turned his fiery gaze on it; and it began to burn.

Nothing was left. Future generations could only wonder, "Perhaps there was a world, a universe, a creation before".

## section VI.2 - chapter 76

udyadbrhaccatacatavapuritaso bhimo 'bhavatsaliladanasannipatah  
durvaravairivisamo mahatam balanam sangrama ugra iva hetihatograhatih (39)

Vasistha continued:

Then there arose the terrible winds of dissolution, which blew so violently that the mountains and the oceans became exceedingly agitated, and lost their natural behaviour, and even the netherworld seemed to fall into something far below it. The entire creation became dried and essenceless.

After this, there arose like an irate demon an enormous cloud, which produced dreadful noise. It was like the sound that was made when Brahma the creator broke the golden egg, which gave rise to the created universe. The sound struck terror in everyone's heart because of the added sound of the disintegrating worlds and the oceans. It filled the entire created universe, and united the earth with the heaven and the netherworld. It was unmistakably the sound of cosmic dissolution.

I heard that sound of the cloud. I wondered, "How could this cloud coexist with the fires of cosmic dissolution?" I looked in all directions. I saw all round me showers of adamant and thunderbolt. In a moment, I experienced the sensation of something cold above, and something very hot and burning below. The cloud was so high above that it could neither be seen, nor could the fire reach it.

After consuming the worlds, the fires had become pure sparks, and shone with an extraordinary radiance. When the cloud of dissolution descended, it appeared to be made of the most brilliant lightning. The waters of the seven oceans equalled only a very small part of a corner of that cloud. It appeared as though these very oceans had risen into the sky. The twelve suns were whirlpools in that cloud, and the aquatic creatures were the lightning flashes that moved in it.

The rains came. Every drop of that rain was like a thunderbolt. These raindrops filled the entire space. They fell with such force that they destroyed whatever was left of the universe. The whole sky was one mass of water. The rain put out the fires, and reached the earth-plane.

The waters of this extraordinary and supernatural rain mixed with the fires that were still burning. The two could not defeat or conquer each other, and hence they were ill-matched enemies (because their equal prowess made the conflict interminable and inconclusive). They were of great strength and power. Therefore, their collision was extremely fearsome to witness.

## section VI.2 - chapter 77

puramandaladaityagnisuranagavivasvatam nlkurambam dadhadvyomni  
masakanamivocayam (24)

Vasistha continued:

At that time, the entire space was clothed in the ashes of destruction. These ashes were churned by terrible winds. Falling rain was making more dreadful noise everywhere, which sounded like the victory cries of the demons of dissolution. The winds were carrying away the burnt remains of the cities of Indra (the god of heaven) and other deities.

Thus the three elements - water, fire, and wind - were completely out of control, alignment, or harmony; and it looked as though they were fighting with each other. The tumult and the sound of this chaos were deafening. The torrential rain put out the fires, producing the sound 'cham cham cham'. The mighty rivers that flowed down the mountains carried away other mountains, continents, and cities. The planets and stars in the heavens were also rolling out of their orbits. The great tidal waves were everywhere, breaking down mountains, and the wind was blowing these mountains away.

There was utter darkness everywhere, as the rays of the sun were veiled by the rain and the clouds, which were of dark blue colour. The very support of the earth had completely disintegrated, and therefore the mountains were disintegrating, too. The tidal waves were picking up these mountains, and were hurling them at the clouds. It appeared as if the three worlds were weeping and wailing aloud.

The gods and the demons were all subject to these dreadful calamities, and yet they were still flying at one another's throats in interminable enmity.

Only the vital air or prana which presides over the disintegration of material or physical bodies, sustained these disintegrating objects, and wafted them here and there. **At that time, the entire space was filled with flying cities, demons, fire, serpents, and suns, which looked like so many flies and mosquitoes.**

Even the deities presiding over the different directions were approaching destruction, and there was confusion in those directions. The dust of destroyed creation was everywhere. The entire universe was filled with the debris of 'temples' made of different precious stones and metals of different colours. It was difficult to see the universe.

Devoid of the veil of creation, that (truth or god) which remains after the total destruction of what is known as creation, alone existed. Once again there was fullness, the fullness that becomes apparent when the diverse creatures are destroyed, the fullness that was there all the time. By this time, of course, the cosmic fires of destruction had been completely put out by this torrential rains from the cosmic clouds.

## section VI.2 - chapter 78 79

tasmatsvabhavah prathamam prasphuranveti samvidam vasanakaranam  
pascadbuddhva sainpasyati bhramam (33)

Vasistha continued:

There was no space. There were no directions. There was neither 'below' nor 'above'. There were neither elements nor a creation. There was but one limitless ocean.

Meanwhile, I saw Brahmaloaka, as the sun beholds the earth at sunrise. There, Brahma the creator was seated in samadhi or meditation, as if he were an unshakable mountain, surrounded by the pradhana or the first principles, the gods and the sages, the celestials and the siddhas, who were also seated in the meditation-posture, deeply engrossed in meditation, as if they were without life. The twelve suns also arrived there, and entered into meditation.

After a brief period, I saw Brahma and the others, as one sees one's dream-objects on waking up. I saw them as so many manifestations of mental conditioning, not as the materialisation of the dream-objects.

I then realised that all these gods, etc., were also pure void. Without leaving that place, they had vanished from sight. I realised that they too had attained nirvana after having abandoned name and form, like Brahma the creator. When the vasana or self-limiting conditioning had ceased in them, they had become invisible. This body is but pure void; it seems to exist on account of the vasana or mental conditioning. When the latter ceases, the body ceases to be seen or experienced, just as the dream-object is not experienced on waking up. Even so, neither the subtle (ativahika) body nor the gross (adhibhautika) body is seen, even in the waking state, when the mental conditioning ceases. The example of the dream-state is given here, because that is something everybody experiences. He who rejects his own experience, is fit to be shunned from a great distance; who can wake up a man who pretends to sleep?

If it is argued that when the body which causes dream ceases to be, dream ceases, then in the absence of the body there is no life in the otherworld. Then surely there is no creation! If it is said that the world has never been what it is not, then it does not exist even now. If it is said that consciousness is an exudation of the body, etc., then the teachings of the scriptures become utterly useless. If you decide against their authority, why have any authority at all? If you accept that delusion exists as long as the body exists, then delusion becomes a reality. If consciousness arises in the body accidentally, why should not that consciousness realise its infinite nature?

Anyhow, whatever consciousness becomes aware of within itself, it experiences (whether one calls it real or unreal). **Therefore, in the first instance, the self-nature knows itself as consciousness, on account of its own inherent movement. Then, on account of mental conditioning vasana, it experiences deluded perception.** Conditioned awareness is bondage; when there is no awareness of conditioning (or conditioned awareness), there is nirvana.

## section VI.2 - chapter 80

kakutstharudranamasavahankaratayotthitah visamaikabhimanatma murtirasyamalam  
nabhah (19)

Vasistha continued:

When thus all the gods and also the twelve suns had become one with Brahma, these suns began to burn away even the world of the Creator, as they had done with the earth. After burning the world of the Creator, and entering into deep meditation, like Brahma, they entered into nirvana, like a lamp without fuel. Everything was then enveloped in dense darkness.

Meanwhile, I saw there a fearsome form. He was like embodied dissolution of the universe, like embodied darkness. However, he shone by his own radiance. He had five faces, ten arms, and three eyes. He had a trident in his hand. He was moving in the space of his own being. He was dark like the rain-bearing cloud. It was as if he rose out of the cosmic ocean, and as he himself were the embodiment of that cosmic ocean. He looked like a winged mountain. From his trident and three eyes, I thought 'This is Rudra', and I bowed to him from a great distance.

Rama asked:

Who is this Rudra, and what are his five faces, ten hands, etc.?

Vasistha continued:

**O Rama, he is known as Rudra, and he is the ego-sense. He is devoted to the disturbance of the equilibrium. His form is pure space or void.** He is of the form of space, and therefore his colour is like that of space. Since he is pure, indivisible (like space) consciousness, he is known as the space-self (akasa-atma). Since he is the self of all, and is omnipresent, he is known as the great self or the supreme self. The five senses (of knowledge) are his faces. The five organs of action and their five fields are his ten arms.

Only when the infinite consciousness becomes aware of itself does this form become manifest. Again, this form as the Rudra is but a small particle, as it were, of the infinite consciousness, and hence does not exist as much in reality. The form is but an illusory perception.

He exists as the unfoldment or movement in cidakasa (infinite consciousness), and as air in both the space in creation and in living beings (as the life-breath). In course of time, when all his movements come to an end, he attains supreme equilibrium. The three gunas (satva, rajas, and tamas), the three periods of time (past, present, and future), the three inner instruments (citta, buddhi, and ahamkara), the three aspects of Aum, and the three vedas, are the three eyes of Rudra. The trident implies that he holds the three worlds in his hands. Since he is attained by satva or goodness, and his very existence is for the good of all, he is known as Siva. He then attains to the state of supreme peace, and is therefore known as Krsna. He himself air creates (as kalpana, imagination) the whole universe, and he drinks the one ocean of cosmic being, and attains to that supreme peace.

## section VI.2 - chapter 80

sa eva vadavo bhutva vahnirakalpamarnave ahanikarah pibatyambu rudrah sarvam  
to tattada (35)

Vasistha continued:

I then saw that this Rudra began to drink the cosmic ocean with the speed of the life-force or prana. The waters of the cosmic ocean entered into his mouth, in which a great fire was burning fiercely. **That Rudra or ego-sense exists as the fire in the bowels of the ocean (or earth), and then, at the end of the world-cycle, he drinks the ocean. Indeed, this ego-sense is the all at all times.**

At that time, there were only four things in that pure and limitless space: (1) the black-coloured Rudra, who stood without any support and without any motion, (2) the earth, which was rather muddy, and which was the abode of all the worlds, from the netherworld to the heaven, (3) the upper part of the creation, which being far, far away was beyond sight, and (4) among all these, everywhere, there was the pure Brahman, or the infinite consciousness pervading the different parts of the creation. Nothing else existed.

Rama asked: What is the abode of Brahma, the creator; what are its veils and how does it exist?

Vasistha replied: The abode of Brahma (the centre of the earth-plane) is enveloped by water which is ten times the extent of the earth-plane. Even so, the region of fire is ten times the extent of the water-plane. The region of air beyond it is ten times the extent of the fire-plane. Lastly, the space-plane is ten times the extent of the air-plane. Beyond that is the limitless space of Brahma-akasa.

Rama asked: O sage, who holds this creation from above and from below?

Vasistha continued: The earth, etc., are held in their position by the great body of the brahma-anda (the golden egg or the cosmic person).

Rama asked again: O Lord, tell me by whom is the brahma-anda sustained.

Vasistha replied: O Rama, it is not supported by anyone at all, whether you regard it as falling or not-falling. For, this universe has no form, no body, no materiality, though it seems to have a form. What exactly do we mean by 'it falls' and by 'holding it'? Whatever be the notion in the infinite consciousness, it remains in that manner. This creation is but the dream-city of the infinite consciousness. When it is thought of as 'falling', it seems to fall all the time; when it is thought of as existing in space, it stands and moves in space; when it is thought of as unmoving, it remains motionless. When it is thought to have been destroyed, it appears to have been destroyed.

## section VI.2 - chapter 81

kalaratriryam seti maya 'numitadehaka kali bhagavati seyamiti nirnitasajjana  
(24)

Vasistha continued:

Then I saw that Rudra begin to dance in space, as if he were intoxicated. It was as if the waters of the cosmic dissolution had assumed a form, and were dancing in that form. Lo and behold! Even as I was watching the dance of Rudra, I saw a shadow behind him. How could shadow exist without sun, I asked myself. As I was reflecting over this phenomenon, that shadow (female) stepped in front of Rudra, and she was also dancing.

She had three eyes. She was of dark colour. She was thin. But she was huge. Her mouth emitted fire. She looked like the dark night or the limitless space embodied as a female. Her arms extended to the farthest reach of space. She was so thin that her nerves were visible, and it appeared that since she was thin and tall, someone had bound her with those nerves so that she might not collapse. She wore a garland made of the heads of gods, suns, and demons. She wore earrings of snakes.

Now she had one arm, a moment later she had many arms, and a moment later she hurled her arms on the dance-floor. Now she had one mouth, a moment later she had many mouths, and a moment later still she had no mouth at all. Now she had one foot, a moment later she had many feet, and a moment later still she was without feet. **I concluded from all this that she was Kalaratri (the Night of Death). Holy men call her Kali or Bhagavati.**

She had three eyes which were pits of fire. She had high cheek bones and a chin. She had a necklace of stars strung on air. With her mighty arms, which had sparkling and radiant nails, she filled the directions. Her breathing was so powerful that the biggest mountains could be blown away by it.

Her body seemed to swell enormously when she was dancing. While I was witnessing this dance, she playfully strung the mountains into a garland for herself. The three worlds became mirrors in the three (upper, middle, and lower) parts of her body. Cities, forests, mountains, etc., became so many flowers for the garland she wore around her body (neck).

In her limbs were cities and towns, the seasons, the three worlds, the months, and the day and night. Dharma and adharma became her earrings. Vedas were her breasts filled with the milk of the highest knowledge. She held many different weapons in her hands. The fourteen types of beings, like the gods and all the rest of them, were hairs on her body. All these beings with their cities, and villages were dancing with her, delighted at the thought of being born again. The entire universe was in constant motion because she was dancing; from another point of view, of course, they were firmly established (in her).

The whole universe was reflected on her body as if in a mirror. Even as I was looking they appeared, disappeared and reappeared.

## section VI.2 chapter 81

dimbandimbam sudimbam pacapaca sahasa jhamyajhamym prajhamym nrtyanti  
sabdavadyaih srajamurasi sirahtekham tarksyapaksaiah purnam rakttasavanam  
yamamahisamahasrngamadaya panau payadvo vandyamanah pralayamuditaya bhairavah  
kalaratrya (102)

Vasistha continued:

What was that dance? The stellar firmament was revolving, the mountains were revolving, and the gods and the demons were also revolving, like mosquitoes. The revolving firmament looked like her flowing garment. It was delightful to watch the very big trees (the kalpa tree) which were but hairs on her body revolve while she danced. They were ascending and descending between heaven and earth, as it were.

The sun and the moon, the day and the night, were reflected on her fingernails, as it were, when she danced. The big mountains like the Himalayas, the Meru, etc., were also dancing with delight. It looked as though another cosmic dissolution was about to take place.

The goddess wore the sacred thread made of three strands, which were all kinds of prosperity, perfect knowledge and sacrifice.

Though it appeared that everything was revolving, nothing really happened. The air that flowed in and out of her nostrils was making great sounds 'ghum ghum'. On account of the movement of the countless arms of the goddess, the air in the entire space was being churned. By merely watching all this, even my eyes (and mind, too) began to get fatigued and confused. When the mirrors on her body were agitated by the dancing, then the mountains began to fall, the gods and celestials began to fall, and their palaces to collapse.

In her body, all the immovable objects became movable. Still more astonishing, oceans danced on mountain peaks, and the mountain was dancing in empty space. The space danced beneath the earth-plane, and continents, with flowering gardens and cities, were dancing in the orb of the sun. All these were floating around like straw within the mirror of the goddess, as it were. Fish were swimming in the mirage, and cities were seen in space, which also seemed to hold mountains. The sky and the clouds of cosmic dissolution were resting on the mountains which had fallen.

In the body of Kalaratri were found night and day, creation and dissolution, purity and impurity. Though all the gods, etc., were tumbled by her dance, they were apparently steady because of the steadiness of the infinite consciousness. In her consciousness, there was natural knowledge. By her dance, she created and dissolved the universes moment after moment, just as a small boy shifts his attention from moment to moment. Now she is near, now she is far, now she is infinitesimal, and now she is cosmic. Such is the manifestation of her cosmic creative power. **She dances, holding the horns of the buffalo, which is the vehicle of the god of death, to the accompaniment of sounds like 'dimbam dimbam paca paca jhamya'. She wears a garland of skulls, and on her head is a peacock feather. She bows to Rudra, the god of dissolution. May he protect you.**

## section VI.2 - chapter 82

cetanatvattathabhutasvabhavavibhavadrte sthatum na yujyate tasya yatha hemna  
nirakrti (6)

Rama asked:

Lord, when everything had been destroyed, how does she dance and with whom? And how could she have all those garlands and all the rest of it?

Vasistha replied:

O Rama, this was neither a male nor a female, nor did they dance. They wore not of any such nature, nor did they have any such form. Only the eternal, infinite consciousness, which is the first cause, and the cause of all causes, existed - as infinite, as peace, and as pervading everything by its move appearance. The Lord (Sivam) is that. The Lord himself took on the appearance or form of Bhairava when the entire universe had ceased to exist; but in fact he was as formless as the infinite space. **It is not appropriate even to assume that the infinite consciousness, which had become manifest in all its glory on account of its inherent nature, would suddenly be without it; just as gold cannot be without any form whatsoever.**

How can consciousness remain without being conscious? Can you see gold without any form? How can anything remain without expressing its nature? How can sugar cane lose its sweetness? If it has lost its sweetness, it is no longer sugar cane, and its juice is not sweet.

When consciousness loses consciousness, it is no longer consciousness. Everything has to be what it is, and it is impossible to have it any other way. Hence, that infinite consciousness is pure existence at all times, and it does not undergo any diminution. It shines by its own light, it has no beginning nor middle nor end, and it is omnipotent. That itself at the end of a world cycle appears as the space and the earth-plane, etc., and seems to undergo natural calamities and wholesale destruction; though there is no reality in all these.

Birth, death, maya, delusion, blindness, non-substantiality, substantiality, wisdom, bondage, liberation, good and evil, knowledge and ignorance, embodied and disembodied states, a moment and eternity, unsteadiness and firmness, you and I and the other, truth and falsehood, cleverness and foolishness, notions concerning time, space, action and matter, form, sight and related thought, action springing from the intellect and the senses, and all the five elements by which everything is pervaded - all these are pure consciousness which, without abandoning its nature, appears to be all these (just as space seems to be cut up, though it is really not so cut up). This infinite consciousness alone is known as lord Siva, Hari, Brahma, the moon and the sun, Indra and Varuna, Yama, Kubera and fire. He who is enlightened, however, sees not the diversity, but the one infinite consciousness.

## section VI.2 - chapter 83

maya drsta tadakasameva santam tadakrtih mayaiva tatparijnatam nanyah pasyati tattatha (3)

Vasistha continued:

The cosmic form that I described to you as lord Siva was pure consciousness; that itself was Rudra the dancer. There was no such form, nor was there formlessness. In the mass of consciousness, all this was felt to have been experienced. **I saw only that space (plane) which was supreme peace; and I experienced it in the form which I described. No one else saw it that way.**

What was described as the end of a world-cycle, as Rudra and as Bhairavi - all that was but an illusory appearance; they were experienced in those forms only by me. The mass of consciousness alone exists. When it is perceived as a certain form (Bhairava), it is seen in that form, and it seems to assume such a form. The comprehension of a word and its meaning (object) is not possible without consciousness. It is because of persistent use of such comprehension that you begin to feel that the object denoted by the expression is absolutely real. There was neither a Bhairavi nor a Bhairava (Kalaratri and Rudra), nor even the cosmic dissolution; all these were illusory appearances. The only reality is the infinite consciousness. Thus I have described to you the significance of the form, and the formlessness of Rudra. I shall now explain to you the significance of the dance.

Consciousness is never without some movement within itself. Without this movement, it might become 'unreal'. Thus consciousness appeared to be Rudra, on account of this movement within itself. Movement is the very nature of consciousness, and therefore inseparable from it. This movement of consciousness within itself is what was experienced as the dance of the lord Rudra. That movement was but pure movement. It was experienced by me as the dance of the Lord, on account of my own psychological conditioning. Thus, the dance of the Lord was the movement within pure consciousness.

Rama asked: When all that is unreal is dissolved during the cosmic dissolution, how does consciousness become aware, and of what?

Vasistha continued: Of course, consciousness does not become aware of another. What is said to be the object of observation here is only a reference to the very nature of that consciousness. Just as in a dream, the cities, etc., are all within the consciousness of the dreamer, consciousness becomes aware of its own movement within itself, right from the moment this movement arises. Thus arise in it notions of a moment, an age, a world-cycle, etc., as also, notions of 'I' and 'you', etc. Thus, there is neither a duality, nor a unity, nor a void, neither consciousness (as the subject), nor unconsciousness. There is pure silence, or not even that. The infinite consciousness alone exists.

## section VI.2 - chapter 84

sa bhairavaicidakasah siva ityabhidhiyate ananyam tasya tam viddhi  
spandasakttim manomayim (2)

Vasistha continued:

**The plane (space) of consciousness itself is known as Bhairava or Siva. Inseparable and non-different from him is his dynamic energy which is of the nature of the mind.** Air is seen (experienced) in its motion; fire is known by its heat; the pure consciousness is pure and tranquil, and it is known as Siva. This Siva is beyond description. It is the dynamic energy of the Lord which executes all his wishes, as it were, and makes the wishes appear as visions. This energy or power or Maya is consciousness. 'She' is a living force, and therefore she is called the jiva. Since this creation-manifestation is natural to the infinite consciousness, she is known as Prakriti or nature. Since she is the cause of all things being seen and experienced, she is known as kriya or action.

Since she manifests great anger towards evil, she is known as candika. Since she is of the colour of the blue-lotus, she is known as utpala. She is known as jaya, because she is always victorious. She is known as siddha, because perfection rests in her. Jaya is also known as jayanti, as also of vijaya, all of which signify victory. Since she is unconquerable, she is known as parajita. She is known as durga, since her form or real nature is beyond our grasp. She is known as uma, because she is the very essence of the sacred monosyllable Om. She is called gayatri, because her names are sung by all, and also savitri, because she is the creatrix of all. She is the expansion of one's vision of all things, and hence she is known as sarasvati. Since she is of white (yellow or red) colour, she is known as gauri. Since she exists as a ray of light, in one who sleeps, and in one who has been awakened by the contemplation of the subtle inner vibrations produced by the sound of Om, she is known as indukala (ray of the moon).

Since she and Siva have space as their real form, their bodies have a blue colour. Space is their flesh, bones, everything. They exist in space as space. Her dance with different gestures, etc., symbolises the creation, decay, and death of all beings. She is conceived of as having limbs, because she creates the worlds by the movement of her energy. This kali invests all things with their characteristics by the power inherent in her own limbs, as it were. But one cannot by any means apprehend her limbs, nor can her real nature be described. Just as a motion within space is experienced by us as air, even so the dynamic energy of consciousness is experienced by the action or motion that takes place in that consciousness. However, motion or action cannot be regarded as the quality of consciousness, because it has no qualities nor characteristics; consciousness is pure and utterly tranquil, beyond description. The notion of motion in consciousness is ignorance.

## section VI.2 - chapter 84

yad yathabhutasarvarthakriyakari pradrsyate tatsatyamatmano 'nyasya naiva  
'tattamupeyusah (40)

Vasistha continued:

When this dynamic energy of consciousness rests at each place as it is (without becoming something else), that itself is known as Siva, the Lord. That is, the thing in itself is the Lord. The following are the limbs of this dynamic energy of consciousness which have been created as notions in her; all these created worlds, the earth with all the continents and oceans, the forests and the mountains, the scriptures, the different forms of sacred rites, wars in which various forms of weapons are used, and all the fourteen worlds.

Rama said:

O sage, are these things which are said to be the limbs in the body of this dynamic energy real or false?

Vasistha replied:

O Rama, all these are indeed real, for they have all been brought about by the operation of this dynamic energy of consciousness, and they are all experienced by consciousness. Just as the mirror reflects a real object that exists outside, this consciousness reflects within itself that which is within itself - hence, it is real. Even the imaginary city or the illusory appearance of the city arises only in consciousness, whether the appearance arises because of persistent contemplation, or because of the purity of consciousness. This creation is real, whether it is regarded as a reflection, or a dream-object, or a fancy, because it is based on the truth which is the self - this is my opinion. If you object: "But these fanciful creations are of no practical use to me", consider of what use are they who have gone to a distant country. They are of use to the inhabitants of the village to which they have gone. Even so with everything.

**Whatever there is here which exists, and functions here, is real to the self and not to another who does not perceive it, and is unaware of it.** Therefore, all these creations and creatures that exist within the field of the energy of consciousness are true to the perceiving self, and are unreal to the non-perceiver. All the notions and the dreams that exist in the present, past, or the future, are all real, because the self, which is the self of all, is real. They are all experienced by those who have reached the appropriate state of consciousness, just as he who goes to a distant land, sees the sights there. However, motion of the energy of consciousness does not alter the truth, even as a dreamer transported to another place, without his sleep being disturbed, does not have his dream interrupted. When it is realised that the perception of the three worlds is but an unreal fancy, there is no question of its interruption or otherwise.

## section VI.2 - chapter 85

sadhurvasati coraughe tavadyavadasau na tam pari janati vijnaya na tatra  
ramate punah (24)

Vasistha continued:

An imaginary city is imagination, not city. Even so, the creation is but the notion that arises in the energy of the infinite consciousness. Or, the notion that so arises is the creation.

Kalaratri is to the Lord what movement is to air. Just as in empty space, air moves as if it has form; she moves in the infinite consciousness, executing the will or the wish of the Lord, as it were. When there is no such movement of the energy, then the Lord alone exists.

While she continues to dance in this fashion in space, then, by accidental coincidence (the crow and the coconut), she comes into contact with the Lord. The moment this contact is made, she is weakened, and made thin and transparent. She abandons her cosmic form, and becomes a mountain, then she becomes a small town, and then a beautiful tree. Then she becomes like space, and lastly she becomes of the form of the Lord himself, like the river entering the ocean. Then the Lord shines as one without a second.

Rama asked: But, holy sir, tell me why the divine mother thus becomes tranquil?

Vasistha replied: O Rama, it is the dynamic energy of consciousness that is known as prakrti, jaganmaya, etc. She is unperverted. That which is superior to this energy is consciousness itself, which is the very self of consciousness, supreme peace. This dynamic energy functions and moves as long as there is the momentum of the Lord's wish. In a way, she dances as long as she does not see the Lord.

Since consciousness and energy are inseparably one, the energy comes into contact with (becomes aware of) the Lord, and becomes the Lord himself. When the prakrti touches the Lord, she abandons the prakrti-hood (the state of being movement). She merges in the Lord, even as the river merges in the ocean. The movement of energy is but the result of a notion arising in consciousness, and the energy naturally returns to consciousness, just as the shadow may be said to enter a person when the shadow ceases to be. **A holy man may live in the company of thieves till he discovers the truth; afterwards is he does not relish such company.** Consciousness revels in duality till it sees its own self. The energy of consciousness dances until it beholds the glory of nirvana. When it beholds consciousness, it becomes pure consciousness.

One roams this samsara with its birth and death only till one beholds the supreme. Having seen it, he is immediately immersed in the supreme. Who will again abandon that which frees him from all sorrow?

## section VI.2 - chapter 86

duravatpreksyate mamsadr̥sa yadyeva si sila dr̥syate tacch̥tiaivaika na tu  
sargadi kincana (15)

Vasistha continued:

I shall now tell you, O Rama, how lord Rudra, who was standing in the cosmic space with an apparent form, cast it off and attained total tranquillity.

That Rudra stood observing the division in consciousness known as the creation. In a moment he 'swallowed the division' as it were. Then Rudra stood alone, one with the space as if he himself were space. In a few minutes, he became as light as cloud, and his size was fast shrinking. I saw through my own divine vision that he had become smaller than an atom. In a moment, he had become invisible. He had become supreme peace. He had become one with the absolute Brahman or pure consciousness.

Thus, O Rama, I saw within that rock the creation, sustenance, and the dissolution of the universe. I was amazed at all this illusory perception. Again I looked at the rock, and I saw all sorts of creations and creatures in it, like the limbs of Kalaratri. All this is seen only with the eyes of awakened intelligence, or by the divine eye which sees everything, everywhere, at all times, as everything is. **If one sees the rock with the physical eyes as if it lies at a distance, only the rock is seen, but no creation, etc.**

After all this, I turned my inner eye to another part of the same rock. Once again I saw a whole creation come into being, and all the rest of it. In every part of that rock, I saw a whole creation. Even so I saw innumerable creations in the very many rocks that I found on that hill.

In some of these creations, the Brahma had just begun his work of creation; in others the gods were springing from the mind of the Creator; some were populated by human beings, in some there were no gods, and in some no demons; in some the satyayuga (golden age) reigned, and in others the kaliyuga (iron age); in some the people had conquered old age and death, in some the people were all enlightened because they encountered no obstruction to their righteousness. Thus I saw the state of the universe in the past, present and future. In some I saw dense darkness and ignorance; in some I saw Rama fighting Ravana, and in some Ravana abducting Sita. Some were ruled by the gods, and some by demons.

Rama asked: Lord, tell me, did I exist as Rama before this incarnation?

Vasistha replied: You and I have been born here again and again, O Rama. Of course, from the point of view of the absolute reality, neither you nor I nor this world has ever come into being. All these are like ripples on the surface of water. Their particular appearance and disappearance are due to illusory perception and deluded understanding.

## section VI.2 - chapter 87

gatam svabhavam cidvyoma yatha tvam rama nidraya jagradva svapnalokam va  
viganvetsi samam ghanam (10)

Vasistha continued:

After thus contemplating the infinite consciousness for some time, I suddenly realised that all this creation was within myself, my own body, just as the tree is in the seed. When one closes his eyes to sleep, he enters into an inner world created by his inner vision; when sleep comes to an end, one wakes up, and his vision enters the world of the waking state. In the same way, creation is experienced by one's entering into it within his own heart.

Having seen the appearance of this creation in pure space, I entered into other parts of myself, eager to see other aspects of creation. When thus the light of my inner intelligence was directed to that 'space', there arose in it an experience of that space. **O Rama, when you enter into the consciousness of your own self, whether in sleep or in the waking state, you know that it is equally a mass of consciousness.** To begin with, there is only this pure space or emptiness. In it, there arises the notion 'I am'. The condensation of that is known as buddhi or intellect, and the condensation of that is known as the mind. That knows or experiences the pure element of sound and also the other elements, the tanmatras. From these experiences arise the various senses.

Some say that there is some order in this creation, others declare that there is no such order. However, it is not possible to alter the nature and characteristics of created objects which have acquired those characteristics through the appropriate notion that arose in the infinite consciousness in the beginning.

As I was thus observing creation, I had become atomic. I realised myself as a ray of light. Contemplating that alone, I had become gross. In this grossness, there were the potentialities of sense-experiences. I began to see. The organs through which I saw became the eyes, that which I saw became the scene (object), the fruit of this experience was sight, 'when' I saw all this became time (duration), the manner in which I saw became the method or order, 'wherever' I saw became space. By conviction these become the order of creation.

When thus consciousness 'opened its eyes', as it were, or became aware of its own inherent potentialities, the tanmatras (pure elements) arose, and then all the senses, which are in fact and in truth pure void or space, came into being.

Even so, I thought "Let me hear something." From this, sound arose, as also the organ of hearing. Then there arose the sense of touch, the sense of taste, and the sense of smell, etc. Even though all these seem to have arisen in me, in fact nothing has ever happened.

## section VI.2 - chapter 87

evamrupamaham jalam bhavayan yattadasthitah tadahankara ityadya kathyate  
tvadrsairjanaih (35)

Vasistha continued:

When thus the five elements and the five senses came into being, their corresponding knowledge and experience arose in me irresistibly. They were without 'form' (substantiality), and they were illusory. **When I thus stood contemplating these notions and experiences, that state of my being is known by people like you as I-ness or ego-sense.** When this notion of ego-sense becomes more gross, it is known as buddhi or intellect; when that becomes gross, it is known as the mind. Thus, though I am pure consciousness, I seem to have acquired a subtle body (Rivahika) and an antahkarana (inner instrument consisting of mind, intellect, etc.).

I am subtler and more empty than even the air. Hence, I do not obstruct the coming into being of anything. But, since I continue to be in this notional existence for a considerable period of time, you imagine that I have a body. It is on account of this notion existing in you that I produce this sound known as speech. You hear it even as a sleeping person hears sounds in his dream. The first sound that a child utters is Om, and hence Om has come to be regarded as the foremost among sounds. After that, whatever I have been saying as if in dream, appears to you to be my speech.

I am the absolute Brahman. I am self-contained, the creator of this creation, and the preceptor of all. I have created all this through my own thoughts and notions. Thus do I exist, but I am unborn. I have seen the universe, beyond that I have seen nothing. But all this that I have seen is but pure void. All this is but pure experiencing. Nothing (the earth, etc.) exists, nor has anything ever come into being. Nothing exists outside. Everything is in consciousness; everything is consciousness. There is no world in Brahman, but Brahman sees or experiences a world. This perception is not a fact or reality, but just a notion.

This truth cannot be seen by physical eyes, which can only see material objects. When you see with your subtle (ativahika) eyes, you will behold the creation as it is, as the truth, as pure Brahman-nirvana.

When I experienced space, I knew what earth was. I became earth. In that earth I experienced the existence of countless universes, without ever abandoning the awareness that I am the infinite consciousness. I saw the most amazing earthly phenomena and events within that earth (within me). In fact, I experienced even the farmer ploughing 'me' (the earth), and I experienced the burning heat of the sun and the cool flow of rainwater. I became the fearful space in which the Lokaloka mountains (the boundaries of the world) exist, and I experienced the actions and the movements of countless beings. Countless beings of different types - gods, demons, humans, animals and worms - filled me. I was filled with mountains, forests, etc., which exist on earth.

## section VI.2 - chapter 88 89

idam ca manasam ca 'ham sampannah prthubhutam neda na manasam naiva  
sampanno vastutastvham (89/2)

Vasistha continued:

While I remained in the earth-consciousness, I experienced the experiences of the earth, with all its rivers, etc. Here I experienced the weeping and wailing of those who had lost their dear and near ones; here I experienced the joy of dancing girls; there were the cries of the hungry, the joy of the affluent, drought, and earth-quake, war, and destruction, beautiful birds, and lakes, suffering worms, flourishing forests, meditating sages. O Rama, in this earth-body of mine, all these took place.

Rama asked:

When you were thus engaged in the contemplation of the earth (parthiva-dharana), was that earth real or only mental?

Vasistha replied:

**Truly, this was mental, and I had myself become the earth; equally truly, this was not mental, nor did I actually become the earth.** Apart from the mind, there is no earth. Whether you consider something as real or as unreal, it is but mental action. I am but the pure infinite consciousness; that notion which arises in it is known as sankalpa or thought or imagination. That notion is the mind, it is the earth, it is the world, it is the creator; this world appears in space on account of that notion, just as a fancied city exists in the sky.

What I experienced as the earth was but a simple notion, and therefore mental. It is pervaded by the mind; on account of the persistent contemplation (dharana), it remains as if it is the earth. The earth-plane is mental; it is the notion that arises in consciousness, and it is otherwise void. When this notion remains constant for some time, it apparently abandons its mental state, and it seems to become this solid, material, hard, and firm earth.

From this point of view, the earth does not exist. But it has come to be regarded as solid material existence from the beginning of creation. Just as the dream-object is nothing but the consciousness of the dreamer, this world-appearance is nothing but pure consciousness. The notion that arises in consciousness is pure consciousness, and nothing else. Hence, there is no notion as such, neither a self nor a world. When it is thus seen, the world does not exist; when it is not observed carefully, it seems to come into being.

Just as a crystal reflects colours without intending to do so, the infinite consciousness reflects in it the entire universe. Hence, the world is neither mental nor material. It is pure consciousness alone that appears as this earth. It is the false notion, entertained by countless beings in the three worlds, that has attained relative or existential reality, known as the earth. 'I am all this, and all that is within all this.' With this realisation, I saw everything.

## section VI.2 - chapter 90

sarvatraiva 'sti prthvyadi sthulam tacca na kincana cidvyomaiva yatha  
svapnapuram paramajatavat (5)

Vasistha continued:

Thus, in my own heart, I experienced the earth-plane. Whatever was seen and experienced, was there, in my heart; but it looked as though it were different from me, in a subject-object relationship. That was because there is the universe everywhere, there is Brahman everywhere, and there is a void everywhere. **The earth-plane exists everywhere (it is of course nothing in truth); but it is pure consciousness. Like a dream-city, it has never been truly created in fact.**

There is neither a diversity nor a non-diversity. There is neither being nor non-being. There is no 'I'. How can one say that there is something? Though this creation is experienced, it does not exist in truth; or, if it is said to exist, it is Brahman alone that exists. When it is like a dream-city, how can one affirm or deny its existence?

Just as I experienced the earth-plane by the earth-contemplation (prthvi-dharana), I also experienced the water-plane by the water-dharana. By contemplation of water, I became water; though not-inert, I became inert. I dwelt in the bowels of the ocean for a long long time, making the appropriate sounds. I dwelt in the body of plants and creepers, and made my own channels within them. I entered into the mouths of living beings, and mingled with the vital organs in their bodies. I flowed restlessly along river beds, and I took rest at the dams en route. Rising as vapour, I entered into the heavens as cloud. There, I rested for some time with my friend the lightning.

I dwelt in all beings as the water-element, even as the infinite consciousness dwells in all beings. Coming into contact with the taste-buds in the tongue, I experienced different tastes; surely that experience is pure knowledge. The taste was not experienced by me, nor by the body, nor by any other. The experience happened within as the object of experiencing - and as such it is false.

When the flowers blossomed, I descended upon them as dew and tasted whatever sweetness was left in them after the bees had had their share. I dwelt in the fourteen classes of beings as awareness of taste - consciousness, though appearing to be unconsciousness. Assuming the form of droplets of water or spray, I enjoyed riding on wind and travelling from one place to another. Thus, in that state as water, I had varied and interesting experiences. I saw hundreds of worlds come into being and vanish. Whether this world has form or no form, it is pure consciousness and immaterial void. O Rama, you are nothing, but you are not non-existent. You are pure and supreme consciousness.

## section VI.2 - chapter 91

hemadisu suvarnatvam naradisu parakramah kacakacyam ca ratnadau  
varsadivavabhasanam (17)

Vasistha continued:

Then I became the fire-element through the contemplation of that element (teja-dharana). Fire or light is predominantly satva, and therefore it is always luminous, and it dispels darkness even as a king makes thieves flee his presence. I realised the misery of darkness, which destroys all good qualities, because I became the light in which everything is seen. Light bestows form on everything, even as a father bestows form on his offspring. In the netherworld, light shines at a minimum level, and there is greater darkness. In heaven, there is light alone - and always. Light is the sun that makes the lotus of action blossom.

I became the good colour (suvarna) in gold, etc., I became vitality and valour in men, in jewels sparkled as their fire, in rainclouds I became the light of the lightning, in passionate women I became the twinkle in their eyes, I became the strength of the lion. I was myself the hatred of the demons in the gods, and the hatred of the gods in the demons. I became the vital essence of all beings. I experienced being the sun, the moon, the stars, precious stones, fire (including the fire of cosmic destruction), lightning, lump. When I became fire, the burning cinders became my teeth, the smoke my hair, and fuel was my food. In the blacksmith's workshop, I became the fire that made the iron red-hot, and when it was beaten, I flew out as sparks.

Rama asked: O sage, when you had thus become the fire-element, were you happy or unhappy?

Vasistha replied: Just as when a person sleeps, he becomes temporarily insentient, though he is a sentient being, consciousness becomes an inert object. When it thinks of itself as the elements (earth etc.,) it thinks of itself as being inert. In fact, however, there is no such division of consciousness into subject and object.

Hence, whatever I experienced in the states of earth, water and fire, I experienced only as Brahman. If I had in fact become inert, how could I experience what it is to be earth, etc.? The sentient person thinks 'I am asleep' and he appears to be insentient. If one wakes up to the truth concerning oneself, then the materiality of the body vanishes. With the subtle (atimahika) body, he is then able to enter anything anywhere. This subtle body is nothing but pure intelligence. When one enters another state with thin intelligence out of his own wish, then obviously one does not experience unhappiness or sorrow.

Just as the world seen and experienced in a dream is enveloped by the darkness of ignorance, and is therefore unreal, even so are the other elements that one experiences. When one touches a river of sparks which he fancies in his own mind, he does not experience pain. Such was the case with my elemental experiences.

## section VI.2 - chapter 92

sarvapatalapadena bhutalodaradharina khamurdhna 'pi tada rama na tyaktta 'tha  
paranuta (50)

Vasistha continued:

Then I became the air-element by vayu-dharana (contemplation of oneself as wind). I taught the grass, leaves, creepers, and straw, the art of dancing. Wafting cool breeze, I became the dear friend of young ladies. At the same time, I was dreaded for my heat wave, hurricane, and tornadoes. In pleasure-gardens, I carried sweet scent; in hell, I carried sparks of fire. My motion was so fast that people considered mind and wind to be brothers. I flowed with the waters of the holy Ganga, and it would have been tiresome, but I was happy that we were able to relieve the tiresomeness and fatigue of others. I assisted space by carrying sound-waves; and therefore I came to be known as the dear friend of space. I dwelt in the vital organs of all beings. I knew the secrets of fire, and I was also known as the friend of the fire. I was operating the body-machine of all embodied (living) beings by being their life-breath. Hence, I became their friend and their enemy at the same time.

Though I stood in front of all, I could not be perceived by any. During the cosmic dissolution, I could lift huge mountains and hurl them as I pleased. As air, I performed six functions: gathering into a mass, drying up, upholding or supporting, vibrating or causing motion, conveying scent, and cooling. I was dedicated to the task of building and destroying bodies.

Being the element air, I perceived within each molecule of air a whole universe. In each of those universes, I again saw all the elements, etc., as in this universe. They were not real existences; they were but notions that arise in the cosmic void or space.

In those worlds, too, there were the gods and the planets, mountains and oceans, and the illusory notions of birth, old age and death. I roamed all those realms to my heart's content. Countless types of beings, like the celestials and the sages, rested on my body like so many flies and mosquitoes. By my leave they obtained their various forms and colours. They derived immense pleasure when I touched them, but they could not see me.

**Though the netherworlds were my feet, the earth my abdomen, and the heavens my head, even then I did not abandon my subatomic nature.** I was spread in all directions everywhere, at all times, and I did everything. I was the self of all. I was all. Yet, I was pure void. I experienced being something, and being nothing, the formless state, as also form, while retaining awareness of all this, as well as being unaware of these. There are countless such universes as the one that I experienced. Just as a man dreams that he dreams countless objects, I experienced universes within every atom, and universes within the atoms of those universes. I myself became all these universes; and though I was the self of all, and I pervaded all these, I did not so envelop all these. These are but words, even as are 'There is heat in fire' (heat in fire - denotes but one fact, though three words are used).

## section VI.2 - chapter 93

svapnasankalpasamsatau svapnasankalpapattanam yada sa sukuti nasta  
matsatkalpopasantitah (15)

Vasistha continued:

After all this, I re-entered my cottage or hermitage in outer space. I looked for my physical body. It was not there. But, I found an aged sage sitting in that hermitage. He was in deep meditation. He was seated in the lotus-posture. His face was radiant and beautiful, on account of the peace and bliss that filled him. His lotus-like hands had been placed in front of his navel, and they shone with an extraordinary brilliance. His eyes were closed, and he was obviously beyond body-consciousness. Not seeing my own body, but observing the sage sitting in meditation, I began to think as follows:

Surely, this is a great and perfected sage. Like me, he must have arrived here seeking total seclusion. Since he sought seclusion, he must have seen this hermitage in space. Perhaps he expected me to return and, seeing that I had not returned for a long time, he must have thrown that body out and himself occupied the hermitage. Let me return to my own realm.

When I thus reflected, and when my desire to stay in that hermitage ceased, that hermitage disappeared, and with it even that sage disappeared. **When one's thoughts (notions or concepts) cease, that which those thoughts brought into being also ceases. When my wish for the hermitage ceased, it disappeared.** Like a spacecraft, that hermitage fell. The sage fell. And I too descended along with him on to the earth-plane. The sage landed in the same state and posture in which he was in that hermitage. This was because, through the union of prana and apana, he had overcome the force of gravity. He did not even wake up from his meditation. His body was strong as a rock, and light as cotton.

In order to bring him back to normal body-consciousness, I assumed the form of a big cloud which rained and thundered. Then he regained body-consciousness. I enquired of him: "Where are you, O sage? What are you doing? Who are you? Though you fell from such height, you are oblivious of it; how is that?"

After contemplating the past for a few moments, the Sage said: "I have now recognised you, O holy one; I salute you. Kindly pardon me for not having saluted you earlier. It is indeed the nature of sages to be forgiving. O sage, I have wandered in the realms of the gods for a considerable time. I am tired of this samsara. When all this is pure consciousness, what is it that we call pleasure? Hence I reside in space, free from mental distractions and attraction. None of these sense-experiences is real, independent of consciousness objects of pleasure are sources of poison, sexual delights are delusions, sweetness robs the enjoyer of sweetness; he who is overcome by them, is surely destroyed. This life is short. It is full of distractions. By sheer accident, sometimes, one gets a little happiness here. Nothing is permanent or stable here. Like a pot on the potter's wheel, this body revolves endlessly in this life. There are powerful thieves (sense-objects) everywhere. Hence, I should be vigilant."

## section VI.2 - chapter 93

jiryante jiryatah kesa danta jiryanti jiryatah karyate jiryate sarvam  
trsnaiivaika na jiryate (86)

The Sage continued:

'This has happened today', 'This is mine' and, 'This is his' - occupied with such thoughts, people do not realise the passing of time. We have eaten and drunk a lot, we have roamed a lot, and we have experienced pain and pleasure. What is left to be done? How shall we gain supreme peace? All trees are wood, all beings are flesh, all earth is clay, everything is tainted by pain and impermanence. In what shall I repose confidence?

Who is my protector here? Neither wealth nor friends nor relatives nor acquaintances (or pleasures); all these are themselves victims of time. Whom shall I trust, when I realise that everyone is bound to die today or tomorrow?

Even the religious rites, which are governed by injunctions and prohibitions, make a man fall into this samsara, even as water flows from a higher place to a lower one. They bewilder and confuse a person. The unreal, by persistent apprehension, seems to be real; hence, since essentially the unreal is unreal, it is unreal, though it may appear to be real. But people are deluded, and they run after the objects of sense-pleasure, even as a river runs down fast to reach self-destruction in the ocean. The ignorant mind rushes towards sense-enjoyment, like an arrow released from a bow and it is not interested in goodness.

Pleasure is dreadful pain, prosperity is adversity, sensual enjoyment is the worst disease, and pursuit of pleasure is disgusting. Adversity is a great blessing. Happiness is followed by unhappiness. Life ends in death. Aha, the power of Maya! Sensual pleasure is worse than the most poisonous snake; the former kills instantly, by the merest contact. Since wealth, etc., cause delusion, they are worse than poison. It is true that pleasure is enjoyable and affluence is beautiful, but life is fleeting, and hence they are rendered meaningless. Pleasure and wealth are pleasing on the surface, but the end is unhappiness and sorrow.

**With the advancing of age, the hairs turn grey, and the teeth and everything else (the faculties and vitality etc.) decrease; only craving does not decrease.** There is a similarity between childhood and youth - both pass away quickly. Life ebbs away, like a flowing river, and the past can never be recovered.

After a long time, I have attained egolessness. I am not interested in heavenly pleasures. Like you, O sage, I too longed to resort to a secluded place. Hence, I saw that hermitage in space. I did not realise that it was your hermitage, and that you would one day return to it. I did not pay attention to it. Only now I know this. Only when one's attention is directed to these facts, does one perceive them with one's inner eye of intelligence; then one knows the past, present, and future - not until then. Such is the nature of the mind, even to the gods.

## section VI.2 - chapter 94

jano jarathabhedatvanna sankalparthabhajanam sa esa jirnabhedatvat  
satyakamatvabhajanam (22)

Vasistha continued:

I said to the sage: "Having heard your story, I think that you should continue to live in that hermitage in outer space. Get up and let us live in the world of the perfected beings (siddhas). It is good for each one to live in his own environment which does not cause mental distraction."

Both of us rose into space. We saluted each other and took leave of each other. He went where he thought fit, and I parted from him and went my own way.

Rama asked: Lord, as your body had disintegrated on this earth, with what sort of body did you roam the world of the siddhas?

Vasistha replied: When I went to the city of Indra, the king of the gods, I had a spatial body, and therefore nobody there recognised me. I could not be touched or held by anyone. I was like a thought, devoid of matter, but endowed with a form made of pure wish (sankalpa). This is comparable to the dream-experience in which dream bodies are produced of non-material substance. One who considers this impossible, ignores the experience of dream, and one who thus ignores the obvious experience is fit to be ignored. I was able to see others, especially those endowed with a material body, but they could not see me.

Rama asked again: But, then, how was it possible for that sage to see you?

Vasistha replied: O Rama, people like us have the power to materialise and realise our wish. Nothing ever happens to us that we do not so wish. Only people who are drowned in worldly activities forget in a moment the fact that they have a subtle (ativahika) body. When I decided "May this sage see me", then that sage saw me. **People in whom the perception of division has been deep-rooted, do not have the power to realise their wish. When one like the sage has weakened the perception of division, it is possible for him to realise his wish.** Even among siddhas or perfected ones, he who has more psychic transparency, is able to succeed in his efforts.

To return to the story, I roamed the celestial regions like a ghost.

Rama asked: Lord, do ghosts exist? What do they look like, and what do they do?

Vasistha replied: O Rama, ghosts do exist in this world. I shall now tell you what they are, and what they do. Surely, he who does not deal with a subject when requested to do so, is not a worthy teacher.

## section VI.2 - chapter 94

sattvavastambhayantrenamantrena 'radhitena va drsyante 'pi ca grhyante  
kadacit kenacit kvacit (39)

Vasistha continued:

Some ghosts (pisaca) have an ethereal body, though endowed with hands and feet, and they see people like you. Others have fearful shadowy forms; they overwhelm the bodies of human beings, and influence their minds. Some of them kill or harm people. Some are like fog or mist, and others have dream-like bodies. Some of them have bodies made of air alone. Some have bodies which are no more than the delusion of the perceiver. They cannot be grasped; nor can they grasp others. They experience heat and cold, pleasure, and pain. But they cannot eat, drink, or take anything. They have desire, hate, fear, anger, greed, and delusion. They are charmed and brought under control by mantras, drugs, penance, charity, courage, and righteousness. **They are seen and also grasped if one rests on satva. Also, this can happen by the use of magical symbols (mandalas) and formulas (mantras), and by worship performed by someone, at some time, and somewhere.**

Some ghosts are of a divine nature, and appear to be gods. Some are like humans, and others like serpents. Some are like dogs and jackals, and live in villages and forests, or in blind wells, roadsides, and other impure places. I shall now tell you about their origin.

In the one infinite consciousness, there arises a notion which becomes the jiva and then, by becoming more and more dense, it becomes the ego-sense, or mind (which is later called Brahma the creator). All these and the whole world arise and exist in a notion; hence they are unreal. It is experienced as real, just as one feels that one's notion is something real. In that sense, all these gods and other creatures are real. In truth, however, there is neither a field here, nor a seed, nor a farmer, nor the tree (known as creation or the world). However, in that notion of the field of creation, there exist all these beings. The resplendent ones among them are the gods; the half-baked ones are humans; they in whom there is a thick veil of impurity are the worms and such creatures; they who are devoid of any fruitfulness, who are empty and bodiless (asarira), are known as ghosts or picacas. The differentiation is due not to the whim or fancy of the creator Brahma, but to their own choice. They became whatever they wished to become. However, in fact, they are all but consciousness, appearing to be subtle (ativahika) bodies. It is on account of persistent self-deception that they seem to have physical or material forms.

The ghosts, too, exist in their own forms, doing what they have to do, according to their own nature, and experiencing various experiences. They see and communicate with one another as if in a dream. Some of them do not communicate, like the dream-objects in a person's dream. Like the ghosts, there are also the goblins and disembodied beings. The ghosts create their own circle of darkness of ignorance, which even the sun's rays cannot penetrate. They thrive in the darkness of ignorance; the light of knowledge is their enemy.

## section VI.2 - chapter 95

moksah sitalacittatvam bandhah santaptacittata etasminnapi na 'rthitvam aho lokasya mudhata (29 )

Vasistha continued:

As I said, I was roaming the heaven like a ghost. No one could see me. Though they were under my control, they could not control me. One day I thought, "I can realise my wish; may I be seen henceforth by these gods." Immediately my wish became real. They saw me.

The gods had different notions concerning my appearance in their midst. They who did not know my identity, thought that I had risen from the earth; they called me Parthiva (Earth) Vasistha. Some thought I had descended through the rays of the sun, and I became known as Tajasa (Light) Vasistha. They who thought I wafted in with the wind, called me Vata (Air) Vasistha. They who thought that I had risen from the waters, called me Vari (Water) Vasistha.

In due course of time, I came to have a physical or material body. To me there was no difference between the subtle and the physical bodies; they were both pure consciousness in reality. Even here I appear to function in and through this body, because of this discourse. A jivanmukta (a sage liberated while living) is indeed Brahman, and he has an ethereal body; even so, one who is a bodiless sage, is also Brahman. There is no notion in me other than of Brahman. Hence, even when I am engaged in diverse activities, this realisation of Brahman does not cease. Just as to a dreamer, the unborn and bodiless-dream-object is real, even so this world is real and material to me. Even so do all these creations and worlds shine as if real and material, but they have never been created.

Because of the recurrent feeling of the ethereal Vasistha that arises in the minds of all of you and also in me, I appear to be seated here. In truth, however, all this is pure void, and all these are only notions that arise in the mind of the Creator. Notions like 'I' and 'you' have become firmly established in your consciousness, because you have not cared to investigate them. If they are investigated, and their true nature is understood, they vanish very soon. When the truth is realised, all these scenes of so-called creations vanish, even as a mirage ceases to be seen as water when its true nature is understood.

In fact, by a mere study of this Maharamayana (Yoga Vasistha), the reality is realised; there is no difficulty in it whatsoever. But he who is not interested in liberation, is a worm, not human. One should carefully investigate the bliss of liberation, and the sorrow inevitable to ignorance. By the study of the Maharamayana, one attains to supreme peace. **Liberation confers 'inner coolness' (peace) on the mind; bondage promotes psychological distress (psychological scorching fire). Even after realising this, one does not strive for liberation. How foolish are the people!** Such people are overcome by desire for sense-gratification. But even they can cultivate a desire for liberation by a study of this scripture.

The assembly dispersed; end of seventeenth day.

## section VI.2 - chapter 96

na ca 'dyapi mrtam rama cinmatram kasyacitkvacit na ca sunya sthita  
bhumistasmaccitpuruso 'ksayah (16)

Vasistha continued:

I have narrated the story of the rock which enables you to realise the truth quite clearly. Nothing exists anywhere at any time; Brahman alone exists as a mass of Brahman without any division whatsoever. Brahman is a mass of consciousness. It does not undergo any change. The cosmic being is but a dream-object in that consciousness, whether that being is subtle or gross. Hence, there is neither a Brahma the creator nor the creation, nothing but the indivisible consciousness. The diversity perceived in a dream does not create a diversity in the dreamer; even so the notion of a creation does not create a division in consciousness. Consciousness alone is, no creation; the dream-mountain is the dreamer not a mountain. The infinite consciousness (cidakasa) is I, it is the three worlds, it is the purusa (cosmic being) and it is you.

Minus this cidakasa, the body is a corpse. This infinite consciousness cannot be cut nor burnt and hence it never ceases. Therefore, no one ever dies nor is anyone born. Consciousness is the person; if it is said that that person dies and therefore consciousness dies, it is like saying that when a son dies, his father dies too. If consciousness dies, then everything dies and the world becomes empty. **O Rama, this consciousness is not dead till now, anywhere, in anyone; nor has this creation stood as a void; hence it is clear that the innermost being of everyone, which is pure consciousness, is unchanging.** When this is realised, where is birth and death?

When one realises "I am pure consciousness", he is unconcerned with life or death, pleasure or pain. Fie on that wretch in whom this realisation has not arisen (or has ceased). One who realises "I am pure experiencing or consciousness" is unaffected by any calamity. He is not affected by mental distress or psychological illness. When one feels "I am the body," he forfeits strength and wisdom; he who realises "I am pure consciousness", gains them. The latter is not subjected to greed, delusion, or vanity. Alas, how foolish are they who wail "We shall die" when thinking of the death of the body. When one rests in the knowledge "I am consciousness", he feels a blow from the most powerful weapon, as if it were the touch of a flower.

If consciousness can die, then people die all the time. Please tell me how is it that you have not died already? Nothing dies. Consciousness alone entertains the twin notions 'I am alive' and 'I am dead'. Consciousness sees or becomes aware of samsara (the world-appearance), and consciousness becomes aware of liberation. It becomes aware of pleasure and pain without abandoning its true nature. In a state of self-ignorance, it gets involved in delusion; in a state of self-knowledge, it frees itself from delusion. But, consciousness itself never rises, and it never sets. There is no such thing as the reality, and there is nothing called ignorance or falsehood. Whatever is conceived of by one, that exists in that manner.

## section VI.2 - chapter 97

tasmatsvaniscaye yasmin yah sthitah sa tatha tatah avasyam phalamapnoti na  
cedbalyannivartate (8)

Vasistha continued:

Since the world is the dream of the supreme self, and since everything is pervaded by Brahman, it is experienced as Brahman. The world-appearance or illusion is perceived; the supreme consciousness remains unseen. Hence, the illusion may be regarded as the real imagination of the self. From another point of view, this world-appearance is an illusion though the reality of infinite consciousness remains incomprehensible. Hence, there arises the notion of a complete void or 'sunya; this, too, is real. The infinite consciousness (or the supreme person that arises in it) is not involved to activity; the world springs from the unmanifest cause (nature). This view is also tenable since it is experienced as such. Others hold that Brahman appears to be the world in a state of ignorance (just as a rope appears as a snake in darkness). This, too, is based on direct experience and hence real. The theory that the entire universe is the conglomeration of atoms, is also acceptable; by proper investigation, this knowledge or understanding has been arrived at.

There are some who say that the world is what one sees it to be, and that this principle applies to 'the other world', too, and that therefore this world is neither real nor unreal, but the reality is purely subjective. There are others who declare that the external world alone is real, and there is no other reality. They also express the truth, in as much as they do not reach whatever may be beyond the experience of their own and others' senses. They are also right who declare that everything is changing all the time, for the power that thus engineers constant change is omnipotent. The belief that the jiva dwells in the body, like a sparrow imprisoned in a pot, and at death flies away from it to another realm, and also a similar belief held by foreigners are also acceptable since they are accepted in their own countries and communities. Sainly men look upon all with equal vision; they who know the reality, know that it is the self of all.

There are those who assert that nature manifests itself naturally, without an intelligent creator, for one sees that in nature there are many undesired and unintelligent happenings (like natural calamities) - such a view is also reasonable. On the other hand, they who assert the existence of the one universal doer of everything, are also right; their mind is saturated with the universal power. They who say that this world exists, as also 'the other world', are right, too. In their eyes, pilgrimage, rituals, etc., are meaningful. The notion that everything is void or sunya is right, for it is the result of much investigation. The infinite consciousness is like the purest crystal; it reflects whatever notion one holds. The knowers of the truth have realised that this infinite consciousness is neither a void nor a non-void; it is omnipotent, but not that which is seen or known. **Hence, whatever be one's conviction, if one adheres to that conviction, one surely reaches the same goal (attains the same fruit), as long as he does not toy with these notions or realisations in a childish manner.** One should investigate the truth in the company of the knowers of the truth, and then one should stand firm in one's own realisation, without being distracted nor deflected.

## section VI.2 - chapter 97

sarva eva 'nisam sreya dhavanti pranino balat parinimnam payamsiva tadvicarya  
samasrayet (22)

Vasistha continued:

There are wise people here and there, who are wise in terms of the knowledge of the scriptures, as also in terms of their conduct. One should seek their company. There may be many who talk a lot about the scriptures, but he among them who promotes the joy and delight of all, and whose conduct is unimpeachable, is the best among them. **All people, at all times, seek their own good, as if under compulsion, just as water flows downwards, one should understand this, and resort to the company of the wise.**

Rama asked: This world rests like a creeper on the tree of the supreme being. In it, who are the ones who see the ultimate truth, after having duly investigated the past and the future?

Vasistha replied: In every community, there are a number of wise men, by whose light (or grace) there is light in this world. All the people run up and down, like dry blades of grass floating on this ocean of samsara. Forgetful of the self, the dwellers in heaven are burnt in the fire of pleasure. The deluded demons are destroyed by their enemies, the gods, and hurled into a pit (hell) by Narayana. The celestial artistes (gandharvas) do not even inhale a bit of the scent (gandha) of wisdom. They are lost in the enjoyment of their own music, etc. The celestials known as vidyadharas do not respect sages; being the supporters (adhara) of learning (vidya), they are full of vanity. The demi-gods, known as yakshas, consider themselves immortals, and they display their dexterity before aged and infirm people. The demons, known as raksasas live in delusion. The ghosts (pisacas) are forever interested in harassing people. The dwellers of the netherworld, known as the nagas, are inert and unintelligent. The demons, known as asuras, are more like worms which dwell in holes in the ground. How can they acquire any wisdom at all?

Even human beings are narrow-minded and petty minded, interested in the trivia of life. They spend most of their time in the pursuit of evil desires. They do not come into contact with anything that is good or wise at all. They are tempted away from the path of order and wisdom by their own vanities and desires. The class of people known as yogini (note: the practitioners of 'black' arts) are fallen into the pit of drinking and eating like uncultured people.

But there are some liberated beings among the gods (Visnu, Brahma, Rudra, etc.), among the leaders (like Kasyapa, Narada, Sanatkumara), among demons (Hiranyaksa, Bali, Prahlada, etc.), among raksasas (like Vibhisana, Prahasta, Indrajit), among nagas (Taksaka, etc.), and other liberated ones in other planes. Even among human beings there are liberated ones, but they are extremely rare. There are millions of beings; but a liberated one is rare.

## section VI.2 - chapter 98

na nastikyanna castikyatkastanusthanavaidikah manojnamadhuracarah  
priyapesalavadinah (3)

Vasistha continued:

The enemies of holiness, which are greed, delusion, etc., are greatly weakened in the case of the wise men, who are full of dispassion, and who rest in the supreme state. They do not give way to exhilaration or to anger; they do not get involved in anything, or take anything. They neither agitate people, nor are they agitated by them. **They are neither atheists, nor are they confined to a traditional belief. They do not engage themselves in torturous practices, even if they are ordained by the scriptures. Their actions and behaviour are full of common-sense and sweetness, soft (gentle), and affectionate.**

They gladden the hearts of all. They point out the wise path, and instantly and spontaneously they decide what is best. They engage themselves in all kinds of activity externally; but inwardly they are cool and tranquil. They love investigating the meanings of the scriptures. They know who is who (who is a mature person and who is immature). They know what to accept and what to reject. Their actions are appropriate to the occasion.

They avoid forbidden actions. They enjoy good company. They worship, with the flowers of wisdom, everyone who seeks their company and their teaching. They rob the people of their sorrow and grief. They are kind and gentle; but when the rulers of the earth become unrighteous and oppressive, they shake them up, even as an earthquake shakes a mountain. They encourage people in distress and enhance the joy of the happy ones. They restrain the ignorant and foolish behaviour of people.

When one is afflicted by calamities and mental confusion, trials and tribulations, the saints alone are one's refuge. Recognising them by the characteristics given above, one should resort to them for peace. This ocean of samsara is impassable, except with the help of the saints. One should not become passive, fatalistically accepting whatever happens. If all the qualities described are not found in one person, if even one of these qualities is present, one should resort to such a holy man, ignoring all the other defects that may be found in him. One should learn to recognise the good in others, as well as the defects; and then one should strive to resort to the company the good and the wise. Even if a good person has some defect, one should serve him, avoiding major evil tendencies. If one does not overcome evil tendencies, even a good man becomes wicked. This is what I have observed. It is indeed a great misfortune and a calamity to the entire society when a good man turns wicked on account of circumstances.

Hence, one should abandon all other activity, and be devoted to the saint. There is no obstacle to this. This alone is capable of bestowing the best of both the worlds. One should never be far away from the saints; for, by their very proximity, the saints promote goodness everywhere.

## section VI.2 - chapter 99

ayam so 'hamidam tanma ityakalpitakalpanam jagadyatha nram spharam  
tathai voccairgunaih krmeh (9)

Rama asked:

We human beings have diverse means of overcoming sorrow. What about the worms and flies, as also the trees?

Vasistha said:

All beings rest in consciousness, as is appropriate to their nature. They, too, have their own cravings and desires. In our case, there are minor obstructions to the fulfilment of our desires, and in their case the difficulties are enormous. Just as the cosmic person (virat) strives, even so do worms and flies; a little boy flourishes a clenched fist - marvellous is vanity! Birds are born and die in empty space. Even an ant has to eat and look after the family needs. The little fly flitting across a room is equal in dignity to the vulture Garuda flying aloft. **Notions like 'I am this' 'This is mine' are common to both human beings and worms, with all the lofty implications of such notions.**

Even as we strive to gain means of livelihood, the worms strive for it. They, too, love life. A slave takes little interest in the new country; even so do the cows and other animals not take interest in their 'owner's' house. They too have pleasure and pain, but they are free from a sense of 'mine' and 'thine'. Even a seed and a young sprout experience some pain (or awareness) when bitten by a worm, even as a sleeping man experiences the annoyance of a flea. Both Indra (the king of gods) and a worm experience the same attraction, aversion, fear, desire for food, and sex, pain and pleasure, and the distress caused by birth and death. The only difference exists in understanding the meaning of words, and the nature of the elements, and the anticipation of the future events.

Trees which are asleep, as it were, and also the immovable objects, like rocks, etc., exist in the unbroken experience of infinite consciousness. In them there is no notion of division. All this is but pure, infinite consciousness, which thinks it is asleep in the rocks, etc., as it was in the previous creation. Hence, you remain as you are, and I remain as I am. There is no pleasure or pain in the supreme self or consciousness. Ignorance alone is the cause for all delusion. But when the ignorance is dispelled by understanding, then what is seen is no-thing. When the truth concerning this world-dream is understood, it ceases. What then is desirable here, and what is fit to be gained? When the wave subsides, water is not destroyed. When the body is destroyed, the consciousness remains unchanged.

Only an ignorant person persists in his notion concerning the world, and he experiences it as if real. The right understanding of this truth opens the door to self-knowledge. Just as an object is reflected in a mirror, so does this world appear in Brahman. Though the reflection seems to be in the mirror, it is not there: even so, though the world appears to be, it is not there. It seems to produce an effect, though it itself is unreal, even as there is discharge of energy when one dreams of having sex. However, only an ignorant man knows why he considers the world to be real!

## section VI.2 - chapter 100

samvit satya 'stvasatya va tavanmatrah smrtah puman sa yathaniscayo nunam tat satyamiti niscayah (15)

Rama asked:

There are others, O Sage, who hold that, since death is inevitable, one should live happily as long as one lives, and that, once the body is reduced to ashes, there is nothing which survives. What is their way out of the sorrow inherent in samsara?

Vasistha replied:

Whatever the inner intelligence firmly believes in, that alone is experienced by it, as if it is obvious. Consciousness is universal and indivisible: that is one and that alone is diverse. Nothing else existed before the concept of creation arose; hence, nothing else is really true. They are surely ignorant who do not see the reality that is expounded in the scripture. For us, they are as good as dead. They who have realised that all this is pure consciousness (Brahman), do not need our instruction either.

Whatever arises as real in the 'body' of consciousness, is experienced as real; everyone is made of that, whether there is a real physical body or not. If it is contended that (sense-) experience alone is consciousness, then one is bound to suffer; for, as long as one lives, there are bound to be contradictory experiences. On the other hand, if one realises that this world is but a notion that arises in consciousness, the division or the contradiction ceases, and therefore there is no contradictory experience either. Even as floating dust-particles do not affect space, pleasure and pain do not touch one who is established in the realisation of the one indivisible, infinite consciousness.

We do not apprehend a body or a personality or even a jiva; all this is pure consciousness; and, whatever notion arises in it, is experienced as such. Whether it is real or unreal, it is that which experiences the existence of the body. **Whether consciousness is regarded as real or unreal, the person is that alone; what that consciousness considers real is surely real (or, consciousness is real as the person or self).** (That is, even the materialist does not deny the existence of the person, and hence he cannot deny the existence of consciousness). This doctrine confirms the teaching of all scriptures.

When this understanding is clouded, perverse doctrines arise; when that misunderstanding is removed, it yields the highest fruit. But even when it is not rightly understood, it does not cease to be. If it is said that even after self-knowledge this right understanding can once again be clouded, then there is no hope of getting rid of sorrow. If consciousness is realised as real, it is resorted to by the wise. If it is considered unreal, then one becomes inert like a rock. It is when this infinite consciousness 'sleeps', as it were, that the experience of objects arises, and this world comes into being. Thus, he who considers this world and the sense-experience alone as real, is inert and 'asleep'.

## section VI.2 - chapter 100

mrtah sa samvidatmatvadbhuyo no vetti samsrtim jnanadhauta na ya samvinna sa  
tisthatyasamsrtih (30)

Rama asked:

There are they, O sage, who think that this limitless universe exists on all sides. They do not see that it is a mass of consciousness. They see it as it is ordinarily seen; but they do not see that it is changing and is moving towards destruction. In the case of such persons, what method is there to overcome mental distress?

Vasistha replied:

Before answering that question, one should pose another. Does that person feel that matter is indestructible as matter, and that the body is immortal? Then, where is sorrow? But, if this body is made of its various parts, then surely it will perish.

If one knows that the self is pure consciousness (and not the physical body), then, when he dies, there is no samsara (world-appearance) in his consciousness. If one's understanding is not thus purified by right understanding or wisdom, it does not remain without the support of samsara. If, however, he thinks that there is no such thing as consciousness, then he experiences a state which is inertness. One may think that the experiences in the embodied state alone are real. Being firmly established in this conviction, he thinks that death is the final end to sorrow. But this is only because of imperfect experience. They who believe in the non-existence of consciousness, become inert substances when the body is abandoned, and thus they sink into the impenetrable darkness of ignorance. They, on the other hand, who believe that the world exists as a relative reality (as in a dream), continue to experience this world-illusion.

Whether one considers this world to be a permanent reality or a changing phenomenon, there is the experience of pain and pleasure all the same. They who think that the world is a changing but purely material substance (devoid of consciousness), are childish. Have nothing to do with them. They who realise that bodies exist in consciousness, are wise; salutations to them. They who think that there is intelligence in the body, are ignorant.

It is pure consciousness, with the jiva as its body, that keeps going up and down in this cosmic space. Whatever that jiva contemplates within itself, that it experiences. Just as clouds make different patterns in the sky, and just as waves arise on the surface of the ocean, even so do these worlds appear in the infinite consciousness. The dream-city is only the dreamer's mind; it did not even need the co-operating causes (like the building materials) to build it. Even so is the universe; it is pure consciousness, and nothing else. They who realise this, are free from delusion, from attachment (dependency) and from mental distress, while continuing to perform appropriate actions spontaneously in situations which the stream of life bears along.

## section VI.2 - chapter 101

curnatam yantu me 'ngani santu merupamani ca ka ksatih ka ca va  
vrddhiscidrupavapuso mama (14)

Vasistha continued:

Everyone is pure consciousness alone. What else can there be except this consciousness? When consciousness alone exists, what is there to gain, and what to reject? When there is no other, raga (attraction or affection) and dvesa (rejection or aversion) become meaningless.

Consciousness alone is human beings, god, naga (inhabitants of the nether world), mountains, and moving objects. I am pure consciousness, and so are you. We shall die some time or the other, but consciousness does not perish. Consciousness does not have an object for it to become aware of; hence, all talk of unity and diversity is meaningless.

Even the materialists (they who believe in the reality of the physical world) allude to this consciousness, only because they do not deny the self, the intelligence or consciousness that makes them think and say what they say. This consciousness is called Brahman by some, jnanam (self-knowledge), sunya (void), the power of delusion, purusa (the self), cidakasa (space or plane of consciousness), Siva, self (atman), etc., by others. All these descriptions are consciousness, because it is consciousness alone that considers itself thus (i.e., the intelligence in each one of these people who holds a different view).

**May my limbs be pulverised, or may they become as powerful as the Meru-mountain. What is lost and what is gained (increased) when it is realised that I am pure consciousness?** My grandfather and others are dead, but consciousness is not dead. Consciousness is unborn and undying. It is like space. How can sky die? Just as the world is unseen (is destroyed) by the darkness of the night, and just as the world is seen (created) again at dawn, even so is birth and death. One should therefore regard death as a joyful event, for one goes from one body to another; only fools grieve on such joyful occasions. Or, if you think that one is not born again in another body, even then there is no cause for grief, for then death puts an end to the disease of birth and death. Hence, the wise man does not grieve or rejoice in life or in death. If one who is conscious of his own evil-doings fears death, even that is meaningless, since such a person suffers here as well as in the other world. Hence, why do you wail, "Oh, I die, I die, I die", instead of exclaiming in joy, "I shall be, I shall be, I shall be." Even these are meaningless words when you realise that the infinite consciousness alone exists. Space exists in space. What is the meaning of words like 'birth' and 'death'? Knowing that you are pure consciousness, eat, drink, and live without the sense of 'I' and 'mine'. You are like the sky. How can desires arise in you? The wise man enjoys what is pure if it comes to him unsought, borne down by the river of life. If there are impurities borne down by the river of life or by circumstances, the wise man is unconcerned about them, as in deep sleep.

## section VI.2 - chapter 102

upala api mitrani bandhavo vanapadah vanamadhya sthitasya 'pi svajana  
mrgapotakah (3)

Rama asked:

When one has realised the supreme truth, what does he become?

Vasistha replied:

To such a one, even the rocks become friends, and the trees in the forest are relatives; even when he lives in the middle of a forest, the very animals become his kith and kin. A kingdom appears to be void in his eyes, calamities become great good fortune; even when he lives in a kingdom, he rejoices in (celebrates) his misfortunes. Disharmony becomes harmony, sorrow is great joy, and even when engaged in intense activity he experiences deep silence. He sees utter non-action in action. Awake, he is in deep sleep; alive, he is as good as dead. He does everything but nothing. He enjoys without tasting the pleasure. He is a very dear friend of all. He is free from pity for others, but full of compassion. Free from craving, he appears to want. He is only interested in the proper performance of his actions.

He appears to be happy and unhappy in the respective situation. He does not abandon what is natural, and plays his appropriate role in this drama of life. He sympathises with the sorrowful, and rejoices with the happy ones, without being tainted at heart.

Rama asked: But some clever though ignorant people can also pretend to be in that state (observing celibacy like a horse, without the right spirit). How does one distinguish the true from the false?

Vasistha replied: Whether it is true or false, such a nature is praiseworthy. The truly wise ones live as if they had various desires, and they laugh with the fools, though they themselves are wise. No one knows their inner peace and illumined state. Only wise ones know other wise men. The true men of wisdom do not expose their wisdom, nor parade it to win the admiration of the masses. The latter are distractions in the eyes of the wise. 'I wish everyone to know how good I am, so that they may worship me' - such thoughts arise in the mind of the vain man, not of the wise one.

Powers like levitation, etc., are gained by mantras, drugs, etc., even by the ignorant people. He who is prepared to make the necessary effort, can gain these, whether he is enlightened or not. It is the ego that makes the effort, and gains the powers. These powers intensify the vasanas or mental conditioning. But the enlightened man is not interested in any of these. He regards the world as a blade of grass. The enlightened one lives a non-volitional life, engaging himself spontaneously in appropriate action. Even the celestial pleasure-gardens do not make one as happy as the wisdom of the enlightened man. The latter sees, when his own body is subjected to heat and cold, etc., as if all these happened to someone else. He lives for the sake of others, with a heart full of compassion for all beings. He may live in a cave, in a hermitage, or a house, or he may be wandering constantly. He may be a teacher or a student. He may have psychic powers, or he may be forever in samadhi.

## section VI.2 - chapter 103

asmacchastradrte sreya na bhutam na bhavisyati tatah paramabodharthamidameva vicaryatam (25)

Vasistha continued:

The infinite consciousness alone shines as this world-appearance. How can it perish? There is no possibility for the existence of another other than consciousness. When the body perishes, consciousness does not perish. If it is said that consciousness ceases when the body perishes, then it is a matter for rejoicing as there is cessation of samsara and sorrow! If it is said that consciousness exists as long as the body exists, how is it that the dead body is not conscious? All these arguments are not valid. The infinite consciousness alone is real, and whatever it wishes to experience, it does experience as existence, because there is no obstruction to the realisation of its notions. The world has never been created; what is, is the infinite consciousness.

This consciousness itself wishes to experience its infinite potencies. It knows itself when it is aware of itself, and it is ignorant of itself when it is unaware of itself. Therefore, even knowledge and ignorance are pure consciousness, and there is no such division, in truth. Hence, one should engage oneself seriously in the realisation of the self; self-knowledge bestows on one the best of both worlds.

Abandon every kind of mental agitation, and devote every moment of your life to study and investigation of this scripture. One surely gains that for which one strives; if one neglects it, he loses it. The mind flows along the course of wisdom or of ignorance, in whichever direction you make it flow. **Except through this scripture one cannot gain what is good now or at any time. Therefore, for perfect realisation of the supreme truth, one should fervently investigate this scripture alone.** This scripture does more good to you than your father and mother and all your friends put together.

The dreadful illness known as samsara or bondage to worldly existence is not cured by any remedy other than self-knowledge. It is a great pity that you waste your time, and await the hour of death. Foolish people who run after wealth and fame, pawn their very lives in gaining and preserving them. Why do they not spend their life and their time in the investigation of the scripture and the attainment of immortality? It is through self-knowledge that one can destroy misfortunes and calamities by their very roots.

It is for your good that I cry aloud day and night and declare the truth. Listen to this, and realise the self by the self. If you do not rid yourself now of this dire illness, what will you do after death? There is no scripture like this to help you in attaining self-knowledge. Let it shine like a lamp, let it awaken and instruct you like a father, and let it bring you joy like a wife. In this scripture, there is nothing new; but the truth has been presented in a pleasant fashion with a number of stories. It is the truth that is proclaimed in this scripture, that is important; not the one who has declared the truth or composed the scripture.

## section VI.2 - chapter 103

na ' buddhipurvam tatkarma sambhavatyanga kasyacit buddhipurvam tu yad  
vyartham kuryidunmattako hi kah (69)

Vasistha continued:

One should not associate with another who derides and belittles this scripture, either through ignorance or through delusion. I know what I am, and I know who you all are. I am but your own consciousness, seated here, in order to instruct you; I am neither human, nor celestial, nor divine. I am here as the fruit of your merit. In fact, I am neither this nor the other.

One should find here in this world the appropriate remedy for the illness known as samsara (world-illusion). Unless one cultivates a disinterest in the objective and material existence of this world, the belief or the notion of its existence cannot be weakened. There is no other means to rid the self of its impurity of self-limitation. The only way is to weaken the vasana (self-limitation, or conditioning or the notion that the world exists). If the object does exist, then such a notion of its existence is natural; but it does not, though it seems to be, in the absence of the light of enquiry.

The apparent world-existence has no real cause; how can the effect of an unreality be other than unreal? How can a non-material (spiritual) cause bring about a material effect? How can matter arise in pure consciousness any more than a shadow exist in the sun? It is not correct to say that the world is a pure and accidental combination of atoms; they are inert substances. **The world-creation is not the action of ignorance; but, on the other hand, if it is the action of intelligence, why will an intelligent being indulge in such futile action, like a madman?** Hence, it is clear that the world is an appearance, and not existence. We appear to exist in pure void, like objects in a dream. The world is but pure consciousness, and there is no difference between the two; the one is expressed in two ways, like 'air' and 'motion in space'. The infinite consciousness plus the appearance is known as the world; the world minus its form (appearance) is the infinite consciousness (appearance is illusory and illusion does not exist). Just as consciousness creates dreams in a dreamer, it creates the world in the waking state; the two are constituted of the same substance. Where then is the reality of the body, even of Brahma the creator? It arose as the first dream-object in consciousness.

Brahman alone exists, not even the cosmic person. But all these are experienced, as if they were real, over a long period of time. Yet, what is unreal is unreal, even if it has been experienced for a long period of time, and by all. From the creator Brahma right down to the pillar, all appearance of materiality is unreal, like objects seen in a dream. These objects appear to have a form, even as the objects seen in a dream seem to have a form during the dream. Therefore, tell me what is material existence and what are the objects of this world-appearance? Where are they? What are they? What is unity? What is diversity? What am I? What are notions concerning the objects of existence? What are notions and vasanas or self-limitation or psychological conditioning, which perpetuate the notion of world-existence? Where are they? They are not! Realise this, and rest in a state of nirvana.

## section VI.2 - chapter 104 105

mrnmayam tu yatha bhandam mrcchunyam nopalabhyate cinmayam tu tatha cetyain  
cicchunyam nopalabhyate (105/38)

Vasistha continued:

The subtle sound-vibration constitutes space, and the subtle touch-vibration constitutes air. Their friction causes heat, or the fire-element. When the fire subsides, there is water. When all these get together, earth arises from it. But all these are a play of simple vibrations which are formless. How does form arise? After reflecting on this for a considerable time, one comes to the understanding that it is consciousness that gives rise to form. Why not understand this truth right in the beginning? Neither the gross elements nor the forms exist in truth; they arise as they arise in a dream. As forms arise in dreams, so do they arise in the waking state, too. If this is realised, there is liberation. Whether the body continues to exist or ceases to exist, there is no sorrow.

Neither in the waking state nor in dream is there a real world. Consciousness experiences itself as such, and that experience is known as the world. Just as the world seen in a dream is 'nothing', even so, the world seen in the waking state is 'nothing'. Just as one man's dream-experiences are unknown to the person sleeping next to him, one man's experiences in this world are unknown to another.

In dream, the barren woman seems to have a son; in the waking state, the impossible seems to have happened. The unreal appears to be real. Something which has not really been experienced appears to be a real experience, even as one experiences one's own funeral in a dream. When one dreams of falling into a pit, his bed becomes that pit. In blinding light, one sees nothing (it is like darkness).

In dream, the dreamer dies, abandoning his dream-relatives. But, then he wakes up, freed from that dream-life and death. Even so, after experiencing joy and sorrow here for a long time, one dies. The dreamer wakes to experience another dream known as the world. Even so, after experiencing this world, he goes on to yet another. While dreaming, the dreamer does not realise that a previous dream was unreal (dream). Even so, one does not remember the past life, but considers the present life alone to be real. The dreamer is said to 'wake up' when his sleep comes to an end; even so, the person who lives in this world and dies, wakes up elsewhere. The distinction between dream and waking is, therefore, purely arbitrary and academic. Both of them are based on the sole reality of the infinite consciousness.

All the moving and unmoving things are but pure consciousness. When an illusory notion of division arises in it, consciousness comes to be known as the world. **A pot is but clay; in the absence of clay there is no pot. All objects are pure consciousness; and, if consciousness is not, nothing is seen.** Water is liquid; minus its liquidity, it is not water (what is dehydrated water?). Even so is consciousness. Everything here is pure consciousness; minus pure consciousness, nothing is.

## section VI.2 - chapter 106

tgnagulmalatadinam vrddhimagacchataamrtau yah syadunmamato bhavah sa cidakasa  
ucyate (8)

Vasistha continued:

The same thing has been given two names for the sake of convenience: the two (waking and dreaming) are the same, like two cups of water. That which is common to them, which is their common substratum, is pure consciousness.

The attitude or the nature of a tree, which draws nourishment through its roots and exists, is pure consciousness. Similarly, when one's desires have turned away, and when the mind is at perfect peace, then there is pure consciousness. In the case of a healthy man, when his mind is free from objective notions, and sleep has not yet come, there is pure consciousness. **That nature which exists in grass and creepers growing in their proper seasons without the feeling of mine-ness, is pure consciousness.** The nature of one who is free from percepts and concepts, but is not dead, and whose being is clear and pure like the winter sky, is pure consciousness. The pure being of wood and rock, which are as they were created, as also the mind of pure beings, is pure consciousness. That is pure consciousness (cidakasa) in which all things exist, from which they emerge, which is everything, and which is all in all.

When sleep has ceased, the world-appearance rises; when that ceases, there is pure consciousness (cidambaram). That 'nothing' which remains after everything has been negated as 'not this, not this', is pure consciousness (cidambaram). The entire universe is but pure consciousness, as it was, and as it is. Even when there is perception of forms and apprehension of notions and concepts, that consciousness alone exists.

Knowing this, be free from conditioning, even while perceiving the objects of the senses, just as a man who sleeps is yet inwardly 'awake'. Remaining inwardly silent like a rock, talk, walk, drink, and take. This world has not been created at all, for it has no cause; no effect arises without a cause. Hence, consciousness remains as consciousness, without change. When its experience of its own inherent potentialities is continued, it appears as this world. Thus, this objective world has not been created at all, does not exist, and will not come into being; it will not perish either; for, how can non-existence perish? What appears to be is the reflection of consciousness within itself. However, since there is no duality, there is neither a reflection nor an appearance. Who knows whether 'what is' is real or unreal?! Who knows why and how a man dreams, or what the dreams are, except that they are his own consciousness? The Creator and all things are but pure consciousness. When this is realised, it is known as Brahman; when it is not realised, it is known as illusion, Maya, ignorance, and the world. It is that consciousness alone that knows itself as 'I am mountain', 'I am Rudra', 'I am the ocean', and 'I am the cosmic person', just as a person, while dreaming, thinks that all these exist in his dream. All external objects are reflected in the mirror of one's consciousness which, when enquired into, is seen immediately. When thus investigated, their true nature as pure consciousness is realised.

## section VI.2 - chapter 107 108

ato jivannapi mrta iva sarvo 'vatisthate asavaham ca tvah ceti jivanto 'pi  
mrta iva (107/2)

Vasistha continued:

The whole universe is pure consciousness; but, as an object, it is inert appearance.

**Hence, though alive, everything is as if dead; even so, I and you are as if dead, though alive.**

Abandoning the world-idea in the world, and the I-you-idea in ourselves, engage yourself in appropriate action. Why? Why does this world-appearance arise at all? There is no reason, even as in the play of a young child there is no reason or motivation. Hence, one should not waste one's life-time in useless pursuit of knowledge concerning matter and mind. If one seeks gold, one does not clean the sky!

Listen to the following story: In this universe, in this continent known as Jambudvipa, there was a famous city by name Tatam, which was ruled by a king known as Vipascit (lit: learned, wise). His glory was indescribable. Even the court poets had exhausted all their talents without exhausting a description of his virtues. But they loved and enjoyed his company. He was fond of them and gave them lavish gifts every day. He was devoted to the brahmanas (priests), and also to the fire which he devoutly worshipped every day.

He had four ministers who were zealously guarding his kingdom at its four boundaries. On account of their wisdom and valour, the king was victorious and unassailable. One day, he was visited by a wise man from the east. He had harsh and unpleasant words for the king. He said,

"O king, you have bound yourself hand and foot to this earth. Now listen to what I have to say and decide what to do. Your minister who was guarding the eastern side of your city is dead. The one guarding the south endeavoured to cover the eastern side, too, but he was overcome by the enemy. He, too, is dead. When the minister guarding the west rushed to the southern side, he was intercepted by the enemy and killed."

As he was saying this, another man rushed into the court, and announced that the minister guarding the north was at the palace gate. The king alerted his army, and asked that the minister be brought in. The minister entered and saluted the king. He was weak and his breathing was laboured. He had been overpowered by the enemy on account of his weakness. He said to the King, "Lord, all the other three ministers have gone to the world of death, to win that realm for you. Only you have the power to quell the enemy."

In the meantime, yet another man entered the royal presence and reported, "Lord, the city has been completely surrounded by the enemy. Their weapons are seen everywhere. They are extremely powerful like demons. Their armour shines with the light equal to your own glory. Their armies are in excellent array. They are angry, and their battle cries are fierce. The lord of that army sent me to convey this news to you. Now do what is appropriate."

After having conveyed this message, that man went away. Everyone in the king's army got ready for the battle with their arms and weapons uplifted.

## section VI.2 - chapter 109 110

papa mleccha dhanadhyas ca nanadesyah susamhatah bahavo labdharandhrasca  
samaderna 'spadam dvisah (109/4)

Vasistha continued:

In the meantime, all the ministers had assembled around the king. They counselled him thus: "Lord, we have duly considered the situation concerning our enemy. We have come to the conclusion that the three peaceful courses of dealing with the enemy are inappropriate in this case, and that only the fourth - punishment or violence - is adequate. In fact, we have not shown friendship or alliance with these enemies at any time before; hence, it is of no use now. **Enemies who come under the following classification are not amenable to peaceful negotiation: sinners, barbarians, foreigners, they who are firmly united among themselves, as well as they who know our weakness very well.** Therefore, let there be no delay. Order general mobilisation and preparation for a full-scale war."

The king issued the necessary orders, and sent the ministers to the battlefield, saying that he would soon join them after his customary worship of the sacred fire. He then had his bath, and approached the sacred fire for worship. He prayed: "Lord, I have effortlessly overcome all my enemies so far, and ruled this far-flung empire, exercising my sovereignty over many islands and continents. I held sway over many peoples, including demons. But now, perhaps I have grown old. Therefore, these my enemies have thought it fit to invade my territory. Lord, just as till now I have made different oblations to this sacred fire, today I shall offer my own head as oblation. I pray that out of this fire, four powerful beings may emerge, like the four arms of lord Narayana."

So saying, the king cut off his head with the greatest ease, and the next instant his body fell into the fire, along with the severed head. Out of that fire, the king re-emerged as four radiant warriors of extraordinary radiance and vitality, and equipped with the very best of weapons of every description. It was obvious that they could not be overcome by any warlike device that the enemy might adopt, whether it be missiles or mantras, drugs, etc.

The enemy forces were advancing at the same time. There was a terrible battle. The sky was covered with smoke and also with missiles. Swords gleamed, revolvers emitted fire continuously; it was terrible to look at. There was a river of blood in which even elephants were borne down. Here and there, two missiles collided in the sky, which was illumined by the light emitted by them. In the mind and the heart of every warrior, there was only one thought, "I should kill the enemy or be killed by him". The war was also bringing out the good and noble qualities in the people, which were dormant till then. On the other hand, there was also extremely cruel behaviour. Here and there, warriors killed even refugees, and looted whatever they could.

The people who were not directly involved in the war, the non-combatants, fled the place. The battlefield was filled with warriors to whom the distinction between life and death had vanished.

## section VI.2 - chapter 111 112

pravistu yacanam sahye labdah surabilad dvayam atnarthena 'rtha ayati  
kakataliyatah kvacit (112/30)

Vasistha continued:

The king in his four forms proceeded in the four directions on the battlefield. He saw that his army was much weaker than the enemy's well-prepared and well-equipped army. He contemplated, "The sage Agastya drank the ocean; I should become another Agastya now, and dry up this ocean of the enemy forces". He thought of the wind-missile which instantly reached him. He once again saluted and offered a prayer on behalf of his subjects, and directed the missile at the enemy forces. Instantly there were rivers of missiles and weapons everywhere. The gale that blew resembled the winds of cosmic dissolution. Surely enough, by the power of the missile, the enemy forces were reduced to nothing very soon. The wind-missile also caused torrential rains, gale-force winds, and dense dark clouds.

The different units of the enemy army fled in different directions. The Cedi-army (from the land of pearls and snakes) fled in a southerly direction. The Parsis perished in the forest known as Vanjula. The Darada soldiers hid themselves in caves. The Dasarna warriors who went into the nearby forests were killed by the lions there. The warriors from Saka territory could not bear the missiles made of iron, and they ran trembling in fear. The forces of Tungana (whose colour was golden) were robbed by robbers of their clothes, and then they were eaten up by demons.

The survivors in the enemy army hid themselves in the mountain known as Sahya-adri, and rested for a period of seven days. Their wounds were attended to by the celestials (vidhyadhara-women) who were from the territory known as Gandhara. The warriors from Huna, Cina and Kirata had motored dreadful disfigurement from the missiles of the king Vipascit. Even the trees were frightened of the king's power, and stood still for a very long time even after the war.

The air force of Vidura territory was caught up in the winds, and crashed into the lakes. The infantry could not even run on account of the blinding rain that fell. The Hunas who fled to the north were caught up in the quicksands and perished. The Sakas who fled to the east were caught and imprisoned by the king for one day and then released.

The soldiers from the Mandra territory climbed up the Mahendra mountain to seek a refuge. They literally dragged themselves up little by little, and then fell near the hermitage of sages who served them with food, drink, etc. **They climbed the hill for the purpose of avoiding death on the battlefield, and of begging for food; but they got from the cave of the gods two things (immediate safety and the company of sages which ensures permanent peace). Good follows evil sometimes, by accidental coincidence (the crow and the coconut).** The Dasarna soldiers accidentally ate poison and died. The Haihaya soldiers accidentally ate a healing herb, which turned them into celestials, with ability to fly in the air.

## section VI.2 - chapter 113-115

itah svapiti kesavah kulamitastadiyadvisa mito 'pi saranarthinah  
sikharipatrinah serate ito 'pi vadavanalah saha samastasamvartakai raho  
vitatamurjitam bharasaham ca sindhorvapuh (115/6)

Vasistha continued:

Thus pursuing their fleeing enemies, the four kings (which were Vipascit) had traversed a long, long distance. Impelled by the indwelling consciousness, which is omnipotent, they had embarked on a campaign for the conquest of the world, known as digvijaya. For a considerable distance, they were accompanied by their own forces. As they were marching without rest or respite, these forces and their equipment, as also the forces of the enemy which they pursued, weakened and perished. The missiles that the kings had, had also ceased to be effective, just as fire is quenched after burning all its fuel.

The four kings going in the four different directions, were met by huge oceans. The remaining missiles that they had, fell into mud created by the terrible rain that fell, and they disintegrated. The four brothers beheld that limitless ocean with great wonder. (nb: there follows a highly poetic description of the ocean.)

The kings' ministers, who had followed them on this expedition, pointed out to the kings the various beautiful sights - the forests, the trees, the oceans, the mountains, the clouds, and also the hill tribes. (nb: again, there is a poetic description of all these in the text; there is also a 'reverse' - comparison ...) Just as Brahman, though one, appears to be divided into diversity and, though infinite, appears to have created this finite and perishable world, even so this ocean, though one, appears to be divided into several oceans, and it appears to be both eternal and the transient waves.

The ministers pointed to more oceans, and said: "Lord, **here on this ocean, lord Narayana rests. Here in the other ocean, his enemies, the demons, lie hidden. In that other ocean, mountains lie hidden. Beneath this ocean, there is the cosmic fire of unimaginable heat, along with the clouds of cosmic dissolution. How wonderful it is that this ocean is so vast, so firmly established, and able to support so much of burden.** Look at the moon. As it rises on the eastern horizon, it spreads its soft light everywhere, and thus brings auspiciousness to all, ridding all of their fear of darkness and night. But even this moon is tainted with dark spots. When such is the case with these celestial bodies, what can we call an untainted object in this world, what shall we call good and excellent in this world, which time or fate will not tarnish in the twinkling of an eye? Surely, there is no such thing on earth."

## section VI.2 - chapter 116

ahni prakasamasi rakttavapurdinante yamasu krsnamatha ca 'khilavasturikttam  
nityam na kincidapi sadvahasiti mayam na vyoma vetti viduso 'pi vicestitam (17)

The Ministers and others said:

Behold, O king, the rulers of the boundaries of the earth engaged in battle. The celestial nymphs are driving the space vehicles, carrying away those noble ones who are slain in battle. This is considered as the best of all fruits of living: that one should live a life of prosperity, health, and wealth, which does not incur the displeasure of society, and should engage oneself in righteous warfare for the sake of others. He who kills another when the latter comes to fight with him, without transgressing the moral code that applies to warfare, he is a hero, and he goes to heaven.

Behold the sky, O king, where the mighty gods and demons appear in the form of stars, which is also the field for the movement of mighty planets and stars, like the sun and the moon. Fools regard it as empty void even now. In spite of the movement of all these stars and planets, in spite of the battle between gods (light) and demons (darkness), this space is not polluted or tainted or altered in any way.

O space! Though you bear the sun on your lap, and even lord Narayana and all his divine retinue, yet you have not abandoned the darkness that resides in you. This is indeed a great mystery. Yet, we consider the space wise and enlightened, as it is unaffected by the defects and shortcomings of the worlds which abide in it (the space).

O space! During the day you are bright. At dawn and dusk, you are crimson. At night, you are dark. You are devoid of materiality. You do not hold or bear the burden of any substance. Hence, you are regarded as Maya. No one, not even the learned and the wise, can truly understand you and your function. O space, he who owns nothing achieves everything. You are pure void within yourself, and yet you cause everything to grow and to be exalted.

In space there are no cities or villages, no forests or parks, no trees or shade, yet the sun courses through space every day. Truly, the noble ones do their duty without fail, however difficult and irksome it may be.

Though apparently doing nothing, space regulates the growth of plants and trees, by preventing them from excessive growth. That in which infinite universes are born, and into which they dissolve - how can that space be considered devoid of everything? There is something wrong with the scholars.

## section VI.2 - chapter 117-121

sphurati ca ghanam smrtva smrtva na ca 'pi vipadyate gunavati jane  
baddhasanam sramo 'pi sukhavahah (118/26 )

*(The next few - chapters are also full of highly poetic and artistic descriptions of natural phenomena, the flora and the fauna, with interesting spiritual parallels, from which the following two are but samples.)*

The Ministers and others continued:

O lord, behold the crane. How diligent and efficient it is in capturing and consuming the fish. Wicked people see in the natural behaviour of the crane the justification for their own vicious doctrine, that, even so, one should destroy others for the attainment of one's own selfish ends.

Look at the peacock. It quenches its thirst from the purest rainwater. It does not drink of the polluted waters of the drains and the canals. **However, it continuously remembers the clouds and the rain that falls from them and derives satisfaction. When one's heart is fixed in devotion to the holy ones, even unpleasant experiences become pleasant.**

O king, behold that young couple, talking to each other and refreshing themselves over there. The young man, smitten with love for his beloved, met her just now after a very long separation. This is what he said to her:

"Beloved, listen to what happened to me one day during our separation. I looked at the cloud and prayed to the cloud to convey a message to you. I was so greatly overcome by longing for you that I fainted. My breathing stopped. My memory failed. My body became cold and rigid like a log of wood. Who can ever describe adequately the unhappiness caused by separation from a beloved one?"

"Travellers who witnessed this, thought I was dead and made preparations for the cremation of the destitute body. I was taken to the crematorium. They laid me on the pyre, and set it alight. In a few moments, I experienced all kinds of strange feelings and sensations and visions. I felt that I was falling into a hole in the ground. I was protected by the armour of your love, and of contemplation of your form. I enjoyed your company in my own heart. I remember even now the smallest detail of the amorous dalliance in which we self-forgetfully enjoyed each other. In the meantime, I saw flames around me."

Hearing this, the girl swooned, but the lover revived her and continued the narrative:

"At once, I shouted 'Fire, fire', and woke up from the swoon. The people around the funeral pyre thought that I had returned from the dead, and they were thrilled. They sang and danced. We all returned home."

Vasistha continued:

After listening to all this, the fourfold Vipascit worshipped the fire. The fire-god appeared to them. They prayed to him: "We wish to behold the universe composed of the five elements in its totality. Grant that we may do so, and that we may not die till we have seen all - as much as possible with the physical body and beyond that through the mind." The fire-god granted this boon, and vanished.

## section VI.2 - chapter 124

ekadebagata visvagvyapya karmani kurvate yoginastrisu kalesu  
sarvanyanubhavantyapi (8)

Rama asked:

Lord, how was it that, though the fourfold Vipascit was but one person with a single consciousness, the four of them entertained different desires?

Vasistha replied:

Though consciousness is one, non-dual, and omnipresent, it seems to become diverse like the mind of the sleeping (dreaming) person. Even as the mirror reflects diverse objects within itself, because it is pure, even so, consciousness, being absolutely pure, reflects everything within itself. Though mirrors may be made of the same metal, they reflect diverse objects in one another ad infinitum. Similarly, consciousness reflects within itself whatever is placed before it.

Thus the diverse appears to be one, but it is both diverse and non-diverse (one); because it is neither diverse nor non-diverse, it is both diverse and one. Therefore, whatever appeared before, each of the four Vipacits reflected in his consciousness, and was experienced by him. **Yogis can perform actions everywhere and experience all things in all the three periods of time, though apparently remaining in one place.** Water, which is one and all-pervasive, does several things at the same time, and seems to undergo diverse experiences. The one Visnu, with his four arms or four bodies, performs diverse functions in protecting the world. A being (animal) with many arms, holds something with two arms, and with the others kills that thing. It was in that manner that the kings Vipascit engaged themselves in diverse activities.

They diversely slept on the grassy beds on earth. They lived and enjoyed themselves in different continents. They sported in different forests. They roamed the deserts. They dwelt on the peaks of mountains, and in the bowels of the oceans. They sometimes hid themselves in mountain-caves. They sported on the oceans and in the wind, on the waves, as well as on the seashore and in the cities.

The Vipascit, who went east, slept for seven years on the slopes of the sunrise mountain on the continent known as Saka, for he had been charmed by the celestials there; having drunk of the water that was in the rock, he had become like stone. The Vipascit who went west to the sunset mountain, on the same continent fell a victim to the charms of a nymph, who enjoyed him for a whole month. The Vipascit who went east, remained incognito in the turmeric forest for some time. On account of the charm of a celestial, he lived as a lion for ten days. Overpowered by a goblin, he lived as a frog for ten years. The Vipascit who went north, dwelt for a hundred years in a blind well in the Nilagiri (blue mountain) in the Saka continent. The one who went west, learnt the method of becoming a celestial, and lived as a celestial (vidyadhara) for fourteen years.

## section VI.2 - chapter 125

prabodhamanugacchantya apraptayah param padam ekasya apyanekasyah sarvam  
sarvatra yujyate (18)

Vasistha continued:

When the king that went east was under the spell of the water he had drunk, it was the one that went west who rescued him. When the king that went west became a rock, it was the one that went south who rescued him by the use of beef, etc. When the king that went west had been transformed into a bull by a female goblin who had the form of a cow, it was the one that went south who rescued him again. When the king that went south was turned into a celestial, he was rescued by another celestial at the intercession of the one who went west. When the king who went east was turned into a lion, it was the one who went west that rescued him.

Rama asked:

But how do these yogis perform such varied actions in the three periods of time? Pray tell me this.

Vasistha continued:

Whatever be the explanation that the unenlightened people may give for this, let them; but, listen to the enlightened explanation.

In the vision of the knowers of the truth, there is nothing other than the pure and infinite consciousness, and the objective universe is completely and totally non-existent. There is neither a creation nor its opposite. He who rests for ever in this pure and infinite consciousness, is the omnipresent and omnipotent Lord; he is the all, and he is the self of all at all times. Tell me, who can restrain him, how, where, and when. The omnipresent shines as and when he likes, for he is the self of all. What is not present in the self of all? Hence, he shines how, when, and where he likes, whether it is the past or the future or the present, and whether it is the gross or subtle field in which such action takes place. Without ever abandoning his reality as pure consciousness, he functions at a distance and near, creating an epoch or the twinkling of an eye. All this is in the self but the appearance is Maya (illusory); he is unborn and uncreated, and has not been restrained or inhibited. What 'is', is as it is. Whatever 'is', is a mass of consciousness; and that itself is the three worlds. It is the self of the world, it is the form of the world which has arisen on account of the polarisation of consciousness into the subject and the object. Who has created this seer of all, the subject of all - how and when?

Nothing is impossible for this consciousness. **The consciousness of Vipascit had become awakened, but it had not attained the supreme state. Hence, though it is one, it manifests as the all everywhere.** In a state in which there is both awakening and non-awakening, all these things are possible; when the supreme truth has not been attained, such materialisation is possible. It is when there is such partial awakening that one enjoys psychic powers. Thus, the four Vipascits experienced the states that the others had.

## section VI.2 - chapter 125

dharanayogino hyete varena pr-aptasiddhayah avidya vidyate tesam tens to  
'tadvic5rinah (28)

Rama asked:

If Vipascit was an enlightened person, how could he consider himself a lion, etc.?

Vasistha replied:

My description of these kings as awakened or enlightened was only a figure of speech: in fact, Vipascit was not enlightened. The four Vipascits were neither enlightened, nor were they ignorant; they were swinging in-between. In such people, the signs of enlightenment or liberation are seen, as also the signs of ignorance and bondage. They are half-awakened. Whatever Vipascit had attained, had been attained through contemplation, not because he had reached the supreme state. All these siddhis or psychic powers are had by such contemplation.

In those who have reached the supreme state, there is no ignorance or delusion. How can they have a deluded vision, and how can they see falsehood? **The yogis who practise contemplation, and who attain various psychic powers, through grace or boons, are subject to ignorance, which is noticed in them. Hence, they contemplate not the truth, but something which is other than the real.**

There is something more. Even in the case of those liberated sages who are still alive, there is comprehension of materiality while they are engaged in day-to-day activity. Moksha or liberation is also a state of the mind. The natural function of the body adheres to it, and does not cease. One who is freed from ignorance, or the mind, is never again bound by the mind; even as once the fruit has fallen from the tree, no amount of effort can connect it to the tree. The body functions as is natural to it, even in the case of the liberated person; but the consciousness in that person is stable, and is not affected by the states of the physical body.

The powers gained through contemplation, etc., can be seen by others; but the state of liberation that one attains cannot be seen by others. Even as the taste of honey is capable of being tasted only by oneself. When one who has experienced the state of bondage and also pain and pleasure is liberated from all these, he is said to be liberated. He is considered a liberated person whose inner consciousness is cool and peaceful; he is in bondage whose mind and heart are disturbed and distracted. Bondage and liberation are not noticed in physical functions.

Whether his body is cut into a thousand pieces or he is crowned an emperor, the liberated one is liberated even if he apparently weeps and laughs. Within himself he is neither elated nor depressed. He experiences neither happiness nor unhappiness, even while receiving all these experiences. He is not dead even when he is dead, he does not weep though he weeps, he does not laugh though he laughs - such is a liberated one. He is free from attraction or attachment, though he is attracted and attached. He gets angry though he is not angry, he is not deluded though he is deluded.

## section VI.2 - chapter 125

naiva tasya krtena 'rtho na 'krteneha kascana yadyatha nama sampannam  
tattatha 'stvitarena kiln (46)

Vasistha continued:

The notions 'This is happiness' and 'This is unhappiness' do not arise in the liberated ones. When they have realised the truth that there is neither 'the world' nor 'the self', and that the one is the all, 'happiness' and 'unhappiness' are seen as meaningless words. Their grief is superficial, for they are free from sorrow.

It is said that lord Siva plucked off one of the five heads of lord Brahma. The latter was surely capable of growing one more to replace it. But he did not, for he knew "When all this creation is illusory, what shall I do with one more head?". **He had nothing to gain from doing something, or from refraining from doing something. Whatever happens, let it happen even so; why should it be otherwise?**

Lord Siva has his consort in one half of his body, though he has the power to burn up even the god of love. He has the power to abandon all attachment or affection, but he behaves as if he is attached to his consort. He has nothing to gain by remaining so attached, nor does he gain anything by non-attachment. Let it be as it is.

Even so, lord Visnu engages himself in various activities, and inspires others to engage themselves in such activities, too; he 'dies' and he kills others; he is born and he grows - though all the time he is totally free from all this. He could easily refrain from all this, but what is to be gained from such restraint? Let all these be as they are. Such is the attitude of one who is established in the realisation of the infinite consciousness.

Even so do the sun, the moon, and the fire perform their natural functions, though they are all liberated beings (jivanmukta). The preceptors of the gods (Brhaspati) and of the demons (Sukra) are also jivanmuktas, though they play the roles of the leaders of opposing forces, fighting each other like ignorant men. King Janaka is also a liberated royal sage; yet, he engages himself in dreadful wars. There were also several royal sages who engaged themselves in royal duties while inwardly remaining free from bondage. While discharging his worldly duties, the enlightened person behaves in the same way as the ignorant person. The distinction between bondage and liberation lies in the state of one's consciousness, which is conditioned in bondage and unconditioned in liberation. Even several demons had attained liberation - like Bali, Prahlada, Namuci, Vrtra, Andhaka, Mura, etc. The enlightened consciousness is unaffected by the rising and setting of likes and dislikes, mental action and supra-mental consciousness. When one is firmly established in the infinite and unconditioned consciousness, even these distinctions vanish. The diversity which people experience in this creation is but an appearance, like the colours of a rainbow.

The world appears to be in relation to the infinite consciousness, just as spatiality (void or distance) appears to be in relation to space.

## section VI.2 - chapter 126

ativahikasamvitteste 'vyomni vyomatatmakah ndhibhautikadehatvabhavan  
dadra'suragratah (12)

Vasistha continued:

Now, listen to what happened to the four Vipascits. One of them was killed by an elephant. The second was taken away by some celestials (yaksas), who dropped him into blazing fire, and he perished. The third one was taken up to heaven by the celestials known as vidyadhara; there, that Vipascit did not bow to the king (Indra) who cursed him and reduced him to ashes. The fourth was killed by a crocodile.

Remaining in their subtle bodies, these four saw their own previous history in their own minds, where they had created subtle impressions. In the space of their own consciousness, they saw the whole universe, with all its oceans and mountains, towns and cities, the sun and the moon, the stars and the clouds. They even saw their own bodies as before. **Endowed with the subtle (ativahika) bodies, they saw in the space before them their own physical bodies.** On account of their past-life impressions or memories, they saw themselves as being clothed in physical bodies, in order to witness the magnitude of the world. In order to see the actual extent of the earth, they roamed other realms.

The western Vipascit crossed seven continents and seven seas, and had the good fortune to meet lord Visnu. From him Vipascit received the highest wisdom, and remained immersed in samadhi for five years. After that, he abandoned the physical body, and attained nirvana.

The oriental Vipascit remained close to the rays of the moon, and contemplated the moon constantly; hence, he attained the realm of the moon.

The southern Vipascit destroyed all his enemies, and even now he rules the country, because he did not lose his memory or his convictions.

The northern Vipascit was eaten by a crocodile in whose body he lived for a thousand and one years. When that crocodile died, he emerged from its body as another crocodile. Then he crossed oceans and ice-packs of unimaginable distance, and reached the lake of the gods known as Suvarna. There he died. Because he died in that realm of the gods, this Vipascit became a god, even as a piece of wood lying in the midst of coals of fire instantly becomes fire.

This last Vipascit reached the boundaries of the earth-plane known as the Lokaloka mountains, which he remembered from his past-birth experiences. These mountains are several thousand miles in height; one of its sides is illumined, whereas the other is not. From there he saw the earth, etc., as if they were distant stars. Then he went to that side of these mountains which was forever shrouded in darkness. Beyond that is the great void, in which there is no earth, no beings, and nothing mobile or immobile. In it, even the potentiality of creation does not exist.

## section VI.2 - chapter 127

sarvadikkam mahagole nabhasi svarkatarakam kimatrordhvamadhas kim  
syatsarvamurdhvamadhasca va. (22)

Rama asked:

Lord, pray tell me: how does this earth exist, how does the stellar sphere revolve, and how do the Lokaloka mountains exist.

Vasistha replied:

Just as a little child imagines a plaything in the empty space and thinks it is there, the notion of the existence of this earth arises in the infinite consciousness. He whose vision is defective, sees little balls of 'hair' in space, where no such balls exist. Even so, such notions, as the existence of the earth, arose in the infinite consciousness, at the moment which has come to be known as creation. A city which exists in the mind of the daydreamer, needs no support (with the imagination as its sole support); even so, this world is supported only by the experiencing of the infinite consciousness.

Whatever appears in the consciousness, and however it appears to be, and for whatever duration, it seems to exist in that consciousness in that manner for that duration, on account of the inherent power in consciousness. Therefore, just as in the eyes of one with eye-defect the 'ball of hair' does float in space, this earth, etc., does exist in consciousness. If consciousness had 'seen' water flowing up and fire burning down in the very beginning, such would have been the nature of these elements even now. But, it is because that consciousness 'saw' the earth as falling in space that it seems to fall even now and consciousness correspondingly seems to 'rise' in relation to the earth. Thus duality or diverse motion arises.

The Lokaloka mountains are the boundary of the earth-plane. Beyond that is the great spatial pit, filled with total darkness, though something exists in it here and there. Because the stellar sphere is at a considerable distance, there seems to be some light somewhere, and some darkness elsewhere. These stars are at a very great distance from the Lokaloka mountains. The entire stellar sphere, with the exception of the pole star, constantly revolves around its own axis. But all this is non-different from the notion that arises in pure consciousness.

Beyond the worlds or the earth-plane whose boundaries are the Lokaloka mountains, the stellar sphere appears something like the skin of a fruit. However, all this is but the firm notion that arises in the infinite consciousness; it should not be taken that these worlds exist as reality.

Beyond even this stellar sphere, there is another sphere twice its size; that, too, is illumined in part, and is sunk in darkness elsewhere. All this is enclosed in two skull-caps, as it were: one is above, and the other is below, and between them is space. **This universe, which is a cosmic circle, is illumined by the sun and stars. What is 'above' and what is 'below' in all this?** Rising, falling, moving, or remaining steady - all these are notions that arise in consciousness. None of these exist in truth.

## section VI.2 - chapter 128

jagatsvapnesu ca 'nyesu samsthanakathanena kim nahyopayogikadanya katha  
bhavati dhimatam (3)

Vasistha continued:

The description of the universe I have given you is the fruit of direct experience, not inferential guesswork. Besides this, there are other universes of which I have not told you. **For, of what use is investigation into the nature of the world and others, which are but of the nature of a dream; wise men do not waste their time talking about useless things.**

The northernmost extremity is the Meru mountain; and the southernmost extremity is the Lokaloka mountain-range. The inhabitants of the various planes of consciousness and the different worlds experience the materialisation of those worlds, not others.

I told you of the skull-caps of the universe. Beyond them, the whole universe is enveloped by water which is tenfold in extent. Beyond that, there is another envelope, this time of fire, which is tenfold the previous one. Beyond that is the wind-envelope, and then the plane of space, which are each ten times the extent of the previous one.

Beyond even that is the infinite space; this is neither illumined nor is it dark. It is full of pure consciousness. It is beginningless, middleless, and endless. In that, countless millions of universes arise again and again at different points, and again and again they are dissolved in it. There is no being in this infinite space to entertain a notion of these universes, but they exist in whatever form and manner they exist.

Now, listen to the story of the king Vipascit who was on top of the Lokaloka mountains. After he died, he saw his body being eaten by a huge vulture. In his consciousness, the notion of another physical body did not arise, nor did he reach enlightenment. Hence, he wished to engage himself in further activity. For pure mental activity, a physical body is unnecessary. In the case of illusion, dream, daydreaming, and hallucination, the mind creates its own field, which is known as the subtle body (ativahika). Only when that is forgotten or abandoned does the physical body arise. When one realises the unreality of the physical body through proper investigation, then, once again, the subtle (ativahika) body arises.

Hence, investigate the nature of the ativahika body till the knowledge that the infinite consciousness alone is the truth arises. The realisation 'Where is duality, where is hate or affection? All this is pure Siva, beginningless, and endless', is enlightenment.

Vipascit was still in the subtle body, unenlightened. He was enveloped by darkness, as if in a foetus. He then experienced the earth-plane, water-plane, fire-plane, and space-plane. Then he began to investigate the nature of his own subtle body and wondered: "What sustains me who am pure consciousness?" He entered the infinite space of Brahma, and saw everything there. But, not having investigated the illusory nature of ignorance, he rests in it even now, though in fact there is no ignorance, and Brahman alone exists.

## section VI.2 - chapter 129

desakalakriyadyetadekata vasanaikata tayoryadeva balavattadeva jayati ksanat

(7)

Vasistha continued:

Another of the Vipascits also attained the same state, after wandering from continent to continent for a long time, and after reaching the infinite space of Brahma, in which he saw millions of universes. There he exists even now. Yet another of the Vipascits fell a victim to his own mental conditioning and, after renouncing his body, became a deer, and lives on a mountain.

Rama asked:

Lord, when the vasana (mental conditioning) of the king Vipascit was but one, how did it become diverse, producing diverse results in the four Vipascits?

Vasistha replied:

The vasana of beings becomes either dense or light by repeated exercise and repetition of its effects. It is also subject to the influence of time, place, and activity. If it becomes 'light', it undergoes change into something else; if it is deep-rooted, it does not change. **On the one hand are the time, place, and activity (repetition of the habit born of the vasana); on the other is the vasana (mental conditioning) itself. The two (circumstances and vasana) act upon each other. Whichever be the stronger wins instantly.** Thus, the four Vipascits were drawn in different directions, though they had the same vasana to start with; two of them were caught in the net of ignorance, one was liberated, and the other became a deer.

Even now, the two who were caught up in the net of ignorance, have been unable to find a way out. Ignorance is also infinite in a manner of speaking, because it has no real existence. However, if one develops the inner light, and begins to examine it in that light this ignorance, vanishes in the twinkling of an eye.

The Vipascit who went from one country to another, from one world to another, saw an illusory creation. He saw an illusory world, which in fact was Brahman only. He somehow came into contact with a holy man. With his help, Vipascit realised the truth concerning the illusory perception of the world, and instantly realised the infinite consciousness or Brahman. At that very instant his ignorance (as also his body) ceased to be.

Thus have I told you, O Rama, the story of Vipascit. This ignorance, too, is infinite even as Brahman is infinite, because the ignorance has no independent existence apart from Brahman. It is the infinite consciousness alone that sees countless universes and worlds here and there, now and then. When this truth is not realised, it is known as ignorance; when this truth is realised, the very same consciousness is known as Brahman. There is no division between the two, for the division is unreal ignorance, which in reality is Brahman. The division seems to arise in consciousness and is, therefore, non-different from consciousness. Thus, Brahman alone is the world-appearance; and the division is consciousness.

## section VI.2 - chapter 129

avayavanavayavi nityam veti yatha 'khilan tatha sarvanaham vedmi  
brahmanyatmanyavasthitan (38)

Rama asked:

How was it that the Vipascit could not reach the skull-cap of the universe which Brahma the creator had created?

Vasistha replied:

At the very moment he came into being, Brahma the creator pushed space apart with his two arms. That which was above, was pushed far, far above, and that which was below, went far, far below. All the created elements rest in it, being supported by these two extremities. That which is between these two extremities is known as space, which appears to be limitless, and of a blue-colour. Water and such other elements do not taint this space; in fact, they are not in it (for space is independent of them and exists where one thinks water, air, etc., exist). These elements are but the notions that arise in others.

Vipascit took that path, in order to examine the extent of ignorance, and he began to investigate the stellar sphere. Brahman is infinite; and therefore ignorance of Brahman is also infinite. Ignorance exists when Brahman is not realised; and when Brahman is realised, ignorance is seen not to exist. However far Vipascit went, he was still wandering in the realm of this ignorance.

Of the others, one attained liberation, another became a deer, and an other is also wandering in ignorance. The two who thus wander in distant worlds, are not seen in our consciousness. But the one that became a deer, is within the field of our understanding. That world in which that Vipascit lives as the deer (after having wandered in distant worlds), is this very world which is in one distant corner of the infinite space of consciousness.

Rama asked:

Lord, Vipascit lived in this world itself and went away from here. How is it that he has become a deer in this world?

Vasistha replied:

**Even as one who is endowed with limbs knows them, even so I know everything which may exist in Brahman, as Brahman is my own self.** The past does not know the future and vice versa; but consciousness, which is not divided by time, is aware of all this. In that consciousness, everything is 'here', though to ordinary perception something may be far away. Thus I see the worlds in which Vipascit wandered, and how he became a deer in this very world. In fact, I know where that deer is right now, O Rama. It is the doom that was presented to you as a gift by the king of the Trigarta.

Valmiki said:

When the sage Vasistha said this, Rama and the assembled sages and others were wonderstruck. Rama despatched a few boys to go and fetch the deer. Seeing it, the assembly was amazed, and everyone exclaimed: "Truly, maya (illusion) is limitless and infinite."

## section VI.2 - chapter 130

yenaiva 'bhyudita yasya tasya tena vina gatih na sobhate na sukhada na hitaya  
na satphala (2)

Rama asked:

O sage, how, by whom and by what means will this deer be freed from its unfortunate state of existence?

Vasistha replied:

**The way out of this misfortune is that which was its original cause. Any other path is not the right one, and it will not be productive of happiness, welfare, or fruition.** The king Vipascit adored the fire; and by entering into the fire, this deer will regain its former state, just as gold regains its lustre by being purified in the fire. Behold, I shall make this deer enter into the fire.

Valmiki said:

So saying, the sage Vasistha sipped water from his sacred water-pot, and created a fire in the middle of the hall, without any fuel. It burned brightly without any sparks and without any smoke. The people in the assembly moved away from the centre of the hall. The deer was delighted to see that fire. It began to frisk about in delight. Vasistha was in a deep state of contemplation, and blessed the deer that it should be freed from its past sinful tendencies. He further prayed to the fire-god:

"Remembering his previous existence, O fire, please restore to this deer his old form as the king Vipascit."

The moment the sage uttered these words, the deer rushed with great joy into the fire. It rested for a few minutes in the fire while everyone was looking; gradually its form changed into that of a human being. He was radiant and handsome. As soon as he arose in the fire, the fire vanished from sight. All the assembled sages with one voice exclaimed, "Ah, what radiance (bha) does this person possess! He shines (bhasa) like the sun. Surely, he shall become famous as Bhasa." Hence, he came to be known as Bhasa.

Bhasa realised in a moment, by deep contemplation, all that had happened in his previous incarnations.

In the meantime, the excitement and the conversation in the assembly had subsided, and there was silence once again. Bhasa arose and proceeded towards the sage Vasistha and bowed to him. The sage, in turn, blessed him saying, "May the ignorance, under which you have been labouring for so long, leave you". Then Bhasa saluted Rama and hailed him.

After this, the king Dasaratha welcomed Bhasa:

"Welcome, O king. Be seated here. You have wandered far and wide and for a very long time in this samsara. Now rest here." Bhasa took his seat among the sages in the assembly. King Dasaratha continued: "Alas, like a tethered elephant, this king Vipascit had to undergo countless trials and tribulations. What a great calamity follows imperfect vision of the reality and the perverse understanding of the truth. Though essentially unreal and non-existent, it is amazing what power this illusion has, that it can seemingly create such diverse worlds in the infinite consciousness, and such varied experiences."

## section VI.2 - chapter 131

kalpanam tatparam brahma param brahmaiva kalpanam cidrupam na 'nayorbhedah  
sunnyatvakasayoriva (20)

Visvamisra said:

Even so, O king, there are very many people who wander in this samsara, because they have not gained the best knowledge or enlightenment. There is a king who has wandered in this samsara for the past one million and seven hundred thousand years. These ignorant people are interested in investigating the nature of worldly objects; and they continually flow in this samsara, without ever turning away from it.

This creation exists in the infinite space as a mere notion in the mind of the creator Brahma. Just as little ants move here and there on the surface of a ball, people move about on the surface of this earth. In space, there is no 'below', and there is no 'above'. The direction in which an object falls is known as 'below', and the direction in which birds rise to fly is called 'above'.

In this world, there is a place known as Vatadhana. In that kingdom, there were three princes. They resolved to go to the very limits of this world, to investigate all that it contains. For some time, they examined the objects of the earth, and then they examined the objects in the oceans. They took birth after birth, and continued to pursue their goal of gaining a complete knowledge of this earth. They could not go to the 'ends' of the earth, because, like ants moving on a ball, they were only going from one part of the earth to another, all the time. They are thus wandering on the earth even today.

Thus, there is no end to the illusion in this samsara. Since this illusion arises as a notion in the infinite consciousness, it also seems to be infinite. **The essence (reality or substance) of the notion is the supreme Brahman and vice versa. They are both pure consciousness, and there is no difference or division in consciousness, just as there is no distinction between space and emptiness.** The currents and whirlpools that appear on the surface of water are only water. Since there can be nothing other than consciousness, how can there be something other than consciousness? The infinite consciousness alone shines of its own accord as this world, without even intending to do so. Wherever the infinite consciousness wishes to appear in whatever form, it does so and experiences its own nature in that form for as long as it pleases.

Within the smallest atom of the infinite consciousness exists the potentiality of all experiences, just as there are stones and rocks within the mountain. All these experiences exist, constantly experiencing their own particular modes of experience everywhere. In reality, of course, they do not exist as experiences, but only as the infinite consciousness. These manifold experiences are collectively known as the world, which is the shining appearance of Brahman. But it indeed is a great wonder that this infinite consciousness, without ever abandoning its reality, thinks of itself "I am a jiva". Now, O king Bhasa, tell us of your past experiences.

## section VI.2 - chapter 131

bahu drstam maya drsyam baba bhrantamakhedina bahveva bahudha nunamanubhutam smaramyaham (30)

Bhasa said:

I saw many things, and I wandered a lot, without experiencing fatigue. I experienced many things in many different ways. All this I remember. I experienced many pleasures and much sorrow, in many bodies, over a long period of time, and in distant places, in this limitless space. I attained various bodies on account of boons and curses, and in those embodiments, I saw countless objects and scenes. I was also determined to see and experience everything. This was the original boon that I obtained from the fire-god. Therefore, even though I had different bodies on different planes, I still pursued the original intention of gaining a thorough knowledge of this world.

For a thousand years, I lived as a tree. I had to endure many sufferings during that period. My mind was totally centred within myself, and without mental activity, I produced flowers and fruits. For a hundred years, I was a deer on the mount Meru. I had a golden colour. I lived on grass, and I loved music. I was very small, and therefore non-violent. For fifty years, I was a sarabha (an eight-footed animal, more powerful than the lion). After that, I became a vidyadhara-celestial. Then I became the son of the swan, which is the vehicle of the creator Brahma. I lived as a swan for fifteen hundred years. For a hundred years, I listened to the divine music of the celestial attendants of lord Narayana (Visnu). Then I became a jackal, and lived in a forest. A huge elephant ravaged the bush in which I lived. While I was dying on account of this, I saw that elephant killed by a lion. After this, I became a nymph in another world, and lived alone for half an epoch, on account of the curse of a sage. After this, I lived for a hundred years as a valmika-bird. When our nest was destroyed along with the tree on which we lived, I lost my partner, and then lived the rest of my life alone in a far-off place. Then I became an ascetic, having gained a certain amount of dispassion.

I saw many amazing things. I saw a world which was made entirely of water. Elsewhere, I saw a woman, in whose body the three worlds were reflected as in a mirror. When I asked her who she was, she replied: "I am pure consciousness, and all the worlds are my limbs. Even as I create such bewilderment in you, even so are all things. Till you see everything with the same bewilderment and wonder, you cannot know their real nature. All the worlds are one's own limbs. I hear them all as one hears sounds and expressions during one's dream." I saw countless beings emerge in her, and then dissolve in her, too. Elsewhere, I saw an unusual form of cloud, which produced a dreadful sound of clashing missiles, and which rained weapons on the earth. I saw another wonder: the whole earth was covered in darkness, and whole villages were flying away to a distant world. I saw your village in another world. Elsewhere, I saw that all beings were of the same nature. Elsewhere, I saw a world without a sun, moon, and stars, and there was no darkness; all its inhabitants were radiant and illumined. There is no world I have not seen, nothing I have not experienced.

## section VI.2 - chapter 132

nedam nedam sadityeva vicaranubhave sthitam tatha 'pidamidam ceti durdrstirna  
nivartate (17)

Bhasa continued:

Once I was asleep with a celestial nymph in a garden. Suddenly I woke up to find myself floating downstream, like a blade of grass. Surprised, I asked the nymph: "What is this?" She explained to me: "There is a moonstone mountain nearby. When the moon rises, the springs that issue from that mountain swell, and there is a sudden flood. In the supreme delight I experienced in your company, I forgot to warn you of this."

Having said this, the nymph took me with her, and flew into space without any difficulty. For a period of seven years from then, I lived with her on the top of the mount Mandara.

After this, I roamed other worlds, in which the people were self-luminous. I saw a world in which there were no directions like east and west, no days and nights, no scriptures and no polemics, no distinctions between gods and demons. Then I became a celestial, by name Amarasoma, and lived for fourteen years as an ascetic.

Endowed with the boon granted to me by the fire-god, I moved in space with extraordinary speed. Somewhere I fell into a great ocean, and somewhere I experienced the sensation of falling through space. Moving about in space was my only occupation. I became fatigued, and I slept for a considerable time.

While asleep, I entered into the world of dreams. There again I experienced various worlds and various objects, and there was great restlessness in me. Whatever my eyes saw, I was there in a moment. From there I saw something else, and there I was again in an instant, regardless of the distance.

Thus wandering from one world to another with great speed, I spent many years. But I had not seen the end of the manifestation of ignorance known as 'the objective universe'; for, it was an illusion which had somehow got itself firmly rooted in my heart, just as the fear of a ghost gets hold of the heart of a child. **However well I realise 'This is not real', 'This is not real' after intense enquiry, the feeling 'This is' does not cease.** From moment to moment, new experiences of pleasure and pain arise and cease, like the flowing stream of a river.

I also remember a great mountain peak, which shone by its own light, though there was neither the sun nor the moon there. It was so beautiful that it charmed the heart of those sages who love to live in solitude.

## section VI.2 - chapter 133

badhava hatvangasrñge kapilamurujatamandalam padmayoneh krtva  
daityotttamangaih srajamurasi siratsekham tarksyapaksaih ya devi bhukttavisva  
pibati jagadidam sadribhupithabhutam sa devi niskalanka kalitatanulata patu nah  
palaniyan (30)

Vipascit (Bhasa) continued:

I shall now relate to you another great wonder, which I saw in another world. There is a shining world in the great space, which is beyond your reach. That world is as different from this as the dream-world is different from the world of the waking-state experience. While I was roaming that world, in order to find the extent of the objective universe, I noticed a gigantic shadow, enveloping the whole of that earth. As I lifted my eyes to the sky, in order to find out what the cause of that shadow might be, I saw an enormous thing, looking like a person falling in space, and descending upon the world I was in. It even hid the sun so effectively that the world was totally enveloped in darkness.

It fell on the earth, even as I was thus gazing at it with awe and wonder. I felt that my end was near and, overcome by fear, I quickly entered into fire. I had worshipped the fire-god in very many incarnations; hence, the fire-god reassured me with the words "Do not be afraid". I, too, prayed to the fire-god for his protection. The fire-god commanded me to ascend his own vehicle and said, "Let us both go to the world of fire". The fire-god then made a small hole in that huge body that had fallen on the earth, and both of us escaped into the outer space.

It was only from there that we could realise the colossal nature of that body which had fallen on the earth. By its fall, it had agitated all the oceans, and destroyed all the cities, towns, and forests. It had stopped the flow of the rivers. There was weeping and wailing everywhere. The earth itself was groaning under its weight. Gale-force winds and torrential rains reminded one of the cosmic dissolution. The peaks of the Himalayas had descended into the netherworld. The sun fell on the earth. The entire earth had been shattered. The celestials who were coursing the heavens, saw this enormous body, and thought that it was another newly-created earth, or another half of the universe, or perhaps a portion of space which had fallen from its place!

But when I saw it with great attention, I saw that it was made of flesh, and that the entire earth could not even cover a limb in that body. Having seen this, I turned to my tutelary deity, the fire-god, and asked him, "Lord, what is this?"

The fire-god replied:

"Child, wait till the disturbances caused by the fall of this corpse subside. I shall then tell you all about it."

Then the space around the earth was filled with sages, siddhas, and celestials, the manes, and the gods, all of whom had etheric bodies. They bowed their heads, and offered a prayer to the divine mother Kalaratri: **"May the divine mother, who is endowed with a black body, who consumes the entire universe, who holds the head of Brahma at the tip of her sword, and who wears the garland of the heads of the demons, and who is yet absolutely pure, protect us."**

## section VI.2 - chapter 134

deva ucurayam devi upararikrto mbike sardham svaparivarena  
sighramahriyatamiti (14)

Vipascit (Bhasa) continued:

In response to the prayers of the sages and the siddhas, the divine mother appeared in the sky. She was 'dry' and bloodless. She was accompanied by countless goblins and other spirits. She was several thousand miles tall. She was established in the supreme being. She was seated on the corpse.

The gods said to her: "O divine mother, this is our offering to you. We pray that you may consume it quickly, along with your attendant hosts." As soon as the gods said this, the divine mother began sucking the life-blood of the dead body with the help of her own prana-sakti (life-force). As this blood flowed into her mouth, her own lean body filled with blood, and her belly became distended. She began to dance. The gods, seated on the Lokahika mountains (the boundaries of the earth-plane), witnessed this dance. The goblins began to eat the corpse. The state of the world at that time was indeed pitiable.

The mountains of the earth had disappeared. The firmament appeared to be dressed in a red cloth. As the mother danced, swirling her divine weapons in all directions, whatever remained of the towns and cities of the earth was destroyed; only their memory remained. The whole world was populated now only by the goblins and the hosts that formed the retinue of the divine mother. Seeing all this utter destruction, the gods seated on the Lokaloka mountains were distressed.

Rama asked Vasistha: When it was said that the corpse covered the whole earth-plane, how is it that the Lokaloka mountains were still visible?

Vasistha said: Those mountains were visible over the shoulders of the corpse. The distressed gods reflected thus: "Alas, alas, where has the earth gone, where have the oceans gone, what happened to the people and to the mountains? Where has the Malaya mountain gone with all its sandalwood forests and various fragrant flower-gardens? Alas, the pure white snow of the Himalaya mountains appears to be muddy now. Alas, the ocean of milk (the abode of lord Visnu), the wish-fulfilling tree, all other oceans (those full of curd, wine, or honey) and the mountains full of cocoanut palms have vanished. Alas, the Kraunca continent with its own beautiful mountain, the Puskara continent (in which the swan, which is the vehicle of Brahma the creator, lived in a lake full of lotuses, and in whose mountain-caves the celestials used to enjoy themselves), the Gomedha continent surrounded by fresh-water ocean, and the Saka continent whose very remembrance is auspicious, have all been destroyed. All the gardens and forests have vanished. Where will the people, who are tired and fatigued, take rest now? When shall we again taste the sweetness of sugar and the little figurines made of sugar, since all the sugar cane fields have been destroyed? Alas, the Jambudvipa, which was the support of all other continents, has also been destroyed. Alas, where has the good earth disappeared?"

## section VI.2 - chapter 135 136

brahmanidam trnantanam dvidha bhavati sambhavah eko brahmamayo 'nyastu  
bhrantijastavimau srnu (136/22)

Vasistha (or Bhasa) continued:

The gods continued to say thus among themselves: "The goblins have now eaten the flesh, and drunk the blood of this corpse; hence, one can see the earth again. The very bones of that body form the new mountains." As the gods were saying so, the satisfied goblins began to dance in space. The gods saw that there was some blood left on the earth; they filled the oceans with it, and willed that it should become liquor. The goblins drank of this liquor, and continued to dance; even now they do so. This earth was made out of the flesh (meda) of the corpse, and hence it is known as 'medini' (earth). Thus the earth and its inhabitants were brought again into being. The Creator created a new mankind.

Bhasa said:

Then I asked the fire-god: Who was this person before he died? The Fire-God narrated to me the following story:

Listen, there is infinite space which is full of pure consciousness. In it are countless worlds, floating like so many atoms. In that there arose a cosmic person endowed with self-awareness. That person experiences his own light as you see an object in a dream. From those experiences arise the various senses and their respective organs, which together form the body. These senses perceive their own respective objects, which become the world.

In that world, there arose a person named Asura (demon). He was proud of his might. Once he destroyed the hermitage of a sage who cursed him thus: "You have done this because you are proud of your gigantic body. You will die, and become a mosquito." The fire of that curse burnt Asura to ashes. He became a disembodied personality, just like the mind of an unconscious person. It became one with the physical space. It then became united with the wind in that space. This wind is the life-force (prana). The Asura now awoke as a living being, and acquired energy, water, etc. Once again, endowed with the five elements (the tanmatras) and a particle of the infinite consciousness, he began to vibrate as an individual. There arose in him self-awareness, just as a seed sprouts in favourable conditions. In that self-awareness lay the sage's curse, and therefore the notion of a mosquito. Therefore he became a mosquito.

In answer to Rama's question, Vasistha said:

**"Right from Brahma, down to the blade of grass, all beings are subject to two forms of birth: the first is Brahma's creation, and the other is illusory creation.** The creation that arises spontaneously in the mind of the Creator which he had not experienced before is the creation of Brahma, not 'birth through the womb'. That which arises on account of latent delusion is the illusory birth, born of subject-object relationship.'

The mosquito dwelt happily on a blade of grass with its partner. This grass was eaten by a deer. Because he died looking at the deer, he became a deer. The deer was killed by a hunter; hence, the deer was born as a hunter in the next birth. While the hunter was roaming the forest, he had the good fortune to meet a holy sage, who awakened him: "Why do you engage yourself in this cruel life of a hunter? Abandon this sinful life, and seek to attain nirvana."

## section VI.2 - chapter 137

vivesa manasa mauni tatah sastravivekitam dinaireva yatha puspamamodena  
narasayam (4)

The Hunter asked:

If that is so, O sage, tell me how can one overcome sorrow without engaging oneself in 'hard' or 'soft' practices.

The Sage replied:

Abandon the bow and the arrows this very moment. Remain here, resorting to a life of silence, free from sorrow. Vasistha continued: The hunter did so, without hesitation. **In a matter of days, he entered into the wisdom of the scriptures, just as a flower enters a man's body as its fragrance.**

One day he asked the sage:

"How is it, O sage, that dream which takes place within, appears to be outside?"

The Sage replied:

This question arose in my mind, too, in the very beginning. In order to find an answer to this question, I practised concentration. I sat in the lotus-posture, and remained as pure consciousness. I gathered all the rays of the mind, which were dissipated over a thousand things, and focussed them on my own heart. Along with the life-force, I 'exhaled' the mind outside the body. That prana entered into a living being, which appeared in front of me. That being 'inhaled' that prana, and received it in its own heart.

Then I entered into the very heart of that being. Bound by my own intellect, I followed it into that being. I saw that the inside of that person was rife with countless channels, as if they were all outside. It was also filled with various organs and viscera like the liver, spleen, etc., just as a house is full of furniture. It was warm inside. The cool breeze that flowed into that body from outside, kept it alive and conscious. The channels bore the essence of food. It was very dark inside, like hell. The flow of the life-force along these channels gave ample indications of the physical disturbances that followed the irregular flow of the life-force. In a channel, which resembled the lotus stalk, there flowed a radiant and fiery force, making a distant noise of a wind flowing through a narrow tube. It was filled with all sorts of objects. It was bound together by the movement of air. It was pleasant in places, and agitated in others. It appeared as if the celestial musicians were singing somewhere below the tongue-area, and elsewhere it was as if there were fine music.

I entered the heart of that being. In that heart, I attained the principle of light. In it are the three worlds reflected. It is the light of the three worlds. It is the very essence of all things. The jiva is there in it. The jiva pervades the entire body, but this 'ojas' (inner light) is its special seat. It is protected on all sides by the life-force. I entered it, as water permeates an earthen pot. Remaining there, I saw the entire universe, as if I were seeing it from my own 'ojas'.

## section VI.2 - chapter 137

svapnah svapno jagarayamesa svapne tu jagara svapnastu jagaraiveti jagaraiva  
sthfta dvidha (38)

The Sage continued:

In that dream-world, too, there were the sun, the mountains, and the oceans, as also the gods and the demons and human beings; there were the cities and the forests, the time-scales and the directions. That dream-vision appeared to be permanent; it was as if it arose after the termination of my sleep. I asked myself: "How is that I see this dream, though I am not asleep?" After considerable enquiry I realised: "This surely is the divine form of the truth concerning consciousness. Whatever that consciousness manifests in itself, is known as the world." Wherever this seed of consciousness sees its own form, as it were, there and then, it sees the world, without ever abandoning its own reality as the infinite consciousness.

I have realised now that this world, which is said to be the dream-object, is the perception of this infinite consciousness. The manifestation (shining) of this consciousness is called the waking-world, and also the dream-world. It is one consciousness; there is no division in it. **Dream is dream in relation to the waking state, but a dream is waking state in relation to the dream itself. Dream is non-different from the waking state; waking state itself is twofold.**

A person is but consciousness. Even if a hundred bodies perish, consciousness does not perish. Consciousness is like space, but it exists as if it is the body. The infinite appears to be divided into infinite objects, with and without form. This is because countless particles of experiences shine within the infinite consciousness. When the jiva turns away from the experiencing of the external world and towards the inner world in the heart, then dream arises. When the jiva has externalised consciousness, there is the waking state. When the same jiva turns its gaze upon itself, dream arises. The jiva itself is spread out as the space, the earth, the wind, the mountains, and the oceans, whether they are seen outside or inside. When this truth is realised, one is freed from vasana or mental conditioning.

I then asked myself, "What is sleep?" I began to investigate sleep. When one thinks, "What have I got to do with these objects of the world? Let me rest in utter peace for some time", sleep arises. Just as in the same body there are sentient and also insentient (like nails, hair) parts, sleep is characterised by both sentience and insentience. 'Let me rest in peace' - when this one notion prevails in the mind, there is sleep. This can arise even in the waking state.

Then I began to investigate the state of turiya (the fourth one). If one is established in turiya, the world-appearance ceases on account of perfect illumination. Then the world exists as it is, nothing ceases to be. It is because of the existence of this turya that waking, dream, and sleep exist as they do. The realisation that 'The world has not been created at all, since there is no cause for it to arise', and that 'It is Brahman alone that shines as this world', is turya.

## section VI.2 - chapter 138

yada tadatmakatmaikaparo hr̥di sahas̥thitam upradhanikarotyetaaccittam  
svarthasvabhavatah (21)

The Sage continued:

Then I desired to become one with the consciousness of that being. When I left that being's 'ojas', in order to enter into the consciousness, my own senses were immediately awakened. However, I restrained them at once, and entered into the consciousness. As I entered that consciousness, I experienced two worlds at the same time. Everything appeared double. However, since the two perceiving intelligences were similar, the duality appeared to be similar and mixed well, like water and milk.

In a moment, I drew into myself the consciousness of that other being with the help of my consciousness. At once, the 'two worlds' merged into one, even as for one who is suffering from diplopia, the perception of two moons gives way to the perception of a single moon when he is cured. I had not abandoned my own wisdom, but my own thought-form had greatly weakened, and taken on the thought-form of the other being. Hence, I began to experience the world as he did.

After some time, he retired to sleep. He collected the rays of his mind. Even as a tortoise draws its limbs into itself, his senses were drawn into his heart along with their functions. His sense-organs became as if they were dead, or as if they were but painted images. I was within him, and I followed the course of his mind, and entered into his heart. For a moment, I enjoyed the happiness of sleep, having abandoned the experience of external objects, and having entered into the 'ojas'. All the channels within him were dense and congested, on account of fatigue; and on account of food, drink, etc., the life-breath flowed slowly through the nostrils. **The life-force turns upon its own source within the heart, and relieves the mind of materiality (or, makes the mind unimportant), because naturally it is its own object.** The self is its own object now, and there is no other externalising activity. Hence, it shines in itself as itself.

Rama asked: The mind is able to think only on account of the life-force, and it has no existence in itself. Then, what is it in itself?

Vasistha replied: Though the body is experienced to be real, it does not exist in truth. Mind is as real as the mountain seen in a dream. Since no 'object' has ever been created on account of the absence of any cause, the mind (citta) does not exist. All this is Brahman and, since Brahman is everything, this world exists as it is. Even the body, the mind, etc., are Brahman only; but, how the knowers of truth see this is not for us to describe.

The one indivisible, infinite consciousness perceived itself as its own object, and that is said to be the mind. When there arose the notion of motion, that notion manifested as prana or life-force. Prana gives rise to the experience through the senses, and thus arises the world.

## section VI.2 - chapter 139

yada svakarmani spande vyagrah prano bhram bhavet tada tadyahitavyagrah prano  
na 'tmodyami bhavet (12)

Vasistha continued:

The mind (citta) is the creator of the world, with all that is real, unreal, or mixed which is in it. Prana (life-force) was brought into being by the mind with the idea: 'Prana is my movement, and I shall not be without prana or life-force. Hence it shall be my goal. Even if I am without prana for some time, I shall immediately be with prana again.' The moment this prana gets united with the mind, it sees the illusory world. Because of the firm notion 'I shall never again be without the life-force and the body', it does not regain its true nature as pure consciousness.

It experiences sorrow, since it swings from one extreme to the other, on account of doubt. This sorrow cannot cease, except when the self-knowledge arises. Nothing other than self-knowledge can remove the wrong notion 'I am this'. Self-knowledge does not arise, except through the investigation of the means for liberation. Hence, by every means, one should investigate the means for liberation.

The mind constantly entertains the notion that 'The life-force is my own life,' and therefore the mind rests in prana. When the body is in a state of well-being, the mind functions well, but when the body does not enjoy a state of well-being, the mind does not see anything other than the physical disturbance. **When the prana life-force) is busily engaged in its own vigorous movement, then it is absorbed in its own movement, and is unable to exert in self-knowledge.**

Thus, the relationship between the mind and the prana is that of a rider and the vehicle. Such was the notion entertained by the infinite consciousness right in the beginning; and therefore this relationship prevails even today. One who is not enlightened is unable to transcend it. The ignorant person continues to entertain unshakable notions concerning time, space, matter, mind, prana and body. When the mind and the prana function in harmony, the person engages himself in various activities. When there is disturbance, there is disharmony. When both are at rest, there is sleep. When the nadis (channels of energy) are clogged by food, etc., and there is inertia, the movement of prana becomes dull, and there is sleep. Again, even when the nadis are not clogged by food, etc., but when there is weakness or fatigue, the prana is unable to move properly, and one sleeps. When the nadis themselves become soft and weak, for whatever reason, when they are loaded with all sorts of impurities, and when the prana is thus engaged in some extraordinary activity, then, too, sleep arises.

The Sage said:

When darkness fell, then the person into whose heart I had entered fell into deep sleep. I too enjoyed this deep sleep. Then, when the food he had eaten had been digested, and when the nadis were clear, the life-force began to move vigorously, and sleep weakened.

## section VI.2 - chapter 139

susupte tanutam yate hrdayadiva nirgatam apasyamahamatraiva bhuvanam  
bhaskaradimat (23)

The Sage continued:

When thus sleep had been weakened, I saw the world with its sun etc., as if it arose in the heart. I saw all this where I was. But, this world was being overwhelmed by the flood of cosmic dissolution. I saw myself seated with my bride in a house. The flood was carrying us all away, with the whole house, etc., floating as if to try to fight the flood, and stay alive. Soon, the house in which I was seated, which was being carried down by the flood, broke into pieces. I jumped into the water. I had abandoned the family and friends, being solely interested in the preservation of my life. Sometimes I went down under, and sometimes I rose to the surface. When I obtained a foothold on a rock, and tried to rest a while, a huge wave came and knocked me into the flood again. There was not a single form of suffering that I did not experience during this period, and I was subjected to every type of painful experience.

In the meantime, because I was in a state of utter despair - though quite conscious - I recollected a previous life-time experience in a state of samadhi. Then I was an ascetic. I had entered another person, eager to witness the dream-state. I knew that I was perceiving an illusion. At the same time, I also perceived the present experience; though I was being carried away by the flood, I experienced joy.

While observing the flood and the destruction caused by it, I reflected thus: "What cannot fate do? Even the three-eyed god is being crushed by this flood. In this flood, all the gods and the demons are being whirled around. These mountainous waves rise right up to the seat of Brahma the Creator. These waves look like elephants; they are as powerful as lions, and they seem to float in the sky like clouds. Even the protectors of this earth, along with their palaces and vehicles, fall into this flood and get drowned. The gods and the demons float in this flood together and hold onto one another. Because of the falling cities and the floating palaces, the waters of the flood appear to be solid walls. Even the sun has been overcome by this flood and the sun is being led into the netherworld. Only the knowers of the truth (the sages of self-knowledge) experience no sorrow at all; they see their bodies being borne down the stream, but without the false notion 'I am that body'. Helpless women are drowning. In this flood of cosmic dissolution, where all are being chewed by death, who can save whom? The entire universe now seems only to be an infinite ocean. Where are all the gods headed by Indra?"

## section VI.2 - chapter 140

balam buddhisca tejasca ksayakala upasthite viparyasyati sarvatra sarvatha mahatimapi (6)

The hunter asked:

Do such hallucinations arise even in such great ones like you, O sage? Does not the practice of meditation put an end to them?

The Sage replied:

Everything ceases at the end of a world-cycle. Some things come to an end gradually, while others end abruptly. Again, what has to happen will happen inevitably. Moreover, **with the advent of adversity, strength, intelligence, and vitality (radiance) are all adversely affected everywhere, at all times, even in the case of the great ones.** Lastly, what I described so far was but a dream. What is impossible or irreconcilable with a dream?

Yet, it is important that I should narrate this dream-experience to you. Now, I shall tell you the truth.

While I was thus witnessing this great flood of cosmic dissolution, I came upon the peak of a mountain. I got on top of it. The very next instant, the entire scene changed. I do not even know how the flood-waters disappeared. The whole earth was a mass of mud, in which the gods like Indra, and animals like elephants, were all sunk neck-deep. Soon I was overcome by fatigue and sleep.

After this, though I remained in my own 'ojas', I still carried the psychological conditioning of the previous experience. After thus experiencing a sort of double-consciousness, when I awoke, I saw the mountain-peak in the other person's heart. On the second day, I saw the sunrise there. After this arose all other objects of the world.

I tried to forget everything else, and to engage myself in my usual activity in that world. I said to myself, "I am sixteen years of age, these are my parents, etc." Then I saw a village and in it a hermitage. I began to live in that hermitage which became real to me; the memory of the previous experience began to fade; I considered the body to be my only hope. Wisdom was far from me. Vasana or mental conditioning was the very essence of my being, and I was devoted to wealth. I observed all my social and religious duties. I knew what to do, and what not to do.

One day, a sage came to me as my guest. I entertained him well. At night, he told me a story. He described the limitless universe in detail, and concluded by saying that all that was the infinite consciousness. My own intelligence was awakened. At once, I remembered all the past, how I entered into another's body, etc. I thought that the other person was the cosmic person, and tried to get out of it. I entered into that person's prana. Becoming one with it, I came out. Then I saw immediately in front of me my own body, seated in the lotus-posture, in a hermitage, attended to by disciples. According to these disciples, only an hour had passed after I entered into samadhi. The person into whose heart I had entered was another traveller, who was asleep. I did not tell all this to anyone, but quickly re-entered the heart of the sleeping person. In his heart, the cosmic dissolution had been completed. And the village in which I lived with my relatives had disappeared. Everything was ablaze with the fire of dissolution. I practised the wind-contemplation, and roamed in it.

## section VI.2 - chapter 141 142

tatra damdahyamano 'pi na 'bhavam dukkhabhagaham svapne svapno 'yamityesa  
janannagnavapi cyutah (141/1)

The Sage continued:

Though I was surrounded by that terrible fire there, I was not unhappy at all . When you know while dreaming that it is dream only, you are freed from even fire. While I was investigating the nature of the fire, unaffected by it, because I knew the truth that it was dream, a dreadful heat-wave arose. In that gale, everything began to fly around and to get totally burnt. It was like the dance of destruction.

I began to wonder: after all, all this is only a dream dreamt by me while I am living in someone else's heart. Why should I not get out of all this, instead of witnessing this suffering?

The hunter asked:

You had entered that person's heart in order to know what dream was. Why did you decide to pull out? Did you find out the truth?

The Sage replied:

To begin with, the creation has no cause for coming into being. Hence, neither the word 'creation' nor the object 'creation' are real. They do not exist. But this ignorance or unreality is also a notion which arises in consciousness or reality, and in consciousness or reality what exists (as 'creation') is obvious. I can only tell you the truth from the point of view of one in whom ignorance and foolishness have ceased; what is true from the point of view of the ignorant and the foolish, I do not know. The truth is: all this is pure consciousness, which pervades everything.

Where is body, where is the heart, what is dream, where are water and flood, etc., where is awakening and the cessation of such awakening, where is birth, and where is death? There is only pure consciousness. In the presence of this consciousness, even the smallest and the subtlest of space appears macrocosmic. Spontaneously this consciousness 'thinks' for a moment, and the notion of the world arises, though it is still pure space. Just as in dream, only consciousness puts on various guises, and there are no cities, etc.; the world is pure consciousness only. For us, there is no appearance, nothing unreal or real, no space; but there is only one formless, beginningless, endless, non-dual infinite consciousness. Dream arises without any cause, and there is only the pure consciousness of the perceiver (without an independent object). Here, too, there is no cause, and therefore there is neither a subject nor an object; what exists is the pure consciousness or whatever it is, but it is pure experiencing which is non-dual and beyond description.

Time is both existence and destruction; the seed is itself all that emerges out of it, right up to the flowers and the fruits. Even so Brahman is all this. Consciousness always shines pure. Just as during dreaming the dream has the quality of wakefulness, even so wakefulness is also of the nature of dream only. When all mental activity ceases, you are that which is.

## section VI.2 - chapter 142

yatha svapnesu drstanam na prakkarma nrnam bhavet adisargesu jivanam tatha cinmatrarupinam (40)

The hunter asked:

Lord, who are affected by past karma, and who are not?

The Sage replied:

They who come into being at the very commencement of creation - like Brahma the creator - have no birth and no karma. To them, there is no notion of duality, no samsara, and no notions; their consciousness is pure. Surely, at the very beginning of creation, no one has any karma; for, before that, only the infinite and absolute Brahman existed. Therefore, at the beginning of creation, it was Brahman who manifested as the creation. Just as Brahma the creator and the others manifested at the beginning of creation, even so did countless jivas manifest then. But, they who consider themselves other than Brahman, consider themselves ignorant, and perceive duality. In their case, birth and karma arise of their own accord, because these beings lean on the unreality. But, in the case of those who do not thus consider themselves different from Brahman (like Brahma, Visnu, diva, etc.), they are unaffected by karma.

The infinite consciousness is absolutely pure. Brahman rests in himself. However, in it, there arises just a little notion of the jiva. Where this notion of jiva arises, there ignorance arises; that itself is considered as creation by the same consciousness. Of its own accord, consciousness awakens itself to its own true nature, and realises that it is, and has always been, Brahman.

Water itself takes on the appearance of a whirlpool; Brahman itself takes on the appearance of this creation. This creation is manifest Brahman; it is neither a dream, nor a waking state reality. In that case, what is karma, to whom is it, and of how many types is it? In truth, there is no karma, no ignorance, no creation; all these notions arise only because of one's own experience.

Brahman alone shines as creation, individual selves, karma, birth, and such other notions. Because it is the Lord, it experiences these notions as if they were true. In the beginning of creation, the jiva is not subject to any karma; after this, however, it gets involved in karma, on account of the notions it entertains. What is the body or personality of a whirlpool, and what is its karma? It is water, and even so is everything Brahman.

**The persons seen in a dream have no past karma. Even so, the jivas that arose in the beginning of creation have no karma, because they are pure consciousness.** It is only when one becomes firmly rooted in the notion of this world-appearance as the reality, that the notion of karma arises. Then the jivas roam here, bound by their karma. If it is realised that this creation itself is no-creation, and that Brahman alone exists, then where is karma, whose is karma, and who belongs to that karma? Karma exists only in ignorance; the moment right knowledge arises, karma ceases to bind.

## section VI.2 - chapter 143

sargadavatha dehante bhatam yadvedanam yatha tattatha 'moksameva 'ste tadidam  
sarga ucyate (17)

The Sage continued:

The pandita (one who has self-knowledge) is like the sun which makes the lotus of all dharma, karma, and knowledge blossom. Compared to the wisdom of the sage of self-knowledge, even the status of the king of the gods is like a worthless straw. When self-knowledge arises, the illusory notion of a world-existence vanishes, and the realisation of Brahman as the only truth arises; just as when light dispels darkness, the garland which had been mistaken for a snake, shines as a garland.

The people seen in a dream do not have parents; this world-dream has no cause. The dream-people had no previous karma to cause their present birth. The apparently real people in this dream-world do not have a previous karma either. Even as the jiva perceives and experiences dreams here, even so it fancies and experiences, as if real, a previous existence and karma, in accordance with its own mental conditioning (vasana).

In the beginning of creation, and at the end of the existence of the body, the jiva experiences a dream-like state. Whatever it experiences seems to be - and that is both real and unreal. In a dream, there is contact with 'other' objects, though no such exist. Even so, the perception of the other objects in the waking state is possible, though they are unreal. 'Waking' and 'dreaming' are two words used to denote the movement in consciousness, which brings about awareness. **That awareness or experience which arises in the beginning of creation (sargadi), and at the end of the life-span of the body (dehanta), that awareness continues to exist till it ceases to be (or till liberation is attained), and that is known as creation.**

There is no distinction between consciousness and awareness of objects seen either in the waking state or in a dream, just as there is no distinction between wind and movement. Brahman alone appears to arise, and to perish or to die, and to experience objects; but it is pure consciousness alone, which does not undergo any change, and which is for ever at peace and pure. Whatever that infinite consciousness or cosmic person becomes aware of within itself, becomes both cause and effect. This creation is in the heart of that infinite consciousness, even as the dream is in your heart, both as the cause and effect.

In whatever manner it appeared in the beginning, that has continued to be its natural order, time, space, etc. Whatever characteristic the creation acquired then, has continued to exist since then. First, there arises a notion or a feeling or a concept in the consciousness, and then follows what is known as creation; but all this is but the amazing work of consciousness. The immeasurable space appears to have a blue colour; the immeasurable consciousness appears to exist as this creation.

## section VI.2 - chapter 143

mrtau na jayate tasmacetasaiva sa kevalam iha 'vamtthamityeva vetti khe  
vasanatmakam (42)

The hunter asked:

After leaving this body, how does one get another body for the purpose of experiencing pleasure and pain; what is the causal factor, and what are the co-operating causes?

The Sage replied:

Dharma (virtue), adharma (sin), vasana (latent tendency or mental conditioning), the active self and jiva - all these are synonyms which are notions with no corresponding reality. Consciousness entertains these notions in the space (or the plane) of consciousness. The self experiences the body-notion, because it is pure consciousness, totally independent of the body. Though the body-notion is unreal, it is experienced as if it were real, just like the dream-object. To the dead person, the 'other world' shines as a notion in his own consciousness. Because he sees this for some time, it is assumed to be real.

If it is contended that someone else gives birth to the dead person, how does the latter remember the past in the present incarnation? **The dead one is not born again: but he experiences the notion 'I am here in this manner' etc., on account of his own mental conditioning, within his own consciousness.** When this experience is sustained for some time, and it takes deep root, it takes on the quality of reality. The self, which is but pure space (void), sees a dream in that space (void) itself; it remembers that dream again and again, and thereby arise rebirth and another world. It then believes that world and that birth to be real, and begins to function in that world as that jiva.

In this way, there are millions upon millions of worlds; when their truth is clearly understood, they are but pure consciousness or Brahman, otherwise they appear to be the world-creation. They are nothing, and they belong to none. They have never been really created. Each jiva experiences each one of those worlds as 'this is the world'. It is this mutual relationship that confers reality upon this illusion; when their truth is realised, they are known to be the uncreated reality. What is real to the sage, is impenetrable illusion to the ignorant. What is unreal to the sage, is the most obvious truth to the ignorant.

Whatever the infinite consciousness experiences, that appears to be, then, and there; hence, those experiences are real in relation to the particular experiencer. But, then, since all these (the experiencer and the experiences) are pure consciousness, there is nothing to be spoken of as 'the other' or as duality. In the infinite consciousness, when the notion 'this is this' arises, it shines as 'this is this'; but, when it is seen as 'this is this', then of course it becomes unreal! If it is the experience of consciousness, then it is non-different from consciousness; only in the non-existent state of ignorance is the experience experienced independently. Thus, self-knowledge has no object to be known. When the knowledge is the known, then the self knows itself.

## section VI.2 - chapter 143

ektam tatha ca cinmatram svapne laksatma tisthati punarlaksatma tat  
svapnadekamaste susuptake (58)

The Sage continued:

However carefully we look and investigate, we do not see anything other than the reality. What the ignorant and the foolish see, we do not know. In the enlightened vision of the sage, all this is the pure, indivisible consciousness; that itself appears to be countless separate objects (both sentient and insentient) in the eyes of the ignorant. **The one pure consciousness appears as the diverse dream-objects in a dream. All these millions of objects which appear in the dream become one again in deep sleep.** Similarly, when this dream-world appears in the infinite consciousness, that itself is called creation; when this itself enters into the equivalent of the deep sleep state, it is known as the cosmic dissolution. This is pure commonsense.

The one indivisible consciousness becomes both the diverse objects, and also the infinite individuals; it itself becomes both the void, and also the matter just like in dream. All this diversity is just experiencing. It is pure. It shines in the manner in which it is conceived of. It cannot be removed. This consciousness alone becomes fire, etc., in the beginning of creation, for the purpose of constituting this dream-world. It is pure experiencing alone that shines as the earth, etc., though in truth it is nothing but space or veil which shines as the created world. This awareness or experiencing appears to be impossible to overcome at times, and at times it seems to be capable of being put to an end; in fact it is not possible to put an end to it, because pure experiencing remains even after all the other things have been put to an end. It is like your going from the east to the west. Now you know the east, and now you know the west - but the experience of knowing remains the same. Whatever you think of intently for a considerable time, that you experience; or you rest in peace, and experience that peace. You go from the east to the west, and know these. Another does not go, but stays in one place, and still knows these. The infinite consciousness, being non-moving, remains the same, whether it is thus experienced or thought of. Both experiences arise, and both experiences cease. When the wish arises in one 'I shall go from the south to the north', both these arise in the non-moving consciousness; but when such a wish does not arise, the directions 'north' and 'south' do not exist. When the consciousness thinks, "May I become a city in the sky" or "May I become an animal on earth," these two come into being; when that notion is not there, they cease. To others, the world is something else.

Whether the body is mortal or immortal, the truth is that this samsara and the jiva are like dream. Even among the foreigners there are accounts of people recalling events in their past-lives. Surely, they did not 'die'. Thus the infinite consciousness, which alone appears as all this, is undying, unchanging, and eternal. The unmoving consciousness remains, appearing to be whatever notion arises in it here and there. What is truth, and what is false? So, let one experience bodies, actions, sorrow, or pleasure, as and when they arise; or let them all go. There is no meaning in all this. Let it be 'this' way or 'that' way, let it be or not be; give up this delusion, and remain enlightened.

## section VI.2 - chapter 144

svapne to jagratsamskaro yastajjagratkrtam navam ajagrajjagrada `bhasam  
krtamityeva tadvidah (19)

The Sage continued:

All that exists and all that does not exist are like dream-experiences. Such being the truth, what is bondage and who is liberated? The cloud-formations in the sky throw up ever-changing forms and patterns. Even so is the world-appearance ever changing. It seems to be stable and unchanging on account of ignorance. In this infinite space, there are countless worlds, even as we have our own world; one man's world is not experienced by another person. The measure and the experiences of frogs living in a well, lake, and ocean, are different from one another. They do not share one another's knowledge. People sleeping in one house have different dreams, in which they experience life in different worlds, as it were; even so, the people have different worlds in the same space, while some may not have. All this is but the mysterious and efficient work of the infinite consciousness.

Consciousness has the faculty of holding on to something; a notion so held is known as samskara. But, when it is realised that the notion is only reflected in consciousness, it is seen that there is no samskara independent of consciousness. In dream there is no previous memory, but only the experience of the objects that are experienced for the time being. One may even experience in a dream one's own death, as also objects that appear like those seen before.

This creation was but a mirror-reflection in the indivisible consciousness in the beginning, and hence it was non-different from that consciousness. Brahman (the infinite consciousness) alone shines as this world, which is not something new. The cause alone is the effect. The cause was there before the effect, and will remain even after the effect ceases to be. Because the cause 'acts efficiently' (samyak karoti) in bringing about the effect, it itself is known as samskara.

That which existed before the arising of the dream, but which shines as that which was seen before, that is known as samskara. There is no other external factor known as samskara (popularly translated into 'latent impressions of past experiences and actions'). Things seen and unseen, exist in the consciousness, which shines in its own light, and experiences all those things as if already seen. **In dream, the samskaras created in the waking state arise; but, in the waking state itself, they are created anew. But, they who know the truth, declare that they were in fact created in a state that appeared to be the waking state, but which in fact is not.** Just as movement arises in air spontaneously, even so notions arise in consciousness; where is the need for samskara to create them? When the experience of a thousand things arises in consciousness, it is known as creation; and when the experience of the thousand things ceases in consciousness, that is known as the cosmic dissolution. Thus, the pure consciousness (cidakasa) brings into being this diversity, with all its names and forms, without ever abandoning its indivisibility, just as you create a world in your dream.

## section VI.2 - chapter 144

bhatyakaranakam brahma sargatma 'pyabudham prati tam pratyeva ca bhatyesa  
karyakaranadrghbhamah (49)

The Sage continued:

The perception or the experience of 'the world' exists within the atomic particle of infinite consciousness. Just as the reflection in a mirror is only mirror, however, it is non-different from the infinite consciousness. This Infinite consciousness is beginningless and endless; that itself is called creation. Wherever this consciousness shines, there this creation exists, non-different from it even as a body is non-different from its limbs. You and I are consciousness, the entire world is consciousness; by this realisation, the creation is seen as an integral part of consciousness, and therefore uncreated. Hence, I am that atomic particle of consciousness, and as such I am infinite and omnipresent. Therefore, wherever I am, I see everything from there itself. I am a particle of consciousness, but I am one with the infinite consciousness, on account of the realisation of this truth, even as water is the same as water.

Therefore, by entering into the 'ojas', I experienced the three worlds. All this happened within it, and within it I saw the three worlds - not outside. Whether it is called dream or waking, inside or outside, all this is within the infinite consciousness.

The hunter asked:

If this creation is causeless, how does it come into being? If it has a cause, what is the cause of the dream-creation?

The Sage replied:

In the beginning, creation had no cause whatsoever. Since the objects of this creation had no cause whatsoever, conflicting diversity of objects opposed to one another does not arise. The one absolute Brahman alone shines as all this, and is denoted by words like 'creation', etc. Thus, this causeless creation is Brahman, but it appears to be part of that which has no parts, to be diverse in the indivisible, to have a form in the formless. Because it is pure consciousness, it appears to assume various forms, like the mobile and the immobile objects. And, as the gods and the sages, it creates and sustains a world order, with all the injunctions and prohibitions. Existence, non-existence, the gross, and the subtle, etc., do not in any way affect the omnipresent consciousness.

However, from there on, effects do not arise without a cause. The world order and its lord (Brahman) act on one another, just like one arm restrains the other, though both belong to the same person.

Thus, this creation arises without desire, and without psychological cause. The world order (niyati) exists within Brahman; Brahman does not exist without niyati. Thus, this creation has a cause, but only in relation to the one whose creation it is, and as long as that creation lasts in relation to him. **The ignorant think that Brahman shines or appears as this creation without a cause; and it is again the ignorant that are caught up in this cause-and-effect tangle or deluded notion that causality is inviolably real.** The creation takes place as a coincidence - the ripe coconut falls accidentally, just when a crow alights on it. Then niyati determines 'This is this' and 'That is that'.

## section VI.2 - chapter 145

yadendriyani tisthanti bahyatasca samakulam tada mlananubhavana samkalpartho  
'nubhyate (2)

The Sage continued:

The jiva knows and experiences the external world with the externalised senses, and the inner dream-world with the inner senses. **When the senses are engaged in the experience of the external world, then the field of the internal notions is vague and unclear.** But, when the senses are turned within, then the jiva experiences the world within himself with the greatest clarity. There is no contradiction in this world-appearance whatsoever, at any time; it is as one sees it is. Therefore, when the eyes are extroverted, the jiva experiences the world as if it were outside in the infinite consciousness. The aggregate of the senses of hearing, touch (skin, sight (eyes), smell (nose), taste (tongue), and desire is, known as the jiva, which is of the nature of pure consciousness, endowed with life-force. This jiva exists therefore in everything, everywhere, as everything, and hence he experiences everything, everywhere.

When the jiva (the 'ojas' or the vital essence) is filled with 'phlegm' (slesma or kapha, one of the three humours that constitute the vital essence of the body), he sees its effects there and then. He 'sees' himself rising from the ocean of milk; he sees the moon floating in the sky; he sees lakes and lotuses, gardens and flowers, rejoicing and festivals, in which women sing and dance, feasts with a lot of food and drink, rivers flowing into the ocean, huge palaces painted white, fields covered with fresh snow, parks with deer resting in them, and mountain ranges.

When the jiva is filled with 'bile' (pitta, which is another humour), he experiences its effects there and then. He 'sees' flames which are beautiful, and which produce sweating of the nerves, and which throw up black smoke which darkens the sky, suns which are dazzling in their brilliance and scorching in their heat, oceans and mist rising from them, impassable forests, mirages with swans swimming in them; he sees himself running along the road in fear and covered with hot dust, he sees the earth scorched dry and hot. Wherever the eyes see, they see everything on fire, even the clouds rain fire; and because of this pervasive fire, everything looks brilliant.

When the jiva is filled with 'wind' (vata which is another humour), he experiences the following effects. He sees the world as if it is new, he sees himself and even rocks and mountains flying, everything revolves and rotates, flying angels and celestials, the earth and all that is in it quakes; he sees himself as having fallen into a blind well, or into a dreadful calamity, or as standing perilously on top of a tree of great height or a mountain peak.

## section VI.2 - chapter 145

ksubdhairantarbahiscaiva svalpaih svalpam prapasyati samaih samamidam drsyam  
vatapittakaphadina (59)

The Sage continued:

When the jiva is filled with vata, pitta, and slesma (wind, bile and phlegm), he comes under the influence of the wind, and experiences distress. He sees a shower of mountains and of rocks, he hears dreadful sounds, with which trees revolve in the bowels of the earth. Whole forests whirl around with all the animals in the forests. All the trees are on fire, and there is the sound of burning issuing from all the caves. He sees the collision of mountains. He sees the oceans rising to till the entire sky, and carrying away whole forests, and even clouds lifting them up to the region of Brahma the creator. The whole sky seems to be clear and clean, because of all this friction and rubbing within it. The three worlds appear to be filled with the battle cries of soldiers and warriors.

When thus the jiva is agitated and distressed by all this dreadful vision, he becomes unconscious. Like a worm which lies buried in the earth, like a frog hidden in a rock, like a foetus in the womb, like the seed within the fruit, like the unborn sprout in a seed, like an atom in a molecule, like an uncut figure in a rock, he rests within himself, undisturbed by the movement of prana, because in his resting place there are no 'holes' or outlets. He enters into deep sleep, which is like resting inside a rock, or inside a blind well.

When mental effort makes a hole in that resting place, then he knows the world of dreams, having been made aware of it by the movement of the life-force prana. When this life-force falls from one nadi (nerve-channel) on to another, there is a vision of a shower of mountains. If there is too much of such movement caused by vata, pitta, and slesma, then there is a lot of such experience; if it is less, the experience is less.

Whatever the jiva experiences within (in dream, etc.) on account of the vata, pitta, and slesma, that he experiences outside, too, and in that field his own organs of action function appropriately. **When agitated or disturbed inside and outside, he (the jiva) experiences a little disturbance if the disturbance of the vata, pitta and kapha (slesma) is slight, and he experiences equanimity if they are in a state of balance or equilibrium.** The jiva experiences all these outside when the three humours are agitated or disturbed: burning, drowning, moving in air, resting on rocks and mountains, hell, rising and falling from the sky, hallucinations like drowning in a playground, sunshine at midnight, perversion of intelligence in which one's own appear to be strangers and enemies appear like friends. With closed eyes, these are all seen within oneself, and with open eyes, these are seen outside; but all these delusions are brought about by the disturbed equilibrium of the three humours. When they are in a state of equilibrium, the jiva residing within them sees the whole world as it is, as it really is, non-different from Brahman.

## section VI.2 - chapter 146

jagratsvapnasusuptadi paramarthavidam vidam na vidyate kincidapi  
yathasthitamavasthitam (21)

The Sage continued:

While I was within the 'ojas' of that other person, there arose symptoms of the cosmic dissolution. Mountains began to rain from the sky. I saw it while I was sitting within the 'ojas' of the other person; in fact, it was particles of food that were coursing in the channels of his body that created this illusion of mountains being showered from the dark sky, and this darkness was the darkness of his own deep sleep. I also entered into deep sleep. After some time, I experienced the dawn of awakening consciousness.

As I was waking up from sleep, I experienced the dream state. Within the same 'ojas', I saw a mighty ocean which appeared to be like me. Whatever appeared in that 'ojas', which was the field of experience, I saw without any distortion or perversion, because my consciousness was non-moving, and steady. Consciousness is spread all round, and in it, this world-appearance arises; this world-appearance issues from the deep sleep state, even as a baby is born of the mother.

The hunter asked: You say that the world-appearance issues from the deep sleep, pray, tell me what one experiences in deep sleep.

The Sage continued: 'Is born', 'appears', 'arises as the world', and such other dualistic expressions are but mere words, utterly meaningless. I shall tell you what 'is born' (jata) means. The essence of that expression is 'to come into being', and that 'being' alludes to the eternally existent reality. Even so, the word 'creation' (sarga) also has the same connotation, and it refers to 'existence'.

To us who are enlightened, there is no creation, no death or cessation; all is for ever unborn and peaceful. Brahman is pure existence. The world is pure existence, too. Whom do injunctions and prohibitions affect? The illusory power known as Maya alone is the subject of discussion and argumentation - 'it is' and 'it is not'. Therefore, such disputation is extended by ignorant people to Brahman or the infinite consciousness.

**To those who know the truth or the supreme state, the states of waking, dream and sleep do no exist at all. Whatever is, is as it is.** The dreamworld, as also the world which one sees in his own imagination is not real, even though they are experienced to be so for the time being. Even so, in the beginning of this world-creation, it did not exist or come into being. When thus the world is realised as pure consciousness, then it is not an object of perception; therefore, there is no subject or observer either, there is no experience or experiencer.

## section VI.2 - chapter 147

yastu cinmatragaganam sarvamityeva bodhavan dvattena badhyate neha so 'nga  
tisthati kevalah (21)

The Sage continued:

When I had emerged from deep sleep, this world arose in my dream as from an ocean, as a statue emerges from a stone, as flowers emerge from the tree, as memory emerges from the mind, as waves emerge from the ocean. It was as if they dropped from the sky, as if they arose from the earth, as if they arose in the heart, as if they were food grains that sprang from the earth, as if the curtain that hid them had been lifted, as if they emerged from a temple. From where did the world arrive? One does not know. It is surely the figure fashioned in the stone called the infinite consciousness. It is an imaginary city made of walls which are pure space or void. It is the trick of the juggler known as ignorance. Though it seems to be a firm reality, it is essentially devoid of space and time. Though it seems to be diverse, yet it is non-dual, diverse, and nothing at the same time. Surely, it can only be compared to a castle in the air; for, it is seen and experienced even in the waking state.

Though it has never been created, it exists as if it had been created. It is pure consciousness. It seems to be endowed with time, space, matter, activity, creation, and destruction. It has gods, demons, human beings, and various other forms of creatures. In it are the rivers, mountains, forests, the sky, and the stars.

I saw this 'field of observation'. At the same time, I saw there the house I had seen before, along with all my relatives buildings, and everything as they were before. All these had been dragged into the field of observation, by the latent vasana or psychological tendency. On account of the vasana, I immediately engaged myself in greeting and embracing my relatives etc. , having temporarily lost the knowledge that it was illusory.

Just as a mirror reflects whatever object is placed in front of it, even so, consciousness takes on the form of whatever is presented to it. **However, one who has realised that everything is the pure, infinite consciousness, is not affected by the apparent reality. He remains free, alone, and unaffected.** One who never loses the knowledge of oneness is not troubled by this goblin known as perception of difference or division. They in whom this knowledge has arisen, due to the company of the holy ones and the study of this scripture, do not lose it again. At that time, however, my own understanding had not become clear and firm; hence, even I was swayed by the notions of relationship. But, now, nothing in the world can shake my understanding, nor cloud my realisation. Your mind, too, is not steady now, O hunter, because you have not had satsanga, company of the holy ones.

The hunter said:

True indeed, O sage. It is as you say. Therefore, even though I have listened to your illuminating words, there is still some doubt in me, "Can all this really be true?" Alas, what a great tragedy! Even when this ignorance seems to be obvious, it is hard to abandon it.

## section VI.2 - chapter 148

atah svapnah kvacitsatyah kvacicci 'satya eva va abuddhanam prabuddhanam na  
'sadrupo na sanmayah (14)

The hunter asked:

I have a great doubt, O sage: how can the dream-objects be regarded both as real and unreal?

The Sage replied:

In a dream there is the appearance of time, space, action, and materiality. This appearance arises because of the notion that arises in consciousness, by sheer coincidence. Therefore, that appearance shines as reality in the dream. In the case of hallucinations produced with the help of precious stones (magic wand?), mantras and drugs, they are sometimes real, and at others totally illusory. But, when one experiences real substantiality in a dream, it is only due to coincidence. Whenever a firm notion arises in consciousness, it materialises in that manner, because consciousness is endowed with such power to materialise. If this materialisation can be altered by another force, how can we affirm that the notion that arises in consciousness is firm?

There is no materiality, either inside or outside, except the materialisation of the 'wish', or the notion of the infinite consciousness. When the notion 'This is dream' arises, that dream becomes real; but, if there is the notion of doubt, the dream also takes on the characteristic of the doubt and becomes unreal. It is possible that simultaneously with the dreaming the dreamer may undergo experiences unrelated to the dream; but he attributes them to the dream itself. Thus, by sheer coincidence, the world-appearance which arises in consciousness undergoes some change sooner or later,

This notion of creation arises in consciousness in the very beginning, and it materialises; this materialisation is pure consciousness. Barring this, all else is both real and unreal, orderly and disorderly. **Therefore, in the eyes of the ignorant, dreams appear to be true sometimes, and untrue sometimes; but, in the eyes of the enlightened, they are neither real nor unreal.** The world-appearance is an appearance that arises in consciousness; the very word 'appearance' rules out any positive investigation concerning it.

After dream, one sleeps; and after the waking state, one sleeps. Hence, waking and dream are non-different. The inert 'object' of consciousness alone is regarded as waking, dream, and sleep states - words which have no real meaning. In this long-dream, there is neither order nor disorder. Whatever arises in dream, that alone is - like the movement that arises in air; in the absence of definite causation, order is irrelevant. Even so is the entire creation devoid of definite causation; whatever an object appears to be, that it is - and this is the world order. Dreams are sometimes real and sometimes unreal; hence, it is not subject to a fixed principle or order. It is pure coincidence. The vision that arises on account of magic, mantra, or drugs, also exists in the waking state. Hence, that which is not conditioned by the waking, dream, and deep sleep states, the unconditioned pure consciousness alone is real.

## section VI.2 - chapter 149

karmakalpanaya samvitsvakarmaphalabhagini karmakalpanayonmuktta na  
karmaphalabhagini (23)

The Sage continued:

When I saw, while still in the heart of the other person, my own relatives, etc., I forgot momentarily that they were the products of my own notions, and I lived with them for a period of sixteen years. Then, one day, a great ascetic came to my house. I served him well and with devotion. I took this opportunity of asking him the following question: "In this world, people are said to experience the good and evil results of their own good and evil actions. Is this true in all cases?"

The ascetic looked surprised at this question.

The Ascetic replied:

Pray, tell me what it is in you that distinguishes good from evil. Who are you, where are you, who am I, what is this world? All this is but a dream. I am your dream-object, and you are my dream-object. The object has no form in truth. But, when consciousness considers this to have this form, it takes on that form. The notion that 'All this has a cause', gives rise to a causal relationship; the notion that 'There is no cause', sees no causality.

All of us are in the heart of a macrocosmic being, who is regarded as such by all of us. Even so, there will be other macrocosmic beings for others. This macrocosmic being is the cause for the experiences of pleasure and pain, and for the diverse types of actions. When the 'ojas' of this macrocosmic being is disturbed, it is agitated, and that effect is experienced by all of us who are in his heart. We are affected by natural calamities which cease when his heart regains equanimity. Therefore, this macrocosmic being is the reality of this particular creation. By coincidence, when some people engage themselves in evil actions, the resultant unhappiness befalls all.

Consciousness bestows reward on one when the actions arise from one's own personal notion ('I do this'); when the consciousness is freed from such a notion, such action is not followed followed by its fruits. Whatever notion arises, wherever, and of whatever magnitude, that bears fruits, whether there was a corresponding cause or not. As in a dream, the effect of an action is not governed by a definite cause. At times, the dream-experience has a cause; and, at other times, it has no cause. It is simply accidental coincidence. The waking state experience seems to have a definite causality; but that notion itself is a dream. For, all this is mere appearance of the infinite consciousness.

What is the cause of ignorance, of creation, of the creation of Brahma the creator; what is the original cause for air, fire, water, or space; why do people die and get into a subtle body? These have no cause at all; all these have happened like this from the beginning. After some time, these notions or appearances have attained materiality. Whatever notions arose in the consciousness originally, have remained as such till now. However, the consciousness can alter this by a fresh effort in the present.

## section VI.2 - chapter 150

astametadavidyaisa vyartharupa kimetaya bhrantya bhrantirasadrupa  
tyakttavaisa maya 'dhuna (20)

The Sage continued:

Thus instructed by the ascetic, I was instantly enlightened. I could not leave him. At my request, he lived with me. That very ascetic is sitting right next to you.

The hunter was surprised, and he said:

It is wonderful and strange, O sage, that that which was considered dream, appears to have materialised in the waking state. How is it that this holy man who appeared in your dream has become a reality even in the waking state?

The Sage continued:

Do not be in a hurry. I shall explain everything to you. When I had heard the admonitions of this holy man, I began to reflect: "Alas, on account of my desire for sense-pleasure and for the objects of pleasure, I have slipped away from my path, though I have been a wise man. Or, the notion 'This am I' is illusory and unreal; yet, it is able to give rise to a thousand strange happenings. Or, even if I consider all this to be unreal and that 'I am not', yet all this 'is'. What must I do now? I see the seed of division in me; I shall instantly renounce that. **Let this illusion or ignorance remain; it is a vain appearance, what can it do? I have now given up delusion.** Even the sage who instructed me is but an illusion. I am the infinite and absolute Brahman, and so is he; the relative form is but a passing cloud."

Having arrived at this knowledge, I said to the ascetic: "O sage, I am going, in order to see my own body, as well as the body which I had begun to investigate." When he heard this, he began to smile: "Where are those bodies? They have gone far, far away. If, however, you wish to verify this for yourself, please go." I requested him, "Please stay here till I return." After this, I ascended an aerial vehicle, and flew for a very long time. Yet, I could not find an exit from the heart of the person where I was. I was dejected. I realised that I was bound to that house. I returned there, and asked the ascetic: "Pray, tell me what is all this. The body into which I had entered, and that which was mine - where are they? How is it that I could not find an exit?"

The ascetic replied:

"Surely you will know everything if you see it with your inner vision. You are not this little personality; you are the macrocosmic person himself. Once you desired to enter into the heart of a being in order to experience a dream. That into which you entered is this creation. While you continued to dream in that body, a great fire arose, and it began to consume the forest in the body into which you had entered. That fire had destroyed your body as well as the body of the person into whose heart you had entered."

In answer to the Hunter's question, the sage replied: "The cause of the fire is but the movement of thought in consciousness, just as the cause for the appearance of the world is the movement of thought in the infinite consciousness, and the movement of thought in the consciousness of Brahma the creator."

## section VI.2 - chapter 151 152

tadevam svapna eva 'yam jagradbhavamupagatah sarve vayamiha svapnapurusastava  
suvrata (151/9)

The Ascetic continued:

When thus the two bodies had been destroyed by the great fire, while both of you were asleep, you continued to vibrate as just consciousness. Since the body belongs to the 'ojas', and the two bodies had been destroyed with the 'ojas', you could not find an exit. Not finding the two bodies, you exist in this 'world'. **Thus your dream has materialised into the waking state reality. All of us here are your own dream-objects.** Similarly, you are our dream-objects. That in which all this happens is the pure consciousness (cidakasa), which exists everywhere at all times. You were a dream object before; but, since you assumed that this is the world of the waking state, you became a householder with a family and relations, etc. Thus have I told you all that has happened.

The Sage said:

If this is the nature of dream, I consider all this real.

The Ascetic replied:

If the real can come into being, then it is possible to consider something else as real, too. When the reality of the former itself is doubtful, how can one affirm the reality of the latter? On the other hand, even the original creation is like a dream. It is but an illusory appearance. Though devoid of earth, and all the rest of it, it appears to have earth, etc., O teacher of the hunter! The original dream-like creation of the world, and also the dream that we experience now, are both unreal. The present dream has the objects seen already as its material; the dream-like creation appears in the space as if it had been seen before. Why do you hesitantly say, as if in doubt, "I think the dream is real"? When you experience this world as if it were real, how does a doubt concerning its real nature arise?

The Sage said (to the Hunter):

I interrupted the ascetic's speech and asked him: "How and why did you refer to me as the teacher of the hunter?"

The Ascetic replied:

Listen, I shall tell you what is going to happen in the future. I am an Ascetic with long-standing asceticism. You are a righteous person. Therefore, when you listen to this truth, you will be happy. You and I will continue to remain here. I shall not leave you.

After some years, there will arise a great famine here. In that, all your relatives will perish. The vicious kings will then wage war with one another and destroy all the rest. We shall however know no sorrow, since we are knowers of the truth, and since we are unattached to (free from) all. We shall continue to live here at the foot of a tree. In course of time, a nice forest will grow here. That forest will resemble the pleasure-gardens that abound in heaven itself.

## section VI.2 - chapter 153 154

na 'bhivanchami maranam na 'bhivamchami jivitam yatha sthito 'smi tisthami  
tathaiva vigatajvaram (154/11)

The Sage continued:

The ascetic said: "Both of us will be engaged in austerities there in that forest for a considerable time. To that place will come one day a hunter in pursuit of game. You will enlighten him with your talks and stories. He, too, shall renounce the world, and engage himself in austerities in the same forest. He will question you concerning dreams, in his quest for self-knowledge. You will discourse upon self-knowledge. Thus you will become his guru; hence, I called you the guru of the hunter. I have told you all about myself and you, and what is going to happen to you in the future."

I was astonished to hear all this. The ascetic continued to stay in the same house, and I devoutly worshipped him and served him. I remain here like a mountain, undergoing varied experiences. **I do not desire death, nor do I wish to live. I am what I am, free from mental agitation.**

Then I began to enquire into the nature of the objective world: what is the cause of this world, what is it, and who is aware of it? Surely the one infinite consciousness alone exists. The firmament, earth, air, space, mountains, rivers, and the directions, are all but the same indivisible (spacelike) consciousness. They exist as notions in that consciousness. As such, there is no division or contradiction in it. These are not mountains, nor is this the earth nor space. This is not 'I' either. All these are mere appearances that arise in pure consciousness.

What is the cause for the appearance of this body, as nothing can arise without a cause? If it is said that it is delusion, then what is the cause for this delusion? Who is it that sees this delusion, and who thinks about it? He in whose heart I lived as the experience and I together have been reduced to ashes. Therefore, I exist in pure consciousness which is devoid of action, the doer and the instruments. What exists is not even the appearance of the infinite consciousness, but it is pure consciousness. How can it become an appearance? Who is the seer of this appearance?

Thus, I continue to live in this objective world without any mental agitation, without support or dependence, and without vanity. I do what has to be done at the appropriate moment, but I do nothing. What happens, happens. The sky, the earth, wind, etc., are but one self; all the elements are the body of consciousness. I am at peace, free from injunctions and prohibitions, without even the division between inside and outside. As I have been living like this, you approached me, by coincidence. Thus have I told you all about dreams, about us, and about this creation. Knowing this, be at peace. Nirvana will arise by itself, or nothing may happen.

The hunter said: In that case, we shall all become unreal!

The Sage continued:

True, all these beings are real to one another. To the extent they perceive one another, they experience one another. You have heard all this, but you do not rest in the truth. Only by constant practice does this truth become fully established.

## section VI.2 - chapter 155

jnanam tadupadistam te jirnadarvalpakagnivat samshtitam hrdaye kintu  
dahyamakramya nocitam (12)

The Fire-God said:

Having heard the sage's instructions, the hunter remained seated, like a painted image, there in that forest itself. However, since he had not engaged himself in the persistent practice of the teachings, his heart was not fully established in the supreme state. Instead, he was being tossed about, as oil on the crest of waves, or on a revolving mechanism. He felt helpless, as if he were being attacked by a crocodile, and unable to defend himself. He was full of doubts. He was constantly asking himself, "Is this nirvana?" or "Maybe this is not nirvana, and something else is nirvana." He thought, "Because this world-appearance has arisen in ignorance, the sage's teachings are not firmly rooted in my heart. Hence, I should get away from it. Attaining a subtle body through the performance of austerities, I should go far, far away, to where even space does not exist." Thus he proved that he was still utterly ignorant, and that the teaching of the sage had been utterly useless, because it had not been assimilated, and it had not become active.

He abandoned hunting. Accompanied by the sage, he began to practise intense penance. He continued to practise austerities for many thousands or years, having adopted the mode of living appropriate to ascetics.

One day, he again asked the sage the following question:

"How shall I ever rest in the self?"

The Sage replied:

**The wisdom that I imparted you has remained weak in your heart, like a dull fire which lies dormant in an old tree-trunk. It has not been able to burn and destroy ignorance.** You are not established in the Lord, because you have not assimilated the teaching, and it has not become active; when you thus assimilate the teaching, and it becomes active, surely you will be established in the Lord. I shall describe to you the future events. Listen.

You have no doubt set out to attain self-knowledge, but you have not found your foothold on sound wisdom. Hence, you are swinging like a pendulum. You wish to get out of this world-appearance and, with this end in view, you wish to know its extent. In order to ascertain this, you are engaged in penance. You will continue to perform such penance for several world-cycles.

Then the Lord will appear before you, pleased with your penance. You will then ask him to confer upon you the following boon:

Lord, I understand that this whole universe arises in ignorance. In it, I cannot experience the pure and transparent knowledge of the self. Where is the end to this world-appearance, and what is beyond this? In order to find the answer to this question, I beg of you to grant me the following boon:

Ordain that I shall die only when I wish to. May my body be free from all ailments. May I be endowed with the speed of Garuda. May I be able to course in space without hindrance. May my body grow a mile an hour, so that soon I will grow larger than the world. Thus will I realise the extent of this creation.

The Lord will grant the boon and vanish from sight.

## section VI.2 - chapter 155

avasyam bhavitavyo 'rtho na kadacana kenacit vidhatumanyatha sakyastanna  
ksarati yatnatah (53)

The Sage continued:

After the departure of the Lord, you will continue your penance. Your body would have been reduced to a skeleton by this time; but now it will acquire a radiance on account of the boon. You will bow down to me, and soon your body will become divine. It will 'fly around' faster than Garuda, progressively expanding, and including the celestial bodies within it. In that expanding body, you will see the countless universes as so many waves in the ocean. Just as in the beginning, all these universes arose in the infinite consciousness; even so, at that time, these universes will come within the sphere of your vision. You will then realise that, just as all this is unreal and diverse in the vision of the ignorant, they are real and indivisible to the enlightened.

Thus seeing the alternate arising and subsiding of these countless universes, you will spend a long, long time. You will then be filled with admiration for this infinite intelligence. You will become aware of your own body, and say to yourself: "What is this wretched body which is huge and heavy? It has become of incomparable dimensions, since with it I have filled the entire space. What shall I do after this - I myself do not know. It seems to me that this ignorance (and the world-appearance) is immeasurable. It cannot be measured at all without a direct knowledge of Brahman. I shall discard this body, for nothing can be attained with it. This body of mine is huge and supportless, but it is not possible for me to have the company of enlightened sages with its help."

Having thus decided, you will abandon your body. Your jiva, endowed with just the life-force (prana), will become even subtler than air. Abandoned by the jiva, the body will fall (reduced in size), crushing the earth, etc., by its sheer size and weight. The goddess known as 'Dryness' will consume that body, and thus purify the earth. Thus have I told you what the future holds for you.

The hunter asked:

Lord, terrible is the sorrow that has to be endured by me, for no real gain at all. Is there a means by which this fate can be averted?

The Sage replied:

**That which is inevitable cannot be averted by anyone at any time. It is not altered by an amount of effort.** The right arm is the right arm, and the left arm is the arm; no one can alter that fact. The head and the feet cannot be exchanged for one another. Whatever is, is. Even the science of astrology can only foretell what is to come, but it cannot avert what is bound inevitably to happen. However, the sages of self-knowledge live in this world as if in deep sleep. They experience the result of past actions, without allowing the inner consciousness ever to become perverted, even if the body is to be burnt. They overcome all karmas.

## section VI.2 - chapter 156

yena yena yatha 'tmiya prarthyate svayameva sa prayacchati tathaiva 'su  
tasmiccidanubhuyate (26)

The hunter asked:

Lord, tell me what will happen to me after that.

The Sage replied:

Your jiva will then behold the entire world as you see the world in your dream. It will then regard itself as the king. It will think, "I am the king named Sindhu who is respected widely. My father having retired to the forest, I became king when I was only eight years of age. Beyond the borders of my kingdom, there is another ruled over by a mighty king Viduratha who is hard to conquer. Till now, I have ruled this kingdom for over a hundred years, enjoying all the royal pleasures. Alas, now my kingdom is invaded by the king Viduratha." On account of this thought, there will ensue a fierce battle between you and the king Viduratha. You will kill Viduratha. You will then become the king of the whole world. Surrounded by the ministers, you will engage yourself in the following dialogue:

The minister will say to you: It is a wonder, O king, that you have been able to conquer this king Viduratha.

You will respond: I am indeed wealthy and powerful; why then do you regard it as a wonder that I was able to conquer Viduratha?

The minister will say: He has a wife named Lisa who had, by her austerity and devotion, propitiated goddess Sarasvati, who had adopted Lila as her daughter and fulfilled all her prayers; it would not have been difficult for her to destroy you.

You will say: If that is the case, it was certainly a great wonder that I was able to vanquish Viduratha. Tell me, why did not Viduratha seek to defeat me with the help of the goddess?

The minister will say: He had prayed for liberation from bondage to samsara, and therefore he had actually sought to be killed by you.

You will say: If such is the case, why should I not worship the goddess, and pray for liberation?

The minister will say: She is the wisdom that shines in the hearts of all. Since she is the essence (rasa) of intelligence in all, she is known as Sarasvati. **She bestows immediately on all whatever is prayed for, for she is the self of all. Hence, one experiences the fruition of one's own prayers.** You have not asked for liberation; you have only prayed for the destruction enemies.

You will say: Why have I not prayed for liberation? You say that she dwells in my own heart; why has she not inspired me to pray for liberation?

The minister will say: It is because in your heart there was the impure habit of wishing for the destruction of enemies. Therefore, you did not pray for liberation, but you did pray for the destruction of enemies. Whatever be the citta (mind, heart), that a being is, and this is the experience of even a child. Whatever one knows in his own heart, and whatever one experiences again and again in his heart, so that it becomes a habit, materialises whether it be good or, not good.

## section VI.2 - chapter 157

hyastam duskriya 'bhyeti sobham satkriyaya yatha adyaiva prakttanim  
tasmadyatnatkaryavan bhava (29)

The Sage continued:

You will say: What did I do in the past birth that I was subjected to such an evil habit of thought?

The minister will reply: I shall reveal the secret to you. There is something which exists without beginning and without end, as 'I' and 'you', etc., but which is known as Brahman. That Brahman became its own object of awareness, and therefore it became the jiva and then the mind. This subtle psychological or ethereal body condensed into physical body. It is but the mind which has no form, but which exists as if it has a form (the body). The mind alone is this world; there is no distinction between the two. Satva (the purest form of mind) alone arose in Brahman originally; and it has now become extremely dense and dull (tamasa-tamasa).

You will say: What is this tamasa-tamasa, and how did it arise in the supreme state?

The minister will say: Living beings here have various limbs, even so the subtle self or consciousness has, so to say, the subtle ethereal body as its limb. That itself thinks of itself as the gross body with the physical elements, like earth. That itself functions with the help of its own notions in this world-appearance, which arises in the same consciousness as in a dream. You yourself entertain in your own ethereal body the notion 'This is the densest darkness', and thus that notion is born. All these diversities exist in Brahman, though it is absolutely pure.

The first notion that arises in Brahman when it becomes a jiva, as it were, is experienced by the buddhi (intelligence) as perfect purity (satvika-satvika). When it enters into the stream of life, and if it is endowed with all the noble qualities, it is known as mere satvika birth. The birth which arises in the stream of life, and which is subjected to diverse pleasures, but directed towards liberation, is called rajasa-rajasa. When the birth arises in the stream of life, and when it is devoid of noble qualities, it is known as simple rajasa. When the being has been in the stream of life for a very long time, and has just turned towards liberation, it is known as tamasa-tamasa. But the ordinary birth, which is one in the sequence of several oriented towards liberation,, is known as simple tamasa.

In this manner, there are very many classifications of births. You were born in the tamasa-tamasa class. You have had many births, and so have I. I know them, you do not. Wandering in all these, you have wasted a lot of time. Because you were so conditioned, you found it difficult to free yourself.

You will say: How can I overcome the effect of such past life?

The minister will say: There is nothing that one who strives without agitation cannot achieve. **Yesterday's evil action is transformed into good action by today's noble deeds. Therefore, strive to be good and do good now.** One strives to attain what one wishes to attain; and surely one shall attain it.

Being thus advised by the minister, the king Sindhu will at once renounce the kingdom, and resort to a forest. He will take refuge at the feet of the holy ones. By their very association, he will gain the highest wisdom, and will be liberated.

## section VI.2 - chapter 158 159

tadaivaitanmahamedo mrdhatutvamupagatam kalena vasudha bhuyo bhutva  
mrnmayatam gati (158/19)

The Fire-God continued:

The hunter heard all this from the sage, and was filled with wonder. The hunter and the sage continued to perform austerities. A little later, the sage attained nirvana, and he abandoned his body. After a very long time, Brahma the creator appeared before the hunter, to grant him boons. The hunter was unable to avert the natural force of his own mental conditioning, though he remembered the sage's prophecy. Therefore, he asked for the very boons that he had been conditioned to request.

As a result of the boon, the hunter's body began to expand to cosmic proportions. When, in spite of all this, he discovered that he could not find the limits of ignorance, he became both astonished and agitated. By the mystic process of giving up prana, he abandoned the body, which thereupon fell in space. He himself remained in space, and began to consider himself the king Sindhu.

The body appeared above a certain world-appearance in this universe, and it had the shape of a ball of hair. It looked big enough to cover the whole of the earth.

O Vipascit, thus have I described to you the identity of that body. That world-appearance on which the body fell, appears to us as the world. It was after consuming the blood of that body that the dried up body of the goddess began to be filled, and she came to be known as Candika. **The flesh of that corpse became the earth-element. In course of time, the world acquired its present nature as the earth.** Once again, the earth was endowed with living beings and forests, villages, and cities.

The earth is once again firm and substantial. O good man, go where you wish to go. I have been invited to the kingdom of heaven by Indra, the chief of the gods, who wishes to perform a sacred rite with my help. I shall go there.

Bhasa (Vipascit) said:

Having said this, the fire-god vanished from sight. With all the psychological conditioning in my mind, I went my way, to do what I had to do.

Once again, I saw in the infinite space countless worlds and universes. Some of them were like umbrellas; some were like animals; some were full of trees; others were full of rocks. But I had not arrived at the end of ignorance, at the limits of ignorance; hence, I was depressed and dejected. Thereupon, I decided to engage myself in penance.

Seeing this, Indra said to me: "O Vipascit, in space, you and I have bodies of deer. On account of the deluded notion of a heaven which was in me before, I am wandering in heaven."

Hearing this, I said to Indra: "O king of heaven, I am tired of this samsara. Kindly release me from this samsara quickly."

## section VI.2 - chapter 159

aho nu visama maya manomohavidhyani vidhayah pratishedhasca yadekatra sthitim  
gatah (41)

Indra said to Vipascit:

Your consciousness is moving in the deer-species. Hence, I see that birth as a deer is inevitable. As a deer, you will reach that great assembly, where you will be awakened after listening to your own story. When you enter into the fire of wisdom, you will gain a human form and also spiritual unfoldment in your heart. Then you will abandon your ignorance, and regain utter peace, like wind devoid of movement.

Vipascit (Bhasa) continued:

When Indra said so, the awareness arose in me that I am a deer. From that time, I have been roaming the forests as a deer. Once, when a hunter pursued me, I began to run. But he overpowered me, and took me home. He kept me there for a few days, and then he brought me to you, to be your pet. Thus have I told you my story, O Rama, which clearly illustrates the illusory nature of this samsara. Limitless is this ignorance, with countless branches in all directions; it cannot come to an end by any means other than self-knowledge.

Rama asked:

How was it possible for you to be seen by others when your form arose in your sankalpa?

Vipascit (Bhasa) continued:

Once, while Indra was passing through the sky, full of vanity at having successfully completed a sacred rite, he kicked the body of the sage Durvasa, who was in meditation. The sage cursed him: O Indra, that earth to which you are going will soon be reduced to nothing. Because you kicked me, thinking I was dead, you will soon go to that very earth and live as a deer as long as Vipascit lives there as a deer." Therefore, we became deer which could be seen by others. Of course, an object that arises in one's own mind is as unreal as an object that arises in another's. Again, since Brahman the infinite consciousness is all this and is capable of doing all this, what is impossible in it and for it? On the basis of its omnipotence, it is possible for two imaginary objects to become aware of one another, or to be unaware of one another. Where there is shadow, there is also light, and the shadow arises because of the light. In the infinite consciousness, there is limitless ignorance; hence, anything is possible in it. **Strange and wonderful is this maya, which is perplexing, and which gives rise to delusion in the mind, and in which thesis an antithesis exist together without conflict or contradiction.** Such is the truth concerning Brahman that experiences this ignorance within itself, both as something which has had a beginning, and as something which has had no beginning at all.

If the three worlds are not just the materialisation of the notions that arise in the infinite consciousness, how is it possible for that consciousness to re-create the three worlds after the periodic cosmic dissolution? Hence, it is dear that this creation is nothing more than movement in the infinite consciousness, and the consequent arising of the appearance latent in it.

## section VI.2 - chapter 159

sargadya mrtajivanam sarvatraiva 'ngule 'ngule asamkyah  
santyasankhyanamadrasyapratigha mithah (63)

Vipascit (Bhasa) continued:

The wise ones know that everything is immediately understood aright from the point of view of pure wisdom; there is no other way. This world appearance is the result of the infinite consciousness entertaining the notion 'I am ignorant'. (Thus, even ignorance arises only because of the infinite consciousness.)

No one dies here, nor is anyone born; these two notions arise in consciousness, and it appears as though death and birth are real. If there is death as the final end in fact and in truth, then it is indeed a most welcome and happy event! But, if one who dies is capable of being seen again, then surely he was alive all the time. Thus, there is no death and, by the same token, there is no birth either. The two events appear to be real because of the movement in consciousness; they are otherwise unreal. If they are thought of as real, they are real; if they are known to be unreal, they are unreal. This means thought alone is real. Tell me if there is any life at all devoid of consciousness. In that pure consciousness, there is no sorrow nor death: then, who experiences sorrow, and who dies? What a whirlpool is to water, the body is to the supreme truth. The appearance is pervaded by the reality, and the appearance is but an appearance, without a substantiality of its own. There is no division, distinction, or contradiction between the two. Yet, the infinite consciousness appears to be this creation full of contradictions - this indeed is a great wonder.

Realise that this world-appearance, with all its contradictions, is nothing more than appearance which is non-existent. That infinite and indivisible consciousness alone exists as one thing here and as another thing there; therefore, there is either diversity nor even unity. There is no contradiction, nor is there a non-contradiction. They who know the truth, realise that it is neither real nor unreal; hence, they realise the truth as utter silence. What is seen here as the objective universe is in truth the supreme Brahman. That Brahman alone entertains various notions which are manifest here as these diverse objects; but, in that which entertains these notions, there is no division, and therefore such division is not real.

**Every inch of space is filled with the creations of 'dead' jivas. Such worlds are countless. They are unseen. They exist all together, without any contradiction or conflict among them.** They do not see one another. All these objects of perception are but pure space. Consciousness alone is the perceiver or observer of all, and consciousness perceives these objects in space as one sees an object in dream. Though this consciousness may be fully awake and enlightened, its object continues to appear to be, even as darkness continues till dawn. But, whether the world-appearance is real or unreal, when the truth is realised, there is great peace. Even as ripples and spray arise on the surface of the ocean, seem to exist for a moment and then get merged in the ocean the next minute, this world appears in Brahman and ceases to be the next moment; for, Brahman alone is real.

## section VI.2 - chapter 160

avidyeta dhrta samvid brahmana "tmani sattaya tadbhramena 'sadapyasyati  
sadrupamiva laksyate (11)

Valmiki said:

The king Dasaratha made adequate provision for the maintenance of Vipascit (Bhasa). At that time, another day came to an end. The next day, the members of the assembly gathered again and

The Sage continued:

Surely, that which is seen here is not ignorance. That is why Vipascit could not find its limits or its extent. It remains ignorance only as long as it is not rightly understood. When its reality is seen, it is realised that there was never ever any 'water in the mirage'. You have yourself seen all this with your own eyes and heard it from the lips of this Vipascit (or Bhasa). He, too, will be enlightened like all of you when he listens to our discourse.

**When Brahman holds on to the awareness of ignorance, this ignorance seems to be real. On account of this delusion the unreal appears to be real.** When it is realised that this ignorance is Brahman, then it is realised to be non-different from Brahman, and that division disappears.

This ignorance gives rise to the most fascinating objects, though it itself is nothing. One who sets out to investigate the extent of dreams, soon discovers that they have no limit; one who investigates the extent of the world-appearance arising in this ignorance, soon discovers that it has none either. The objects which have materialised on account of notions that arise in consciousness, and which are abandoned by the perceiver of those notions, who thereupon goes on to entertain other notions, exist in space as the worlds of the siddhas, unaware of one another's existence. These worlds are of diverse natures, and they are inhabited by diverse creatures. However, since there is nothing other than Brahman, all these are also full of Brahman only. Right in the beginning of creation, there was no cause, and hence there was no creation at all. The infinite consciousness conceives of infinite notions and these materialise where those notions arise. What is so strange about this? Even now, you and all the others are the appearances created by the existence of intense notions which are endowed with the extraordinary force of concentration.

He who considers two things (like this world and heaven) to be real, obtains both these. Some siddhas consider hell to be real too, and it appears to be real. That which is firmly believed to exist is experienced by that person physically, for the body is only mind. The jiva abandons a particular state when it leaves one body, and then there itself entertains the notion of another state. If the notion is good, it experiences a good world, and if it is evil, it experiences an evil world. If it thinks of the world of the siddhas, it experiences it; if its thoughts are impure, it experiences hell, then and there.

In hell, the jiva experiences diverse sufferings and calamities - like being pierced by arrows, having the chest hammered by rocks, embracing a red-hot pillar, being burnt alive, eating each other's bodies in hunger, swimming in rivers of blood and pus, feeling 'That evil action has led to this evil experience'.

## section VI.2 - chapter 161

tanmaivam kriyatametadabandhasyaiva bandhanam ka 'nyata  
amalavyomnascinmayasya nirakrteh (35)

Rama asked:

In the story that we just heard, we saw how the sage and the hunter passed through diverse experiences. Is it the very nature of things that determines such experiences, or is there another reason for it?

Vasistha replied:

Such whirlpools of appearances keep occurring of their own accord in the ocean of infinite consciousness all the time. One set of whirlpool-like appearances remains steady, till another arises and supersedes it. Some of these appearances seem to be permanent, because they are long-standing, and others are temporary; but, just as movement, however slight, is inevitable to air, even so this appearance exists always in the infinite consciousness. The enlightened ones call it pure consciousness; the ignorant call it the world. It is neither real nor unreal; what should one call it? This universe is movement of awareness in the infinite consciousness, or the Lord. Hence, both hope and hopelessness are irrelevant to it. O wise men, be what you are.

The infinite consciousness itself regards the movement that arose within It as the world; where is earth (and such other elements) in it? It is the Light of the infinite consciousness which shines; there is no other light. Brahman alone rests forever in Brahman, and this self-awareness is known as ignorance! The entire space is filled with the fullness of consciousness, and that is known as creation. In it, there is no contradiction or duality.

When that infinite consciousness alone exists, what is there to come to an end? Just as the world experienced in a dream does not exist, this world does not exist as a material entity, though it is seen. Just as it is one's own consciousness only that shines as the dream, it is the same consciousness that shines as the objective world in the waking state. Hence, there is no difference between the dream and the waking state. One who wakes up from a dream thinks, "It is like this and not like that which I saw in the dream"; after death, too, one thinks "It is like this and not like that which I saw before death". The dream may be brief and the life may be long, but the experience of the moment is the same in both. Just as in one lifetime one experiences hundreds of dreams, till one attains nirvana, one experiences hundreds of waking states. Just as some people remember their dreams, some people also remember their past existences.

When thus there is no difference between the two, what is known as the world and what is ignorance? When ignorance does not exist, what is bondage? **Pray, do not bind one who is ever free! There does not exist 'another', except the one pure, formless consciousness.** Even when this world-appearance arises in that consciousness, it does not get bound to it; and therefore, there is no liberation either. There is no ignorance in consciousness; there is no notion in pure consciousness. Space alone is space. That which is 'aware' even in deep sleep, that alone is aware in dreams as well as in the waking state; that is pure consciousness. It is that consciousness alone that is responsible even for the awareness of diversity. Creation itself is the supreme Brahman, both the unity and the diversity.

## section VI.2 - chapter 162

atmaiva hyatmano bandhuratmaiva riputatmanah atma 'tmana na cet  
tratastadupayo 'sti netarah (18)

Vasistha continued:

This world exists with all its objects as the very meaning of materialisation of the infinite consciousness. Hence, even the form, its seeing, and the thought concerning it, are all the same pure consciousness, and nothing else. The diversity of dream-objects is a dream, not diversity. Even so, the diversity that is seen during the waking state in the infinite space is the infinite space (consciousness), and there is no diversity. It is the indivisible consciousness that has the appearance of diversity.

This reality of consciousness is experienced differently by the wise and by the ignorant. Hence, this creation is said to be both unreal and real. Since their viewpoints are diametrically opposite, it becomes impossible for one to see what the other sees, and they cannot make one another understand what they see. Creation is what one sees and is aware of, and this is within oneself. When this inner experience is lasting, the creation is said to be lasting, and when it is changing, the creation is said to be changing, too.

In dream, the objects are really immaterial and subtle, yet they are seen to be substantial. Even so, the objects in this creation are truly subtle and unseen, yet they appear to be solid and perceptible. This is true even of the body; it is a delusion and non-existent as such, but like a ghost it is conjured up as a reality. Even psychological or physical conditioning is an appearance, like the sound that is heard when the wind blows (which is heard, though it is not there at all).

Whatever is seen here or thought of to exist, all that is pure consciousness alone. There has never been a reason why something else should have come into being. Hence, realise 'I am at peace, I am like the infinite space'; abandon the notion that you are the jiva. **If one cannot thus redeem oneself, there are no other means; for, one is one's own friend, and one is one's own enemy.** Strive to liberate yourself while you are yet young with the help of pure and right understanding, or buddhi. Do it now. What will you do when you are old and senile? Old age itself is a burden; you cannot carry anything more. Both childhood and old age are useless; youth alone is the right time, if you are a wise one, to live wisely. Having come into this samsara where life is so impermanent, one should, through association with holy scriptures and holy men, endeavour to uplift oneself.

When the truth is realised, this objective universe ceases to bother you, even if it continues to be seen, and even if it is full of restlessness.

## section VI.2 - chapter 163

cittamindriyasenaya nayakam tajjayajjayah upanadgudhapadasya nanu  
carmavrttaiva bhuh (6)

Rama asked:

Ignorance does not cease without the full control of the senses; pray, tell me, how does one control the senses?

Vasistha said:

I shall now describe to you how one gains control over the senses easily by one's own effort. The self (or the personality) is indeed pure consciousness only; on account of its self-awareness, it comes to be known as the jiva. Whatever that jiva thinks, it becomes that instantly. Hence, the attempt to gain control over the self or the senses should be directed to that self-awareness. **The mind (citta) is the commander-in-chief, and the senses are the armed forces. Hence, control of the mind is control (or victory) over the senses. If one's feet are covered with leather shoes, the entire world is covered with leather.**

When one's awareness is raised to one's heart and firmly set in the pure consciousness, the mind naturally and effortlessly becomes tranquil. It does not become tranquil by other means, like austerities, pilgrimage, and rituals. When thus the awareness of the self becomes aware of the experience, then the experience does not leave an impression or memory on consciousness, and is immediately 'forgotten', as it were. Even an attempt to do this takes one closer to the supreme state of self-knowledge.

Be firmly rooted in the contented state, in which you know only that to be yours which is obtained in the course of the due performance of your own appropriate action. He is a man of self-conquest who rests in peace and contentment, performing whatever has to be performed, and avoiding what should be avoided. His mind is at rest who enjoys observing or watching himself, and is disinterested in external events and observations. When one's awareness is thus firmly held within oneself, the mind abandons its usual restlessness, and flows towards wisdom. The wise man attains victory over the senses, and does not drown in the waves of vasanas or mental conditioning. He sees the world as it is. Then the illusion of samsara or world-appearance ceases, and with it all sorrow comes to an end.

When one realises that it is the pure consciousness alone (which is beyond thought, and which therefore never becomes the object of perception or experience) which appears as this world, what is bondage and what is liberation? Dehydrated water does not flow; uncaused experience does not create a psychological division. Experience is like space which puts on the different forms of 'I' and 'you' etc., and which seems to create a diversity where none can arise. That which fills this space is pure consciousness, beside which nothing exists.

## section VI.2 - chapter 163

jigrat svapnah susuptam ca sarvam turyam prabodhinah na 'vidya vidyate tasya dvayastho 'pyeva so 'dvayah (35)

Vasistha continued:

When there is direct experience of the truth that 'I am neither the doer nor the action nor the instrument, but I am the pure consciousness, and the world is indefinable', then it is known that there is self-awareness. The world appears to be what it is not; hence, the self-knowledge that reveals the world is the supreme truth.

In the case of a being with several limbs, it is one being with several limbs; even so, Brahman is one being with countless limbs, known as jiva, etc. The object is but an appearance; consciousness is infinite peace, which exists forever unmodified. It is useless to investigate these as if they are different. In the infinite, there are infinite notions; the latter are called 'ignorance'; there is no other ignorance here.

The jiva alternately passes from the waking to the dreaming, and from the dreaming to the waking states; but he is constant, whether he is awake or asleep. The two states of deep sleep and turiya (the fourth state) are the reality underlying both the waking and the dream states; the two latter are identical, and in fact it is the turiya that knows all the others. **To the enlightened, the waking, the dreaming, and the deep sleep states, are only the turiya; for, in the turiya, there is no ignorance. Therefore, though there appears to be a diversity in it, it is non-dual.** It is only the childish and ignorant people who talk of duality and non-duality; the enlightened ones laugh at all this. However, without such discussion based on duality and non-duality, it is not possible to clean one's consciousness of ignorance. It is only in that spirit that I have dealt with all this, as your dear friend.

The wise ones do constantly talk about this truth, thus enlightening one another. When they thus contemplate this truth constantly, they gain enlightenment (buddhi-yoga), by which they attain the highest state.

The supreme state is not attained without effort. Thus, in order to help you get a clear grasp of the truth, I have explained it repeatedly, using different illustrations. If even an ignorant person tastes this truth thus expounded again and again, he will attain enlightenment. He is surely a fool who thinks "I know this and I have nothing more to know" after once reading this. The knowledge that is gained by a study of this scripture is not gained by the study of any other scripture. This scripture bestows on you both efficiency in action, and perfection in wisdom.

## section VI.2 - chapter 164 165

sarvam prapya param bodham vastu svam rupamujjhati punastadekavakyatvanna  
kimcidva 'param bhavet (164/2)

Vasistha continued:

In the infinite consciousness (which may be compared to the orb of the sun), there are countless particles of light, called jivas. When one says, "They are in it", they are considered its parts; but, in fact, it has no such parts. **The many abandons its diversity when it attains enlightenment. However, when it (the many) is described as the one, it has not become something other than it was before.** It is the same in all conditions and states. It is the content of the consciousness or awareness of the sage of wisdom. That alone is; nothing else has ever existed. It is with the help of that consciousness alone that the ignorant apprehend the object of their own ignorance. We do not know the 'I' or the 'you', or even the object that the ignorant perceive in their ignorance. The feelings 'I am enlightened' and 'He is ignorant' and 'This is the truth' do not arise in the enlightened. This that is known as the creation has never been created, nor has it ever come into being. This world is Brahman, which is as it is here. Therefore, there do not exist any ignorant people or beings here. There is only the infinite space in which such notions as 'This is Brahma the creator', etc., float around.

The consciousness that exists in the waking state enters the dream state, and becomes dream. The dream-consciousness being awake in the dream, attains the status of wakefulness in dream. The dream state enters the waking state; and the waking state abandons the dream, and wakes up. When the waking state enters into the dream state, the dreamer wakes up, as it were. The dreamer regards the waking state as a dream; to him, the consciousness of the dream is the real waking state. Surely, to the dreamer, the true waking state is the dream, not the other waking state.

In relation to the waking state, the dream seems to be short-lived. Even so, the dreamer regards the waking state to be brief. There is no difference whatsoever between the two, and neither of them is real. When awareness ceases, both waking and dreaming cease. There is void. The living person does not experience 'the other world', either in dream or in waking, not till the consciousness of death arises. Just as dreams arise in consciousness and create the three worlds, even so the world appears in the waking state. Just as the dream-creation is pure void, even so the world of the waking state is void, except for the infinite consciousness in which alone the appearance arises. The world is the illusion that appears in consciousness on account of its inherent power. Consciousness alone shines as the water, earth, space, and walls. There is nothing in it which can be grasped or held.

## section VI.2 - chapter 166

atmakhyatirasatkhyatirakhyatih khyatiranyatha ityetasiccamatkrtya  
atmakhyatervibhutayah (9)

Vasistha continued:

The self or the infinite consciousness is the most obvious truth, which does not stand in need of and is independent of the words like 'self' or 'knowledge'. Right from the beginning of the original creation, this infinite consciousness alone exists, with this notion of creation. Wise men and scholars have declared that self-knowledge is devoid of notions and of knowledge of material objects. But all this is the self alone. No knowledge (category) called non-knowledge has ever been known here. Knowledge and non-knowledge (ignorance) are two concepts which do not have corresponding realities. What is there to know or not to know? Knowledge of what is, knowledge that this is this, and knowledge that it is unreal - all these arise in consciousness. **Knowledge of the self, knowledge of the unreal, absence of knowledge, knowledge that the truth is other than the appearance - all these are but the lay of the infinite consciousness, and they are the manifestations or expansions of self-knowledge.**

The fact of self-knowledge exists even when the term 'self-knowledge' has been discarded. Self-knowledge alone is. Let me illustrate it. There is a mighty rock which is vast and whose sides are the blue sky. It has no joints because it has no divisions. It is absolutely solid and undivided. It is imperishable. It is incomparable and unique. Its origin is unknown. Its content is non-material but solid. Within it are countless impressions or images, known to itself as the jiva. It is sentient and insentient.

No one is able to break it. However, in it are these impressions known as gods, demons and humans, with forms and without forms. I have seen these impressions that exist within the rock. If you wish, you can also see them.

Rama asked: If that rock was indivisible, how could you see inside it?

Vasistha said: Indeed no one can break it. But, since I am within that rock as an impression in it, I am able to see all the rest. It is the supreme reality or the self that I have thus described to you. We are integral parts of that indivisible, infinite consciousness. This space, wind, and other elements, all these actions and activities, all these conditionings and the time-sense - all these are limbs of that being. Earth, water, fire, air, space, mind, buddhi, and the ego sense, are limbs of that supreme self. What else is there other than this infinite consciousness? The objects of this world are but pure awareness or experiencing, which is a mass of pure consciousness.

## section VI.2 - chapter 167

ayamatma tviyam khyatirityantahkalanabhramah na sambhavatyatascaenam sabdam  
tyaktva bhava 'rthabhak (4)

Vasistha continued:

Self-knowledge, non-knowledge, or knowledge of the unreal, etc., are words and viewpoints. They are totally unreal in the eyes of the knower of truth. All these arise in the pure consciousness which is clearly seen in me. **'This is the self' and 'This is knowledge' - these are surely false notions that arise within, but they are not real. Abandon the words, but remain established in the experience of the truth they indicate.**

Though countless activities go on within it, it is utterly silent and tranquil. Though it is described in countless superlatives, it remains undisturbed. Though it is constantly in motion, it remains stable like a rock. Though it is the very substance in the five elements, it is unaffected by them like space. Though it is the abode of all objects, it remains pure consciousness. Though it is seen, like a dream-city, it remains unseen consciousness.

Rama said: Just as memory is at the root of the perception in both the waking and the dream states, it is memory alone that gives rise to the feeling that the external objects are real.

Vasistha continued: The appearance of diverse objects in the universe arises in the infinite consciousness when it becomes aware of itself - coincidentally (like a ripe coconut falling when a crow alights on it). Whenever and wherever this consciousness contemplates itself in whatever manner, then and there it appears so, without any cause. The notions 'This is waking', 'This is dream', 'This is sleep', and 'This is turiya', arise in consciousness, because they are consciousness. In fact, there is neither dream, nor waking state, nor sleep, nor turiya, nor something beyond; everything is pure tranquillity and silence. Or, one may say that all this is waking at all times, or dream or sleep or turya. Or, we do not know what it is, for everything is experienced to be what it is thought of.

Its manifestation and unmanifestation - knowledge or ignorance - are two inherent states - like the movement or non-movement of air. Therefore, there is no distinction in the states of waking, etc., nor is there anything known as memory or desire. All these are limited vision. When it is only inner experience that shines as external object, where is objectivity or memory? Memory can arise only from experience, and experience is possible only if the object is real. The notional appearance of the infinite consciousness comes later known as the earth, etc. Let this consciousness shine as it will; is neither real nor unreal, neither something nor nothing. That itself dwells in the heart as the notion of an object which is conceived to be outside. What is 'inside' or 'outside'? Consider it Om, and rest in peace.

## section VI.2 - chapter 168

abuddhipurvameva 'go yatha sakhavicitratam karotyevamajascitrah sargabhasah  
kha eva kham (1)

Vasistha continued:

Just as a tree brings forth diverse beautiful branches without mental activity or volition (intention), even so the unborn and uncreated infinite consciousness gives rise to diverse and colourful world-appearance (creation). It is like space giving rise to space. Just as the ocean gives rise to whirlpools without mental activity or intention even so, without intending to do so, consciousness gives rise to every kind of experience, because it is the lord of all. To those very experiences, the same consciousness gives various 'names', like 'mind', 'buddhi', 'ego sense', etc. Again, without mental activity and intention, the infinite consciousness has given rise within itself to the notion of an object with all the sequence of buddhi, etc. Even the world order (niyati), which includes the fundamental characteristic of the objects, arises in the infinite consciousness, without any intention or mental activity whatsoever.

Moreover, it is all one; the tree includes the trunk, the branches, the leaves; and the flowers - the distinction being verbal. Even so; the infinite consciousness includes everything, the distinction being verbal. If you still ask, "Why then is this futile experience of the objects?", it is good to remind yourself that all this is but a long dream. Who will resort to the non-existent or the hidden thing? Just as we have formed in our mind an image 'This is a tree', in the infinite consciousness there exist images, of space, etc. Just as space (distance) is indistinguishably one with space, and movement with air, even so the buddhi (intelligence) etc., are with the supreme being or the infinite consciousness. This creation is non-different from the infinite consciousness.

This creation appears right from the beginning in the infinite consciousness, as if in a dream. This appearance, moreover, has no cause. How then can it be other than the infinite consciousness? It is analogous to the dream which is a daily universal experience; hence, one should investigate it. What is the essence or the reality in the dream, except the pure intelligence or consciousness which creates it and in which it exists?

This creation does not arise as a 'memory' in the infinite consciousness. It arises in the consciousness without any reason or cause whatsoever (it is a coincidence like the ripe cocoon falling when a crow alights on it); dreaming, conceptualisation, etc., follow later. Once this creation has arisen without any cause in the infinite consciousness, its 'existence' follows later. Therefore, even though this creation seems to have been created, it has not been created; when thus it has not been created at all, surely it does not exist.

In the pure space of the infinite consciousness, these countless world appearances exist. They come into being, and they dissolve, though they are all essentially void (sunya) in their nature. They react upon one another, and thus create this world-appearance, though they are essentially void (sunya). This creation is void, and the void grows and the void alone ceases to be (void because it is devoid of the notion of a 'self').

## section VI.2 - chapter 168

stambhe jade na sa vyakttimanutkirneha gacchati citi tvantargata cittvadeva  
'tmanyeva bhatyalam (42)

Vasistha continued:

Creation of the universe and its dissolution are only deluded notions that arise in consciousness; when the notion of creation remains sustained for a long time, it is taken to be real. The objective appearance of the universe appears spontaneously in the cosmic being, just as a dream arises after a period of deep sleep. Consciousness alone shines as this universe which therefore is its body. After this, consciousness itself gives rise within itself to the notions of memory and psychological categories, earth, and the other elements.

Rama asked: Lord, memories are the impressions that are left on the buddhi. If such impressions, and therefore memories, are absent, how can anything come into being, or even notions arise?

Vasistha replied: I shall presently dispel your doubt, O Rama, and establish non-duality. This world-appearance is like a figure that has not been carved out of the tree. Only when a figure is actually carved out of the tree, does it become a figure; but, since the infinite consciousness is non-dual, such a thing does not happen. **In the inert and insentient wood, the figure does not emerge until it is actually carved. But, since consciousness is full of consciousness, the world-appearance shines within itself.** In fact, consciousness never ceases to be consciousness, nor is the world carved out of it; yet, it shines as this world.

In the beginning of creation, consciousness, being full of potential notions, manifests them. Since those notions are also endowed with consciousness, they appear to be real, as in a dream. Within the space of the heart itself, consciousness gives rise to various notions: 'This is the notion of Brahman, this itself is the notion of pure consciousness.' 'This is the notion of jiva', and 'This is the ego sense, buddhi, mind, time, and space'. 'I am so and so.' 'This is activity.' 'These are the elements.' 'These are the senses.' 'This is the subtle (puryastaka) body, and that is the gross physical body', 'I am Brahma the creator, I am Siva, I am Visnu, I am the sun'. 'This is inside, and that is outside.' 'This is creation, and this is world.' Such notions arise in consciousness itself. There are neither physical or material substances, nor memory, nor duality.

Without cause, this world-appearance arises in consciousness. It is experienced by the consciousness within itself. It is consciousness which considers itself the world and experiences the world. There is therefore no memory, or dream, or time, etc. involved in this. That which is a mass of consciousness within appears to be the world outside; however, there is neither an outside nor an inside, nothing whatsoever except the supreme reality. Therefore, just as the infinite Brahman is real, in the same way, this observed objective universe is also real.

## section VI.2 - chapter 169

animilitanetrasya yasya visvam praliyate sa ksibah paramarthena sa sete  
sukhamatmavan (29)

Vasistha continued:

He to whom joy is no joy, and sorrow is no sorrow, is a liberated one. He whose heart is not agitated, even while being engaged in pleasure, is a liberated one. He is a liberated one who rejoices in pure consciousness itself, as well as in the objective world.

Rama asked: If the liberated one does not find pleasure in pleasure, and sorrow in sorrow, then surely he is insentient and insensitive.

Vasistha continued: Because his awareness is totally absorbed in consciousness, he does not experience pleasure, unless he makes an effort to do so. He is said to rest in consciousness. His doubts have been dissolved, and his contact with all the objects of the world is flavoured by wisdom. The world has lost its 'taste' for him, though he is still active in it, doing what needs to be done, from moment to moment.

On account of the fact that the liberated ones thus rest in the self or consciousness, they appear to be asleep, though they are engaged in activity. In fact, they are not insentient nor insensitive. They are considered to be 'asleep', because they treat this world- appearance as if it were a long dream, not because they are insentient. They rest in that truth or supreme peace, which is utterly dark as night to the ignorant; therefore, they are considered to be asleep, but they are not insentient. Since they are disinterested in the world of the ignorant, they are considered to be asleep in the world. They rejoice in the self at all times; hence, they are not insentient. They have risen above sorrow.

Having roamed this samsara and experienced all kinds of pleasure and pain, the jiva has the good fortune to come into contact with a holy man, and cross this ocean of samsara. He sleeps in great peace, even without a bed. Though he is engaged in intense activity here, he enjoys the peace of deep sleep. This is a great wonder. This 'sleep' cannot be disturbed by anything. **He is truly intoxicated who does not see 'the world', even though his eyes are wide open. He enjoys the bliss of deep sleep.** He has dispelled the notion of the world from his heart, and he has reached fullness. He has quaffed nectar, and he is at peace. His delight is independent of pleasure. He has turned away from greed. He knows that in every atom there is a universe. He is engaged in diverse and intense activity, though he does nothing. He is aware that this world-appearance has the same reality as a dream, thus he has entered into the peace and the bliss of deep sleep. His consciousness is more expansive than even space. By a supreme self-effort, he has realised self-knowledge, and he lives as if he were seeing a long dream in pure space. He is fully awake and enlightened, though he appears to be asleep; he enjoys the greatest delight, though he appears to be asleep. He has reached the highest state.

## section VI.2 - chapter 170

idrsena `tmamitrena sakalatrena samyutah svakarmanamna ramate svabhavenaiva neritah (20)

Rama asked:

Lord, who is the wise man's friend, with whom does he enjoy, what is his enjoyment or delight, and in what manner does he enjoy those pleasures?

Vasistha replied:

The wise man's friend, O Rama, is his own action, which arises spontaneously in him, and in which there is no division or conflict. Like a father, it encourages him, and provides him with enthusiasm. Like a wife, it checks him, restrains him, and guides him. It does not abandon him, even in the worst calamities. It is free from doubt. It promotes the spirit of renunciation. Because it turns anger and hate upon themselves, it is like quaffing nectar. It is his friend and helper, even in the densest forest of troubles and difficulties. It is the treasure chest which contains the precious gems of faith. It saves him from evil and, like a father, it is ever intent on protecting him.

It (one's own action) brings him every type of delight. In all kinds of situations and conditions, it promotes the health of his body. It reveals to him 'This is to be done' and 'This is not to be done'. It is intent on bringing desirable objects and experiences, and warding off undesirable objects and experiences. It causes the speech to be soft and pleasant, and it causes one's behaviour also to be soft and sweet, helpful, adorable, free from selfish desires or passions, and conducive to the supreme attainment of self-knowledge. It is devoted to the protection of the good and the community as a whole. It prevents illnesses of the body and the mind. It promotes the happiness of learned men by engaging in healthy discussions with them. In the case of equals, there is just a semblance of duality. Whatever may be one's situation in life, it (one's own action) is devoted to self-sacrifice, charity, austerity, and pilgrimage. It establishes a healthy relation with the son, wife, brahmanas, servants, and relatives, by means of the sharing of food and drink. **The wise man, by his very nature, enjoys the company of such a bosom-friend, along with the latter's consort. That friend is known as one's own action.**

This friend (one's own-action) has sons who are known as bathing (purity the body), charity, austerity, and meditation. They, too, promote the welfare and happiness of all beings. The spirit of happiness (or a happy spirit) is its wife, who showers happiness on all, naturally and effortlessly. Her name is samata (equanimity, or evenness of mind). She encourages her husband (natural action) in the performance of righteous or appropriate action.

She has another constant companion, known as maitri (friendliness).

The wise man who enjoys the company of this best of all friends with its wife and other companions, has no need to rejoice when he is in joy or pleasure, or grieve when in unpleasant situations. He does not hate, nor become angered. Wherever and in whatever condition he is, he enjoys the state of nirvana, though he is constantly engaged in the activities of the world. He is silent in useless arguments, he is deaf to useless talk, he is a corpse in relation to unrighteous actions, he is very much alive in righteous actions, he is brilliant in exposing what is auspicious, and in a moment he reveals the truth.

All this is natural to the wise man. He does not have to strive to acquire these qualities.

## section VI.2 - chapter 171

prabuddhanam param brahma nirvibhagamidam jagat dhimanto 'pi na tadvidmo  
yadidam tvaprabodhanam (15)

Vasistha continued:

It is the infinite consciousness alone that shines as the world here. In reality, however, it is neither world, nor void, nor even consciousness. Only this much can be said: that which is called world is not that. Because it is subtler than even space, it appears to be other than what it is.

Between 'this' and 'that' is the body of consciousness, and that body is experienced as an object of perception. However, such a creation has no cause, and hence there was no reason for it to arise. How then can it be said to exist now? Therefore, there is no justification to assume the existence of the external universe - not even an atom of it. If something is seen as the external universe here, surely that is the infinite consciousness in fact. Just as the same person who is fast asleep goes on to dream without abandoning his sleep, even so this consciousness, which is pure and indivisible, gives rise within itself to the notion of the objective universe, without ever abandoning its own essential nature as consciousness. Therefore, there is no materiality known as earth, etc., but, whether one feels that what one sees are forms or not forms, the final truth is that all this is the one infinite Brahman, which alone shines as all these. Just as the dream mountain is realised as pure void when the dreamer wakes up, even so are all these forms realised to be non-existent when one is enlightened.

**This world is the indivisible and supreme Brahman to those who are enlightened. Though we are highly intelligent, we do not know what non-enlightenment (ignorance) is.** Between 'this' and 'that' is the mass of consciousness, which is the essential nature of all beings. That is the supreme state of the self. Between 'this' and 'that' is that infinite space, which is the mass of consciousness in which everything is firmly established. Whatever is that mass of consciousness, that alone is all this - real and unreal at the same time. Form, perception, and also the corresponding concepts that arise in the mind, are all pure consciousness, even as whirlpools are in the ocean. Between 'this' and 'that' is the infinite consciousness; when that is realised without any modification or subtraction whatsoever, it is seen that it alone is and that there is no world. Then, even attraction and aversion, existence and non-existence, become its own limbs, without in any way affecting the true nature of the consciousness. Between the two 'ends' is the pure consciousness; the 'ends' are but concepts, and do not exist independent of the reality, which is the middle - that is the essential nature of the infinite self or consciousness. For that consciousness, which exists between 'this' and 'that', another name is 'world'.

Right from the very beginning, the creation has not come into being at all. To say that this world exists as such is pure fiction. It is a pit and it is a tragedy that people say that this world exists (though it does not), and that the supreme Brahman does not exist (though it alone exists).

## section VI.2 - chapter 171

abrahmanyam kva gacchami viparitamato jagat asaddrsyam sadyuktam  
brahmaivam nama gamyate (26)

Vasistha continued:

Where shall I go for that which is not Brahman or the infinite consciousness? Alas, the world is a strange place where people regard the unreal world (the object of perception) to be real. Yet they do reach the same Brahman. The radiance of a precious gem is not its creation, nor is it independent of the gem: even so, the world-appearance is non-different from the self, which is pure consciousness. The sun shines in that supreme state of consciousness; the sun is non-different from that self. However, neither the sun nor the moon can illumine or reveal the self. It is because of the inherent power of that consciousness that the sun and the moon themselves shine, and thus illumine and reveal the objects of perception.

That consciousness is with form and it is without form - all these are words and meaningless concepts. Particles of light that constitute the rays of the sun are the rays of the sun, non-different from it. So, it is right to say that they shine, and also to say that they do not shine. Even so, it is right to say that the sun and the moon shine; and it is also right to say that they do not. Since the sun and all the other luminous bodies shine because of the infinite consciousness, how can it be said that they do not shine or it does not shine?

That supreme state is beyond all concepts, even those of 'mass of consciousness' and 'void'; it is devoid of everything, but it is also full of everything. Hence, the earth, etc., do exist; on the other hand, nothing exists in it. Though there are infinite jivas in it, yet they do not exist as jivas independent of the consciousness. 'Something', 'nothing', etc., are concepts which are far from the reality or the infinite consciousness.

The pure consciousness, which is non-dual, eternal, and all-pervading, exists, and is known as 'world'. When merely the objectivity of all this is removed, what remains of the world of diversity is the truth. It is that consciousness itself which is manifest as the infinite experiences. The waking state of consciousness stands in exactly the same relation to the turiya (transcendental) state as the dream state stands in relation to the deep sleep state. To the enlightened person, however, all these states are but one turiya state of consciousness.

Theories concerning creation or the transformation of the self or consciousness into matter are expressions used by teachers while instructing students; there is not an iota of truth in all this. When one realises the dream as dream, then there is joy; but if this is not realised, then there is unhappiness when one dreams of an unhappy event. The enlightened sage lives in a state of realisation of the truth, even while he engages himself in diverse activities. In diversity he experiences unity; he rejoices even in unpleasant situations. Though he lives in the world, he is really not in it. What more does an enlightened person have to gain? Just as ice is ever cool, the sage lives a natural life, doing what is natural to him, without aspiring for or abandoning anything. The characteristic of the ignorant man is that he strives to be other than what he is.

## section VI.2 - chapter 172

kakataliyavadbhanti sarvatmani susamvidah svangabhutah svatah svasthastha eva smrtayah krthah (24)

Vasistha continued:

The Creator is only the mind, devoid of any trace of materiality. Hence, he has no body or the senses or vasana or mental conditioning. Since he had attained liberation at the end of the previous world-cycle, there is no memory in him. When there is no memory at all, there is no cause for embodiment. Even if such memory were possible in the Creator, even that would be devoid of matter, like a dream-city. However, this is said for the sake of argument: memory is impossible in the liberated ones.

Rama asked: Lord, tell me why is there no memory in them, and how the gunas (the building blocks of creation) arise in the absence of memory.

Vasistha replied: Memory arises only in relation to the objective universe, thus providing the cause-and-effect sequence. When such an object of perception itself is non-existent, how and where does memory arise or exist? When the truth is that all this is indeed Brahman or the infinite consciousness, there is no room for memory.

The contemplation of objects that arises in living beings is considered smrti (remembrance). Of course, such objects are non-existent. How can smrti exist then? However, since the infinite consciousness is the reality in all beings, such contemplation of objects is, in a manner of speaking, inherent in consciousness - hence I referred to smrti. However, it is only from the point of view of the common ignorant men. Enough of it. The natural movement that arises in consciousness is also known as smrti. When that movement occurs repeatedly, it is seen externally as matter. Whatever the consciousness experiences by its own nature, that is said to be smrti. **All these experiences arise in the infinite consciousness of their own accord, as the very limbs of consciousness, without any causal connection (just as a ripe coconut falls coincidentally when a crow happens to alight on it). They are called memory.** This is true of all happenings, even when there appears to be coincidental cause.

Why should we investigate memory which is thus accidental, when we realise that the objects of perception to which it is related themselves are non-existent? They exist only in the eyes of the ignorant. I am not expounding the means of liberation for the benefit of such ignorant people. It is only meant for those who have been awakened, but who have some doubts concerning it. One should never associate with ignorant people who cannot recognise the truth. When a thing is experienced by the consciousness, even just a little, and when that experience is repeated, a mental impression (samskara) is created. Thus is the world-appearance created. However, all this is pervaded by the infinite consciousness. There is neither a form nor memory related to it. When duality itself is non-existent, then surely there is no bondage.

## section VI.2 - chapter 173

sarirasya yatha ksanakhadisu yatha grahah sarvatmanastatha kastadsadadau  
tatha grahah (8)

Rama asked:

How does the omnipresent consciousness identify itself with the body? How does consciousness identify itself with rocks and wood?

Vasistha replied:

Even as the embodied being identifies itself with the hand, so the infinite consciousness identifies itself with the body. **In the same way, as the body identifies itself with the nails and the hair, the omnipresent self identifies itself with rocks and wood etc.** Just as it is pure consciousness alone that becomes rocks and wood in a dream, these notions arose in the infinite consciousness right in the beginning of creation. Just as in an individual's body there are sentient and insentient parts, even so in the cosmic body of the infinite consciousness there are apparently sentient and insentient objects, whereas in truth there are no such forms. When all this is clearly seen, they cease to appear, just as a dream vanishes the moment the dreamer awakes. All this is pure consciousness; there is neither a seer nor an object of perception.

Thousands of world-cycles may arise and cease in the infinite consciousness, yet they are non-different from the infinite consciousness, even as waves are non-different from the ocean. 'I am not a wave, I am the ocean' - when thus the truth is realised, the wave-ness ceases. The world-appearance is like the wave in relation to Brahman, which is the ocean. The existence and the non-existence of this world-appearance are the two ways in which the energy inherent in Brahman manifests.

The experience that arises in consciousness, as in a dream, is known as mind, Brahma the creator, the grandfather of all creation. This being is nameless, formless, and immutable. In that, the notions of 'I' and 'you', etc., arise. Even they are non-different from the Creator. The pure consciousness in which all these notions arise is the great-grandfather of all creatures. Just as the waves which rise and fall on the ocean are only the ocean and non-different from it, all these creations and dissolutions are non-different from the infinite consciousness.

The movement of energy that occurs in the infinite consciousness is known as the cosmic person who is endowed with a magnetic field and gravitational force. This creation arises in him like a dream. Creation is a dream. The waking state is a dream. Even though this creation or world-appearance is apparently seen and experienced, it is in reality the realisation of the notions that arise in us, and they alone exist as the cosmic personality. Consciousness itself experiences the notions that arise in it, again and again. It is that cosmic person who is pervaded and permeated by consciousness that appears as all the dream-objects. Just as an actor who dreams that he is acting, sees himself acting on a stage, entertaining an audience, this consciousness becomes aware of its own experience of this world-appearance.

## section VI.2 - chapter 174

sargastaranga brahmabdhestesu samvedanam dravah sargantaram sukhadyatma  
dvaitaikyditaratkutah (2)

Vasistha continued:

It is consciousness alone that shines as this universe right in the very beginning of creation. Therefore, the three worlds are non-different from Brahman. **Brahman is like the ocean; in it, the creations are like the waves and experiencing is the water. Even after this (creation) there pure unconditioned bliss. Where are duality, non-duality, or anything else?** Both deep sleep and dreaming are alternating states that arise during sleep; even so, appearance and disappearance of this creation are alternating events in the infinite consciousness.

When the wise one realises that this world is like a dream-city, his hopes are not centred in it. The day-dreamer dreams of a great diversity of visions and hopes. Though there seems to be some reality in such daydreams, they are in fact non-existent. If, however, you are looking for some other explanation for this world-appearance, why do you not accept the possibility of delusion or delirious notions and hallucination?

The practice of contemplation in which the mind is restrained from undergoing any modification, is as good as supreme inertia; on the other hand, when such modifications exist in the mind, it is the seat of diversity or samsara. By such contemplation, a state of equanimity is not attained. If it is claimed that liberation is attained when the mind is forcibly restrained from all modifications, then why is it not attained in sleep? Therefore, only when it is realised that there is no creation at all, does real self-knowledge arise which leads to liberation. Such liberation is unending, infinite, and unconditioned - truly nirvikalpa samadhana (samadhi). In it, one remains firmly rooted in self-knowledge, without the least agitation. It is also known as eternal sleep, turiya, nirvanam and moksa.

Dhyana or contemplation or meditation is perfect awakening or enlightenment. The realisation that the objective universe does not exist is perfect awakening. It does not resemble a state of inertia, nor deep sleep, nor nirvikalpa samadhim nor savikalpa samadhi, nor is it an unreal imaginary state. In it, the universe exists as it is, but it is dissolved at the same time. In it, there are no concepts of unity, diversity, their mixture, and their non-existence. In it, there is supreme peace.

That perfect awakening is attained by a careful investigation of this scripture constantly, day and night, not by pilgrimage nor by charity, not by acquiring knowledge nor by the practice of meditation or yoga, not by austerity (penance) nor by religious rites. By none of these methods does illusion come to an end. They only lead to heaven and such other rewards, not to liberation. Delusion ends only when self-knowledge arises in one who has carefully studied and investigated this scripture.

## section VI.2 - chapter 175

yato vaco nivartante tusnimbhavo 'vasisyate vyavaharyapi khatmaiva  
tadvattisthati mukavat (24)

Vasistha continued:

In the beginning, neither this world nor the other world came into being in the infinite consciousness. An unreal, imaginary experience arose in consciousness, just like the experience of embracing a woman in a dream. Only the dreamer exists in the dream; only the infinite consciousness exists in the unreal experience. What appears to be the world, thus arises in that consciousness, which is ever pure. How can impurity arise in the pure consciousness? This experience is also pure. That itself is the dream-city or the dream-creation. That is the world, for, in the very beginning of creation, there was no earth, etc. It was the movement of energy in the infinite consciousness that subsequently created earth and the physical elements, mind, and other psychological categories, which were nothing but notions in consciousness. This movement of energy is like the inherent motion in air which takes place without mental activity or intention.

Consciousness appears in consciousness as its own body or materialisation. The mind itself appears to be the objects of perception, just as in dream. There is no other cause possible. Hence, there is no duality, and there is no division in consciousness. The supreme Brahman is free from all forms; that itself, when it appears to have a form, is this world-appearance. This exists eternally. Just as diversity arises in the one during a dream, this world-appearance of diversity seems to arise in the one infinite Brahman.

The mind itself is Brahma the creator. It is in the very heart of this creation, and it alone does everything and destroys everything. When one thoroughly investigates all this, it is clearly seen that the pure consciousness alone exists and nothing else. **It is beyond description. At the end of the investigation, utter silence alone remains. Though engaged in all activities, remains unaffected like space, as if it were dumb.** The enlightened one, therefore, attains a knowledge of the infinite, and remains utterly silent. He is the best among men.

Brahma the creator brings about this world-appearance without intending to do so. The infinite consciousness, with its 'eyes closed', is itself; and with its 'eyes opened', it is the world. But the infinite consciousness remains itself in both these states. Hence, it is both 'is' and 'is-not', real and unreal. These two states constantly alternate; one is never without the other. Therefore, know the truth as it is, as supreme peace, and know that it is unborn and undying space. Know, too, that the world-appearance is like it, though it is sometimes unlike it. The objective universe has never arisen, nor does it cease, though it is apparently experienced now. It is a mysterious product of the energy or the power of the infinite consciousness.

Whatever is experienced, whenever, and wherever, that seems to exist then and there, whether it is real or unreal. No other reason is appropriate.

## section VI.2 - chapter 175

pauruseyamidamiti pramadaccenne rocate tadanyaditmavijnanasistram  
kimcidvicarayet (76)

Vasistha continued:

Whatever one constantly contemplates, whatever constantly occupies one's mind, and to whatever one is devoted with all his life, that he knows to be real and obvious. When the mind is saturated with consciousness of Brahman, it becomes that; whatever the mind loves most, it becomes that. When one's mind rests in the supreme reality or the infinite consciousness, then one engages himself in righteous activity, without being interested in the activity itself for its own sake.

When this objective universe itself does not exist, or when one cannot affirm or deny its existence, it is not possible to determine who is the doer of actions and the enjoyer of experiences. What is commonly known as Brahma the creator or buddhi the awakened intelligence, etc., is itself the infinite consciousness, which is absolutely pure. The peace in the sky is pure void. The appearance of duality in all these is illusory and non-existent. Therefore, diversity is a meaningless concept. Just as one enters into the dream state after the deep sleep state, the same infinite consciousness moves to the creation state from the state of absolute quiescence; in it, there is no duality or unity. The infinite consciousness perceives this creation within the space of its own consciousness.

Just as there is no definite sequence or order or causal connection in dreams, in this world-appearance there is no definite causal connection or sequence, though it appears to have one. There is no division in dream; nor is there a division in the objects of perception. It is the same Brahman or infinite consciousness that appears in front of you as this universe or creation. In dream, there is no recognition of the objects seen in the dream, nor is there samskara (mental impression), nor even memory, because the dreamer does not think, 'I have seen this before'. Similarly, in the waking state, too, when these three considerations are removed, there is the infinite consciousness alone, which the ignorant man identifies with memory.

Affirmations and negations, injunctions and prohibitions, seem to exist in the supreme being, though they do not exist in it. When a man is dizzy, he feels that the world is going around him, though the dizziness is in him. Even when one knows this, and knows that the objective universe is delusion or illusion, it does not disappear, except through persistent practice. Hence, this illusion ceases only through the devout study of this scripture - there is no other way. It is by self-knowledge or enlightenment that these three (the mind, the objects of perception, and the body) will reach a quiescent state of equanimity, not otherwise. For these three arise from ignorance. By a mere study of this scripture, that ignorance is dispelled. The beauty in this scripture is that its student is not abandoned to his despair; if something is not clear in the first instance, a further study of the scripture makes it clear. This scripture dispels delusion, and enables you to realise that the ordinary life itself is the supreme state.

Therefore, one should study at least a small part of this scripture daily. **If, however, one thinks it is not authoritative because it is of human origin, one can resort to the study of any other scripture dealing with the self-knowledge and final liberation.** But one should not waste one's lifetime.

## section VI.2 - chapter 176

avidyeyamananteyamavidyatvena cetita brahmatvena parijnata bhavati brahma  
nirmalam (22)

Rama asked:

When thus there are countless universes arising and dissolving in the infinite consciousness, why do you teach me of their nature?

Vasistha replied:

It was in that way that you have gained the understanding that the world is a long dream. You have gained knowledge of the relationship between a word and its meaning, or the object it denotes. Hence, all this discussion of the world-appearance and imaginary creation has not been in vain. That illustration best serves its purpose of bringing home a spiritual truth which enables one to understand the word and its corresponding concept; and only that becomes a living truth to guide one in one's daily living. When, having known all that there is to be known, you attain knowledge of the three periods of time (past, present, and future), you will see all this to be true.

In every atom of this existence, there are countless universes - who has the power even to count them? In this connection, I recall a story which my father Brahma the creator once narrated to me. I shall presently narrate it to you - pray, listen. I asked my father Brahma, "What is this world-appearance, and where does it exist?"

Brahma said:

All this that appears as this universe, O sage, is nothing but the infinite consciousness, Brahman. The wise know this to be pure satva (the unconditioned intelligence) which is infinite; and the ignorant see it as the material universe. I shall illustrate this truth with the following narrative concerning this Brahmanda (the cosmic egg).

In this limitless space, there is the infinite self, which is non-different from that space. That self perceived itself within itself as a jiva, a conditioned and living entity. Without at anytime abandoning its own essential nature as the infinite space, it considered itself as 'I am' or the ego-sense, though still with space for its body. This 'I am' expanded into 'I am buddhi or the intellect'. It then saw itself as the buddhi which determines what is 'this' and what is 'that', but which follows the basic illusion of conditioned perception. After this, that itself entertained the notion 'I am mind', and became involved in notions or diverse and perverse thinking. That mind thereupon conceived the notion of the existence of the five senses which, though they are formless, appear to be gross and material, like mountains seen in a dream. The mind assumed that it had a body, composed of the three worlds, with a variety of creatures, with all sorts of relationships, which were assumed to exist between them, all these subject to time.

Thus it saw everything as one sees diverse objects in a mirror. What it saw was enchanting and colourful. In every subatomic particle, there exist such universes.

**Ignorance thinks of all this as ignorance and as limitless creation; but, when it is realised as Brahman, it itself becomes the pure Brahman.** Even if all this is actually seen, nothing is seen because all this is but a dream. Who is the perceiver here, what is perceived, how can there be duality in the infinite being?

## section VI.2 - chapter 177

svabha-vasya svabhavo 'sau kila karanamityapi yaducyate svabhavasya sa paryayokttikalpana (29)

Rama asked:

The world-appearance arises in the infinite consciousness without any cause at all. That being so, why do not such uncaused events continue to happen even now?

Vasistha replied:

Whatever notion one entertains, one perceives that to be true. In Brahman, both causation and causelessness exist, since Brahman is omnipotent. Even so in the case of a living being, the intelligent body has also inert hair and nails. If something other than Brahman is experienced, then surely there is perverse causation which is responsible for that. But, when only the one infinite consciousness shines everywhere, in that, what is the cause, and what is the result?

Rama asked:

In the case of the ignorant, however, there is causal sequence. What is uncaused in him, and how does it exist?

Vasistha replied:

To the enlightened one, there is none who is ignorant. Why should we waste our time discussing what is non-existent?

There are some things which are caused, and there are others which do not have a cause. It depends upon one's point of view; what one regards as valid, that alone he accepts as valid. This creation has no cause at all. The belief that the world was created by god, etc., is a play of words. There is nothing that illustrates this truth as the experience of dream does.

If the creation as a dream is not clearly understood, there is great delusion. If it is rightly understood, delusion vanishes. Speculative reasoning advanced in connection with this creation is ignorance and foolishness. Is fire the 'cause' of the heat which is natural to it? The constituents of the body are in fact formless, ethereal substances; hence, the physical body has no real cause. Also, what can be the cause of the body which experiences the non-existent universe?

**All this is natural to nature (whatever it may be), even if a cause may be assumed. Even the word 'nature' that is used here is a figure of speech.** Therefore, all these objects and their assumed causes are but delusions that arise in the mind of the ignorant. The wise ones know that all effects proceed from causes. When one dreams of being robbed, and when one knows that it was but a dream, there is no sorrow; even so, when the truth is realised, life is freed from sorrow.

The truth certainly is that this universe has never been created, as creation had no cause in the first place. It came into being, and it exists as a dream-object exists in the infinite consciousness. It is Brahman alone and it shines in Brahman. Just as both sleep and dream are aspects of one sleep, even so, this creation and dissolution of the universe are two aspects of the one indivisible, infinite consciousness.

## section VI.2 - chapter 178

antah samvedanam nama calayatyantravestanam bahirbhastramayaskara iva loke  
'nucestanam

Rama said:

Lord, there are substances in this world which are divisible and which are indivisible. The divisible ones collide with one another, and the indivisible ones do not so collide with one another. For instance, one sees the moon and, in a manner of speaking, the eyesight strikes the moon, without dividing it or touching it. I am asking this question from the point of view of the unawakened person. Who is it that governs the inhalation and the exhalation of the life-breath in the body? The body is solid, and it offers resistance; what is that force, which is subtle, and which has no resistance in itself, yet which is able to move the body? If that which is subtle and non-resistant can act on the solid and resistant substance, then why can one not move a mountain by the power of thought alone?

Vasistha said:

The life-breath enters the body, and leaves it during inhalation and exhalation when the subtle nerve-force which rests in the heart expands and contracts like the bellows of the blacksmith.

Rama said:

In the case of the bellows of the blacksmith, it is the blacksmith who operates them. What is it that makes the nadi in the heart thus expand and contract?

Vasistha said:

**Just as the blacksmith makes the bellows expand and contract in this world, there is an inner consciousness which makes all the inner organs function in the body. It is on account of this that everyone lives and functions in this world.**

Rama asked again:

But, the body and all its constituents are solid; how does the subtle consciousness move them? For there is no contact between the solid and the subtle.

Vasistha said:

Listen to this teaching which uproots the whole tree of doubt. There is nothing solid and resistant in this world. All things everywhere are for ever subtle and non-resistant. All this is pure consciousness, which experiences these apparent solid substances as one experiences dream-objects, earth, water, wind, space, the mountains and the oceans, etc., are all subtle consciousness only. Even so are the mind and all the rest of the inner instruments. In this connection I shall narrate to you an ancient legend. I have already narrated the same story to you in another context. Listening to it, you will realise that all that you see here is pure consciousness, and nothing else.

## section VI.2 - chapter 178

neha `krtirna ca bhavabhavajanmanasah satta na caiva na ca nama tatha  
'styasatta santam param kacati kevalamanittham brahma 'thava kacamapyalamatra  
nasti (62)

Vasistha continued:

There once lived a brahmana named Indu. He had ten sons. In course of time, Indu passed away, and his wife too followed him to the other world. The sons performed the funeral. They were not interested in the affairs of the world. They began to consider what might be the best form of contemplation that would enable them to live like gods.

In pursuit of their aspiration, they went away to the forest. and they engaged themselves in intense contemplation and penance. They remained like statues or painted pictures. Their bodies withered away. and what remained was consumed by carnivores. They were immersed in contemplation, 'I am Brahma 'the creator', 'I am the world', and 'I am the entire creation'. Now that the minds of these ten were devoid of embodiment, but were saturated with such contemplation, those very minds became what they contemplated. Thus it is their thought that exists as this creation.

This universe is pure consciousness. Even the earth, the mountains, etc., are pure consciousness. What else is it? Just as the minds of the sons of Indu manifested here as the universe, even so the notion of the universe or creation that arises in Brahma the creator itself appears as this creation. Hence, all these elements, the earth and the mountains are all nothing but pure consciousness.

The potter known as consciousness. with the help of the wheel of his own body (consciousness) and of clay which is also his own body, fashions this creation. If all these creatures and substances are not consciousness, what else are they? This creation stands in the same relation to consciousness as radiance to a jewel. All this is indeed Brahman: this is certain and indisputable.

As and when this truth is clearly seen, immediately there is an end to sorrow. If this truth is not seen, then sorrow becomes firmly and solidly established. The wicked and the ignorant do not see this truth. In their eyes, this samsara is a solid reality, and they do not perceive this truth at all. There are no forms. **There is no existence nor non-existence, no birth, and no death. There is nothing known as reality, nor something which can be called unreal. The supreme, which is absolute peace, perceives this creation within itself - it is not independent of Brahman the infinite consciousness; so, why create the false notion of an independent manifestation?** In its unliberated form, it has thousands of eyes and other limbs; in its liberated state, it is all peace, tranquillity - enough of such descriptions.

## section VI.2 - chapter 179

eka eva bhavatyabdhih sravantinam satairapi eka eva bhavetkala  
rtusamvatsarotkaraih (14)

Vasistha continued:

All the three worlds are but pure consciousness; they are the unconditioned mind (satva). The elements and the creatures, which the ignorant visualise in these worlds, do not exist at all. Such being the truth, where is a solid body, etc. ? Whatever is perceived here is truly non-solid, and extremely subtle consciousness. Consciousness alone exists in consciousness; peace rests in peace; space exists in space; wisdom alone exists in wisdom.

Where is the body, and where are the limbs, where are the internal organs and the skeleton? Know that this body is pure consciousness, which is like space - subtle, though it looks solid. The arms are consciousness; so are the head and all the senses. All these are subtle, and there is nothing which is solid. This world seems to arise in the infinite space or Brahman, like a dream. Because of the very nature of the infinite consciousness, it seems to exist as this creation. Therefore, it is both caused and uncaused. Of course, without a cause, there is no effect. Whatever one constructs in one's own consciousness is also seen by oneself. Just as in dream all things appear everywhere in every manner, even so in the waking state the world appears in all manner everywhere.

One becomes many, just as the sons of Indu became the universe by the power of their contemplation. The many become one, just as devotees of lord Visnu become one with him. **Rivers are many, the ocean is one. Time is one, though the seasons and the years may be called by different names.** This body is also pure consciousness, and it exists in consciousness like a dream-object. Like a dream-object, again it is formless, though its form seems to be obviously experienced as a reality.

The one sleep is regarded as dream-experience at one time, and as deep, dreamless sleep at another; but, sleep is one and indivisible. Even so, consciousness is one, whether in it there is awareness of objects or not. Therefore, what is experienced as the world is nothing but pure consciousness. The seer (experiencer), the object (experience), and the act of seeing (experiencing), are all the one consciousness, which is truly indivisible. The appearance of the world in this consciousness, as something other than consciousness, is an illusion; it ceases when its truth is realised, even as when the truth of a nightmare is realised it ceases to haunt one. It is the infinite potencies of the one infinite consciousness that appear here as the infinite objects of creation.

## section VI.2 - chapter 180

atha tenokttamarthaste ka iva 'nena tapasa arthena 'tivicitra hi  
bhavanticchah saririnam (20)

Rama said:

Lord, once when I was in my teacher's house, someone came in. He was extremely radiant. He had come from the court of the king of Videha. He saluted the assembled holy ones; we students also greeted him appropriately. When he had settled down in his seat and had rested a little, I asked him: "Holy one, you seem to be fatigued from a long journey. Where do you come from?"

The Brahmana replied:

Yes, you are right; I am seeking for something, and I am fatigued on account of intense exertion to attain it. I shall tell you why I am here. I am a brahmana from the country of Videha. I am known as Kundadanta. I became disinterested in the affairs of the world, and I sought the company of holy men and ascetics. On the Sri mountain, I lived for a considerable time, practising penance.

On that mountain, one day, I saw a strange sight. An ascetic dangled from the branch of a tree with his feet tied to the branch. I saluted him and drew near to him. I thought, "This ascetic is surely alive, for his body responds to the changes in the climatic conditions." I stayed there for a few days and served him, and won his confidence. **One day, I asked him: "With what aim are you engaged in this penance?" The Ascetic replied: "Embodied beings have many interesting goals in life."** I persisted in my question.

The Ascetic said:

I was born in the city of Mathura and was brought up there. I had acquired knowledge of the scriptures. I heard "The king enjoys all kinds of pleasures". I was inspired by that goal. I decided to become the emperor of the entire world. Hence, I came here, and have been engaged in this penance for the past twelve years. I have answered your question. You had better go your way. I shall continue my penance.

The Brahmana continued:

I requested him to accept my service as long as he carried on his penance. The moment I said this, he closed his eyes and became as if dead. For six months from that day, I remained in that place and served him. One day, there appeared on that scene a being as radiant as the sun. I offered him due worship, and the ascetic worshipped him mentally. That radiant being said to the ascetic: "O ascetic, let this asceticism cease, and I shall grant you the boon of your choice. You will become the emperor of the whole earth and rule for seven thousand years, remaining in this very body of yours." After bestowing this boon, the radiant being vanished from sight. When he had gone, I said to the ascetic: "Now that you have obtained the boon of your choice, terminate this penance and return to your normal duties." He accepted. I snapped the rope with which his feet were bound to the tree. Both of us then went to Mathura.

## section VI.2 - chapter 181

bhrataro 'stau vayamime jataneekataya taya ekasamvinmaya jata  
ekasamkalpaniscayah (11)

The Brahmana Kundadanta continued:

En route to Mathura, we spent some time in a village known as Rodha, and two days in a city known as Salim. On the third day, we reached a forest.

There, the ascetic abandoned the popular route, and said to me: "Let us go to the Gauri Asramam, which is near here. There, my seven brothers live. We are eight brothers. **Though we were born as separate individuals, we were all united in the one consciousness, and we all had the same goal which we determined to reach.** On account of that, they too are engaged in the performance of penance. I came here along with them and, in the beginning, I saw this forest in which there was the Gauri Asramam. Come, let us go to the Asramam, which purifies one of all sins. The minds and the hearts of even scholars and knowers of the truth are filled with eagerness to visit holy men. Surely, we should consider it a great blessing to have the opportunity of visiting this hermitage."

When we approached the area of the Asramam, we saw only barren ground, as if a deluge had washed the hermitage away. There was not a tree, no hermitage, no human being, no sage - nothing.

Both of us simultaneously exclaimed: "Alas, what has happened to this place?" Then we roamed that area and saw a solitary tree. When we approached this tree, we saw, scouted under it, an aged ascetic, who was deeply engrossed in samadhi. We sat near him, and waited for a considerable time. But he did not get up from his meditation.

I then went near him and shouted at the top of my voice, "Sage, get up from meditation".

When I said this, the sage opened his eyes, and uttered these words in a voice resembling the roaring of a lion: "Holy ones, who are you? What happened to the Gauri Asramam that stood here? Or who has brought me to this desolate place? What epoch is the present?" We were puzzled. I said to him, "Surely, O sage, you know everything. Therefore, only you can answer your own questions. Why do you not see all that has happened through your own yogic vision?"

When I said this, the sage once again went into deep meditation and, through his inner psychic vision, he learned everything that had happened.

The sage remained silent for a while, and then said to us: "Holy ones! Listen to this wondrous narration."

The Sage said:

You see this tree here. Because of my presence here, it blossomed profusely. For some unknown reason, the goddess of learning and speech dwelt here for ten years, being adored by all the different seasons of the year. This place became a dense forest, and it became known as Gauri-vana (Gauri-forest). In this forest, even the goddesses and the women folk of the siddhas or the perfected ones played. Even the gods came here to pay their homage at the feet of the goddess.

## section VI.2 - chapter 182

tadbharyastakametesu yatesu tapase ciram babhuva duhkhitam strinam yadviyogo  
hi duhsahah (29)

The Sage continued:

After spending a period of ten years there, Gauri returned to her place on the left side of lord Siva. On account of her touch, this tree never grew old. After some time, the forest became an ordinary forest, which the people of the area made use of. At that time, I was the king of Malaya. I renounced the kingdom, and came here to practise penance. I entered into deep meditation here. After some time, all of you eight brothers also came here. After spending some time here, you went away to Sri mountain, another went to Kraunca mountain, another to Kasi, and yet another to the Himalaya. The remaining four continued their penance here. All of them wanted to be rulers of the whole earth. They all obtained appropriate boons from the gods. After enjoying the fruits of their penance, all of them returned home, except you. I did not leave this place. The people held me and this tree in great esteem. I have been here for a long time. All this I have seen by my yogic vision. Now, you, too, return home, and rejoin your family.

In reply to Kundadanta's question: "The earth is one, how can eight people rule it at the same time?", the sage said:

This is not the only puzzling feature, there are others! In fact, all these eight brothers will rule the earth within their own house, after they give up their physical bodies. They will also have their (eight) wives remain constantly with them as stars. For, **these wives of theirs were sunk in inconsolable grief when their husbands left their homes for doing penance; women cannot bear separation from their husbands.** These women also performed intense penance. Goddess Parvati was pleased with them, and asked them to choose a boon. They said, "Just as you love your lord, we love our husbands: pray grant that they shall be immortal." But the goddess pointed out that that was contrary to natural order, and asked them to choose another boon. They asked, "Even when our husbands die and cast off their bodies, may they not leave the home even for a moment." The goddess granted the boon, and also granted that their husbands would rule the earth. Soon after this, the seven brothers returned home. Today, the eighth will return too.

There is yet another wonder in this story. When all the eight boys had gone away to the forest to perform penance, the grieving parents, accompanied by the wives of the eight brothers, set out on a pilgrimage. On the way, they came across a short-statured, reddish coloured, and ash-besmeared ascetic, who was on the road to the holy place known as Kalapagrama. They did not respect him, but treated him with suspicion. The ascetic, who was Durvasa, was annoyed, and cursed them: "You will pay the price for your haughtiness. Though your sons and your daughters-in-law will earn boons from the gods, those boons will produce contrary results." They realised their error, and rushed forward to beg the ascetic's pardon. But before they could reach him, he vanished from sight.

## section VI.2 - chapter 183

vayam kileme bhagavan varah sapaśca sarvada nanu samvinmaya eva deho 'nyo  
'smakamasti no (29)

Kundadanta said:

O sage, the earth is one; how can there be seven rulers of the earth simultaneously? One who does not leave his own house, how does he become the emperor of the earth? When a person has earned both blessings (boons) and curses which contradict each other, what is his fate?

The Sage said to the ascetic:

You will see how all these are made possible!

You will soon return home and be reunited with the family. In due course of time, you will all die. Your bodies will all be cremated by your relations. All of you will remain separately in the space of consciousness for a brief while, as if in deep sleep. In the meantime, all your karmas (the boons and the curses) will gather around you. The boons will assume their own forms, and the curses will assume their forms, too. The boons will have a pleasant countenance, and lotus-like palms, four arms, and a mace. The curses will be fierce-looking, dark, two armed, three eyed, and will hold a trident.

The boons will say to the curses: "Go away, you curses; our time has arrived, and you cannot transgress it." The curses will say to the boons: "Go away, you boons; it is our time, and no one can transgress it."

The boons will say: "You have been made by the sage, but we have been created by the sun."

But the curses will reply: "You have indeed been created by the sun, but we are born of a part of lord Rudra himself who is superior even to the devas or gods; the sage is a part or limb of lord Rudra." Saying this, the curses will lift up their trident ready to strike.

The boons will thereupon say:

"O curses, consider what evil flows from our quarrel here. Abandon your aggressive attitude, and let us decide what is the best course of action. We have eventually to go to Brahma the creator for a decision. Why not go there now?" The curses will agree: surely, even a fool agrees to wise counsel. They will all go to Brahma and inform him of the dispute.

Brahma will say to them: "Whichever of you has truth within, will win the dispute. Therefore, look within, and see what the inner contents are."

The curses thereupon will say: "We are defeated, O Lord, for there is nothing worthy in us. **All of us, O Lord, both the boons and the curses, are in fact pure consciousness; and we do not even possess a body.**"

## section VI.2 - chapter 183

varapradanam varadairvaradanam vararthibhih yada suciramabhyastam varanam  
sarata tada (33)

The Sage continued:

The curses will further say: "The consciousness which grants the boon through the giver of the boon considers in the receiver of the boon 'I have received the boon.' The same consciousness experiences suitable embodiment and the fruits of the boons. **Therefore, the granting of the boon by those who grant the boons, and the receiving the boon by those who sought the boons, are firmly grounded in their consciousness, and therefore form part of their essence.** Hence, they are invincible to us. The pure conquer the impure at all times. Only if the boons and the curses are of equal force, do they yield mixed results, like milk mixed with water. These results are experienced by the person as if in a dream. Lord, give us leave to go." The curses will withdraw.

Another situation will arise. Here, the very boon that the jivas of the brothers would not leave the house, turns into a curse, and challenges the boon that they would rule the whole earth. The former will appeal to Brahma the creator for a ruling. Brahma will say: "Though the two boons seem to be conflicting on the surface, indeed both of them have already been fulfilled. For, the eight brothers exist within their own house; yet, they also exist as the rulers of the whole world, since their physical bodies have been shed."

All the boons will now question Brahma: "We have heard that there is only one earth. How is it possible for all the eight brothers to rule the earth, and yet remain in their own house?" Brahma will say: "Your world and our world are all pure void, and they exist within a subatomic particle as a dream-object is experienced within oneself. What is then so astonishing about the eight brothers experiencing the existence of several worlds in their own house?"

"Immediately after death, this world is realised exactly as it is - as a dense void - within one's own mind. Even in an atom, the entire earth shines, not to speak of the house. Whatever is, is the infinite consciousness; there is naught known as the earth." When Brahma says this the boons will bow to him, and, having abandoned their false notion of a physical existence, will resume their subtle existence.

Then and there, the eight brothers, unknown to one another, will become the rulers of the earth. One will rule from Ujjaini. Another will rule over Sakadvipa. Another will rule over Kusadvipa. Another will rule over Salmalidvipa, sporting in water with celestials. Another will rule Krauncadvipa, and another Gomedadvipa, and the last will rule Puskaradvipa. Thus, both the boons will duly be fulfilled.

## section VI.2 - chapter 184

samkalpasya vapurbrahma samkalpakacidakrteh tadeva jagato rupam tasmad  
brahmatmakam jagat (V)

Kundadanta asked:

How can eight earths exist in one house?

The Sage replied:

The infinite consciousness, being omnipresent, shines everywhere in every way. The self perceives the worlds within itself.

Kundadanta asked again: In one Lord, who is the infinite consciousness, how does diversity exist as if real?

The Sage said:

There is only one infinite consciousness, which is supreme peace; there is no diversity at all, though such diversity may be experienced. The diversity that appears to exist is apparent and false, like dreams and deep sleep. Though there seems to be movement, there is no movement; mountains are not mountains. Even as in a dream, the nature of the self alone exists as all this. But, even that nature does not exist, and hence diverse objects do not exist either. Whatever was fancied by the infinite consciousness in the beginning, that alone exists as it was. Even that fancy is not real; the infinite consciousness exists as it always exists.

In flowers, leaves, fruits, pillars, trees, and in everything, the supreme being alone exists as 'the other'. The two expressions, viz., 'the supreme being' and 'the universe' are synonymous. When, through the study of the scriptures dealing with self-knowledge, this truth is realised, there is liberation. **The content or the reality of notions and thoughts is Brahman or the infinite consciousness, and that itself is the content or the reality of the world-appearance, too. Hence, the world is Brahman.** Descriptions, and that which is beyond description, injunctions, prohibitions, existence and non-existence, silence and non-silence, jiva and the self - all this is Brahman; the reality alone appears to be the unreal appearance. When all this is Brahman alone, what is activity, and what is renunciation and all the rest of it? In one sleep, there arise both sleep and a thousand dreams; even so, in the one indivisible consciousness, countless appearances arise. All these are essentially pure consciousness, which is extremely subtle. They are really invisible, though they appear to be visible. The whole universe (including Rudra, Visnu, and Brahma) is like a dream.

In that single ocean of consciousness, this diversity, with all its joys and sorrows, arises. Just as one with a defective vision sees strange objects in space, even so the ignorant perceive the world. The notion that arises in Brahma the creator (known as the world order) brings about all these, and sustains them.

## section VI.2 - chapter 184 185

apurvam drsyate sarvam svapne svamaragam yatha pragdrstam drstamityeva  
tatraiva `bhyasatah smrtih (184/40)

Kundadanta said:

Memory arises when a past experience is revived in one's consciousness. In the beginning of creation, whose memory expands as this creation?

The Sage replied:

Everything is seen and experienced, even though all this had not been seen or experienced before - even as one may dream of one's own death. The very notion 'This I have seen before', when repeatedly entertained, becomes a memory. In the space of one's own consciousness, the imaginary object appears; it cannot be said that it is real or unreal. It is only by the grace (or the power) of consciousness that even dreams and the like are experienced - how then is it impossible for this pure consciousness to bring about the world-appearance as if it were revived memory? Just as at the end of deep sleep one dreams, even so in the infinite consciousness the three worlds appear. That which is called the world is pure void. What is, and in what it is, and from what it is, that which is all, exists everywhere at all times.

Now, arise, and do what has to be done. I shall resume my contemplation; for, without such contemplation, there is possibility of contact with sorrow.

Kundadanta said:

Having said thus, the sage immediately closed his eyes, and entered into deep contemplation. His life-breath and his mind had ceased to move, and therefore he sat there like a painted picture. We tried to speak to him, but he did not even hear us. We were sorry to lose him. However, we moved away from there, and slowly reached the house.

In course of time, all the seven brothers passed away. Only my friend, the eighth brother, lived. Later, he too passed away. I was overcome by grief. Therefore, once again, I went to that sage at the foot of the Kadamba tree. I waited upon him. After three months, he opened his eyes.

In answer to my prayer, he said to me: "I am devoted to contemplation or samadhi. I cannot stay away from it, even for a moment. The truth does not become clear in you until it is heard again and again, and meditated upon again and again. I shall therefore tell you what to do. Go to Ayodhya. There is a king there known as Dagaratha. His son is Rama. His guru Vasistha is discoursing upon the means to liberation. Listen to this. By that means you will attain supreme peace." Having said this, he once again entered into samadhi. I then came to this place to be with you.

Rama said:

That Kundadanta is sitting next to me and has devoutly heard this discourse on the means to liberation. Today, he is free from all doubts.

## section VI.2 - chapter 185 186

kiledam bhrantimatratma visvam brahmeti bhatyajam bhrantirbrahmaiva ca brahma  
santamekamanamayam (186/3)

Vasistha asked Kundadanta:

Tell us what you have learnt during the course of this discourse.

Kundadanta replied:

Conquest of the mind alone is the destruction of all doubts. I have knowledge in which there is no contradiction. All my doubts are at rest. I am firmly established in the supreme state. I have learnt this from you: the infinite self or consciousness alone exists in the infinite space as this world. Everything exists, in everything, as everything, everywhere, for ever. The whole universe exists in a mustard seed; but, when the reality is known, the universe does not exist in a mustard seed. The universe exists in a house; but the house itself is pure void. It is Brahman or the infinite consciousness alone that appears as all this, and is experienced as all this.

Vasistha continued:

It is wonderful that this great man has attained enlightenment. He has realised perfectly that the whole universe is Brahman.

**It is only through delusion that Brahman is seen as the world. But that delusion also is Brahman which is supreme and infinite peace.** Whatever is, wherever, whenever, and in whatever manner, that is there, and then, and in that manner. Whatever the infinite consciousness considers itself to be, that it appears to be. The entire universe (brahmanda) exists in an atom of the infinite consciousness; hence, an atom itself is the universe. The infinite consciousness is indivisible. When this is realised, there is cessation of the bondage of birth, etc., and that is liberation. Be as you are, free from distress.

You are the object of perception; you are the seer. You are consciousness, and you are inertia. You are something, and you are nothing. Because Brahman rests in itself. There are no two things known as Brahman and the objective universe; they are one like space and void. An intelligent, conscious man, appears to be an insentient and inert person while he sleeps; even so does the infinite consciousness appear to be the insentient objects in this creation. The infinite consciousness later becomes the sentient objects, just as the sleeping man begins to dream. This continues till the person attains liberation and realises that this world-appearance has been a long dream. It is on account of the infinite consciousness's inherent awareness that it considers itself an insentient and immobile being; and it is on account of the same awareness that, elsewhere, it considers itself sentient and mobile. Just as the same person has sentient and apparently insentient limbs, all the sentient and insentient objects of this creation put together form the body of the infinite consciousness.

## section VI.2 - chapter 186

cinnidrayah svapnamayo bhagascittamudahrtam tadeva mucyate bhutam jivo  
devisuradidrk (28)

Vasistha continued:

In the very beginning of creation, whatever dream-like appearance arose in the infinite consciousness, has remained as this creation till now. However, consciousness is indivisible and extremely subtle, and therefore in it there is no diversity, even now. Creation, existence, and dissolution, are non-existent in the vision of the enlightened ones like us. Though the infinite consciousness is indivisible, it experiences within itself the two states of bondage and liberation; the dream-like experience of diversity is known as bondage, and the sleep-like state is liberation. It is the infinite consciousness alone which sees 'This is creation', 'This is dissolution', 'This is waking', and 'This is dreaming'. **If the infinite consciousness is compared to the homogeneous deep sleep state, that part of it which is comparable to a dream, is known as the mind. It is this mind that, as the jiva, sees itself as god, demon etc., and also liberates all beings from such diversity.** When this is realised, the homogeneity of dreamless sleep state is reached; that is considered liberation by those who aspire for liberation.

The mind alone is all this: man, god, demon, trees, and mountains, goblins, birds, and worms. It alone becomes the infinite diversity that is seen here - from Brahma the creator to the pillar. It is the mind that sees the space above. The mind is the dynamic and aggressive form of the infinite consciousness. Thus, when the notion of the universe arises in the infinite consciousness, we think that it is the mind that brought about all this. The mind alone is jiva. It is without beginning and without end. It is like space which seems to occupy pots and jars without being limited by them. It takes on and abandons bodies. But when it realises its own true nature, the deluded notion of physical embodiment ceases.

The mind is like the smallest particle of an atom. The mind is the personality or the jiva. Hence, the world or this creation exists in the person or the jiva. Whatever objects are perceived in this world, are the mind only, even as the dream-objects are the mind only; again, the person or the jiva is also nothing other than the mind. Therefore, it is clear that the world-appearance and the self are non-different.

All these substances that are seen in this universe are in fact pure consciousness; apart from consciousness what is seen is like a dream - just a notion or an idea, like the braceletness of gold.

Such a notion of creation, when it arises in the infinite consciousness, is known as the universe. This phenomenon has been variously described as sankalpa (thought or idea), etc.

## section VI.2 - chapter 186

silanruttam yatha satyam sankalpanagare tatha jagatsankalpanagaram satyam  
brahmana ipsitam (72)

Vasistha continued:

In course of time, by the constant practice of vicara or enquiry, and of equanimity, or by being endowed with purity at birth, perfect knowledge arises in the wise man who sees the reality in everything. Then, his buddhi or awakened intelligence, regains its nature as pure consciousness, devoid of duality. The infinite consciousness is devoid of body, and is unhidden by veils; its only body is its faculty of awareness and its ability to illumine all things. It is through these that consciousness perceives everything that it considers to exist, as a result of the notions that arise in it. This entire universe is an idea that arises in the infinite consciousness. Even so, the self is also able to give rise to different notions within itself, and experience the materialisation of these notions. Thus, boons and curses are also realised as notions that arise in the consciousness, but they are non-different from it. But, if the veil of ignorance has not been removed, and if one still entertains notions of duality or diversity, the boons granted by such a one are ineffective.

Rama asked:

How does an unenlightened but righteous person confer boons?

Vasistha continued:

Whatever Brahma the creator ordained in the beginning of this creation prevails even now. Brahma is non-different from Brahman the infinite consciousness. That Brahma brought into being, through his own thought-force, the standard of righteousness, charity, austerity, good qualities, the vedas and other scriptures, and the five great elements. He also ordained that the utterances (boons, etc.) of the ascetics and the knowers of the vedas should come true. It was Brahma who also ordained the nature of all substances here. Just as we become our own dream-objects while dreaming, consciousness, though it is real and conscious, becomes even the unreal world-appearance with all its sentient and insentient objects. The unreal world-appearance itself is later regarded as real on account of constantly repeated affirmation and conviction of its reality. **When one indulges in day-dreaming, he can even see stone images dance as if they were real; even so, this world-appearance, which appears in Brahman, is thought to be real.**

The seer and the seen are non-different; consciousness is conscious of itself as consciousness. Therefore, it sees whatever it wishes to see. I am the Infinite Brahman, who is the cosmic person, whose body is the world; hence, the world and Brahman are non-different. Just as a conscious being may sometimes be in an unconscious state, even so, the supreme being or the infinite consciousness itself exists as the apparently inert world. In dream there is 'light', in deep sleep there is darkness, though both these are in sleep; even so, both light and darkness seem to exist in the one infinite consciousness.

## section VI.2 - chapter 187

sargo 'yamiti tad buddham ksanam yatkacanam citah kalpk 'yamiti tadbuddham ksanam tatkacanam citah (10)

Rama said:

In this world-appearance with all its bewildering diversity, how does the cosmic order (niyati) function? How is it that the sun of all the celestial bodies is so hot, and who ordained that the days be long some times, and short at other times?

Vasistha replied:

The cosmic order arises and exists in the supreme being or the infinite consciousness by sheer coincidence (as the ripe coconut falls when a crow coincidentally alights on it). The manner in which it is, is known as the universe. Because of the infinity and the omnipotence of consciousness, this cosmic order is seen to be endowed with intelligence. What thus exists is known as the cosmic order, *niyati*.

A momentary movement in consciousness is understood by it as 'This is creation'; when there is a momentary movement of energy in consciousness, it knows it as 'This is an epoch'. Similar movement of energy in consciousness alone is known as time, action, space, substance, etc. Even form, sight, and the thought concerning these are but movement of energy which arises of its own accord in consciousness which is formless. Whatever arises in this manner is known as the character of the respective substance; this has come to be known as the cosmic order.

Essentially, a moment and an epoch are similar movements of energy in the infinite consciousness. They both arise naturally in consciousness, and are therefore regarded as nature or the cosmic order. In this manner, in the one consciousness, countless substances arise with their own characteristics. Thus, for instance, the earth is endowed with solidity and firmness, and is able to support living beings - that is its characteristic in the cosmic order. Even so, it is the same in the case of the five elements, etc., including the sun. Their characteristics arise in the infinite consciousness as a corresponding movement of energy, and they come to be known as the cosmic order. The stellar sphere revolves like a wheel, again on account of the movement of energy that arises in consciousness. In that, some are brilliant, and some less brilliant, and some do not shine at all. Diverse are the characteristics of these diverse objects in this world-appearance. In reality, however, these have not really been created as objects. It is the infinite consciousness alone that appears as all these. The manner in which they appear to exist, as long as they do exist, is known as nature or the cosmic order, *niyati*.

## section VI.2 - chapter 187

yatha 'vayavino na 'ntah sadaiva 'vayavanavah na 'stam yanti na codyanti  
jagantyatmapade tatha (33)

Vasistha continued:

Within the infinite space is the root-element of sound hidden, like a sprout in a seed. From this, foolish people have spun theories concerning a material creation for the entertainment of other fools. Nothing ever comes into being, nor does anything cease to be; what is, exists firmly established in the supreme peace like the centre of a rock. **Just as in the case of one who has limbs and organs there is constant renewal of the cells (atoms) constituting those organs endlessly, even so there is no end to the existence of universes in the supreme being.**

The infinite consciousness becomes aware of a part of its own being, and thus awareness arises in it. This is followed by the notion of relationship, the word and its corresponding object. Since this awareness is endowed with the faculty to observe and examine what it observes, it is recognised as consciousness.

Out of this mass of consciousness arise jiva and all the rest of it. However, at this stage it is still not individualised, for want of ignorance. But when ignorance arises in it, then it is turned towards samsara. It is filled with the unborn elements. At this stage, the ego-sense or individualisation arises, along with the sense of time. This is the vital factor in the existence of the world.

It is the consciousness itself that thus becomes individualised. In it arises the notion of the root-element of space. With it also appear its relationship, the word (its name), and the meaning (the object). From this arise later all the other elements and the fourteen worlds.

The consciousness then entertains the notion of motion. This motion is air, with its corresponding action, as the sense of touch and the life of all beings. Similarly, the light that shines in consciousness is the root-element of form which bestows form on all beings. The experience of seeing is light, the experience of touch is the sense of touch, the experience of hearing is the sense of hearing. Even so the root-elements responsible for taste and smell arise. Though unreal as independent substances, they appear to be real as in a dream. All these later compound with one another, and create gross forms, etc. They are but the materialisation of notions or ideas that arise in the infinite consciousness, not real entities.

That by which form is seen is known as eye, that by which sound is heard is known as ear, that by which touch is experienced is known as skin, that by which taste is experienced is known as the tongue, that by which smell is experienced is known as nose (or their corresponding inner sense, rather than the organ). On account of spatial and temporal limitations, the jiva gets involved in the cosmic order, and is unable to experience everything.

## section VI.2 - chapter 188

evamatyantavitata sampanne drsyavibhrame na kincidapi sampannam sarvasunyam  
tatam yatah (20)

Vasistha continued:

The expression 'in the beginning', used as if there were such a beginning of such a creation of even a notion, is meant only for the purpose of instruction; it is not true. The notion which arises in consciousness, but which is non-different from consciousness itself, is known as jiva when it is outgoing to perceive the 'object' .

This notion or concept has several names and descriptions. Because, through it, consciousness becomes a living entity, it is known as jiva. Because it is conscious of the object, it is known as consciousness (cit). Because it designates all things as 'This is this', it is known as buddhi (designating intelligence). Because it thinks of concepts and percepts, it is known as the mind (manas). Because it considers itself 'I am', it is known as ego-sense (ahamkara). Because it is rich in consciousness, it is known as citta (psyche). Because it forms a network of firm notions, it is known as the purustaka. Because it arises in the beginning of creation, it is known as prakrti (nature). Because it is not known (i.e., it ceases) when one attains enlightenment, it is known as ignorance (avidya). All these descriptions are based on the existence of the subtle (ativahika) body. Though this illusory world-appearance has thus been described, it does not exist.

The ativahika body is but a subtle void. It does not arise, and therefore has no need to cease. Yet, in the field known as the infinite consciousness, countless universes will continue to appear. The subtle mental body reflects the universe as a mirror reflects an object placed in front of it.

At the end of the period following the cosmic dissolution, the supreme being thinks of the subtle (ativahika) body which arises in the infinite consciousness. This subtle body thinks of itself as Brahma, Virat, Visnu, etc. Whatever the subtle body identifies itself with, that it appears to be. **Though all these diverse entities seem to have been created, it is only an optical illusion. For, nothing is ever created. Everything is but pure void which pervades all.** The beginningless Brahman alone exists. However, on account of the fact that this cosmic subtle body entertains the notion that it experiences this diversity, such diversity seems to be uncontradicted truth.

In this ativahika (subtle) body, there arise the thoughts or concepts of physical bodies and their component parts, concepts of birth, activity, etc., concepts of time, space, sequence, etc., as also concepts of old age, death, virtue and defect, knowledge, etc. Having conjured up these concepts, the subtle body itself experiences the objective universe composed of the five elements as if it existed in reality. But all this is surely illusory, like dream-objects and dream-experiences.

## section VI.2 - chapter 189

asatye satyabuddhyaiva baddho bhavati bhavanat bahuso  
bhavayatyantarnanatvamanudhavati (13)

Vasistha continued:

The cosmic subtle (ativahika) body that arose as the creator Brahma by sheer coincidence (just as a ripe coconut falls when a crow alights on it), continues to exist on account of the inherent nature of consciousness. It itself is the universe. The seer, the seen, and the act of seeing, are all unreal. Or, if they are all considered real, even then they are all Brahman, and Brahman alone is real.

The cosmic subtle body arises of its own accord and that itself becomes a solid substance by being constantly thought of as such, even as a dream may appear to be real when it is prolonged. Thus, even materiality or substantiality arises of its own accord from the subtle (ativahika) body. 'I am this', 'I am that' - thus the notions that arise in that body appear as mountains and the various directions, but all this is mere delusion, appearance, or optical illusion. When the ativahika body is thought of as material or physical substance by the creator Brahma, such materiality arises.

Consciousness considers itself as Brahma the creator; it considers, 'This is body' and 'This is the support for the body', and thus creates a relationship between the body and the support, which thereafter becomes a bondage. **When there is the notion of reality in unreal phenomena, there is bondage. When many such notions arise, then diversity is brought into being.**

That person then utters sounds, makes gestures, and indicates whatever he wishes to convey. He sings the mantras of the veda after uttering Om. Soon he engages himself in diverse activities with the help of all these. He is of the nature of the mind and whatever he thinks, that he experiences. It cannot be difficult for one to see his own nature, and that which has arisen in him on account of his own nature. However, when he thus perceived the notion of the world within himself, soon it became a solid reality. Though this physical and material universe is but a long dream or magic product, it shines as if it is true in the subtle body or Brahma the creator.

Hence, it is clear that the physical or material universe does not exist at any time anywhere. The subtle body itself appears to be the solid body, on account of the notion of such solidity arising in it repeatedly. Its very source is unreal. The sole reality in all this is Brahman. There is naught here but Brahman.

## section VI.2 - chapter 190

jnanasya jneyata nasti kevalam jnanamavyayam avacyamiti bodho 'ntah  
samyajnanamiti smrtam (5)

Vasistha continued: When knowledge becomes the object of knowing, it is known as bondage. Liberation is when knowledge ceases to be such an object of knowing.

Rama asked: How does the firm conviction that knowledge is the object of knowing come to an end?

Vasistha said: When there is full awakening, the dullness of intelligence comes to an end. Then, liberation, which is formless, peaceful, and real, comes into being. Rama said: What is that perfect awakening which is perfect knowledge and by which a living being here is freed from bondage?

Vasistha said: **Knowledge does not have an object to know. Knowledge is independent and eternal; it is beyond description and definition. When this truth is directly realised, there is perfect knowledge.**

Rama said: What is the division that arises between knowledge and the object of knowing? In what sense do we use the word 'knowledge' ?

Vasistha said: Full awakening or enlightenment is jnana or knowledge. Its contemplation is the means to such awakening. There is in reality no division between knowledge and the object of knowing.

Rama said: If that is so, how has this deluded vision of knowledge and the object of knowing arisen in the first place and become firmly rooted?

Vasistha said: It is on account of the deluded belief that there is something other than knowledge, something outside of itself, that the division has arisen. In fact, there is nothing either inside or outside.

Rama said: All this that seems to be obvious - I, you, etc., and all these elements, and the diverse beings that we surely experience - how can it be accepted that they do not exist?

Vasistha said: The cosmic person or virat and the cosmos, etc., did not in fact come into being at the very beginning of creation. Hence, there has never been an 'object of seeing' at any time whatsoever.

## section VI.2 - chapter 190

evam cettanmahabaho jnaptireva jagattrayam vibuddhajrianadehasya kuto maranajanmana (21)

Rama asked: This world was, is and will be, and it is experienced every day. How can it be said that it was never created?

Vasistha replied: This world-appearance is unreal even as the following are unreal, though they appear to be real: the dream-objects, water in the mirage, the second moon when one is suffering from diplopia and castles in the air.

Rama asked: How can it be said that 'I', 'you', etc., did not arise at all, even in the very beginning of creation?

Vasistha replied: An effect arises from a cause, not otherwise. During the state of cosmic dissolution preceding the assumed creation, there is supreme peace in which there is no cause for the creation of a universe.

Rama said: Even during the state of cosmic dissolution, surely the unborn and eternal being remains. Why can it not be regarded as the cause of this creation?

Vasistha replied: Whatever is in the cause, that alone is found in the effect. Something which is unreal does not arise in the real. A piece of cloth is not produced with the help of a pot.

Rama said: Perhaps this whole creation exists in a subtle state in Brahman the infinite consciousness during the cosmic dissolution, and perhaps that alone manifests itself during the next creation.

Vasistha replied: Who has experienced the truth of that assumption and so why repose faith in such a speculation?

Rama said: Surely the knowers of the truth have experienced in that state that there is pure and infinite consciousness. Of course, space was non-existent then. The 'real' and material world can obviously not spring from void.

Vasistha said: **If that is so, then surely the three worlds are nothing but pure consciousness. To one whose body is of pure consciousness, there is neither birth or death.**

Rama asked: Then, pray, tell me how has this world-illusion arisen at all?

Vasistha replied: In the absence of cause and effect, there is neither being or non being. How does this 'object of perception' arise then? It does not; the self itself thinks of itself, and experiences itself as the object of perception. All this is but consciousness, and naught else.

## section VI.2 - chapter 190

karanabhavato rama nastyeya khalu vibhramah sarvam tvamahamityadi  
santakamanamayamam (31)

Rama asked: The inert 'object of perception' thinks ! The Lord, who is the seer of all, becomes the object. How is all this possible? Is it possible for wood to burn fire?

Vasistha replied: The seer does not become the object of perception, because the latter does not exist. The seer alone is all this - the one mass of consciousness.

Rama asked: The infinite consciousness becomes aware of consciousness as its object within itself, and thus does this world-appearance come into being. How does the object arise?

Vasistha replied: For want of a cause, the object does not arise at all. Therefore, consciousness is ever free and ever indescribable and indefinable.

Rama asked: If that is so, how do the ego-sense and such other categories arise? How does one experience the world?

Vasistha replied: For want of a cause, none of these things ever arises. Where is the object of perception? All the so-called created objects are but illusions of perception.

Rama asked: In this pure consciousness, which is free from movement, and therefore free from the awareness of an object, how does illusion arise?

Vasistha replied: **O Rama, for want of a cause, there is no illusion either. All this (I, you, and all the rest of it) is the one infinite peace.**

Rama asked: Lord, I am bewildered and I do not know what to ask now. I am totally awakened or enlightened; what shall I ask now?

Vasistha replied: In the absence of a cause for any of this, do not enquire into the cause ('why'). Then you will easily rest in the supreme, indescribable reality.

Rama said: I accept that, for want of a cause, there has never been a creation. But to whom does this confusion concerning knowledge and its object arise?

Vasistha replied: For want of a cause, and also because the one infinite peace alone exists, there is no illusion either. You do not rest in that peace, because you have not repeatedly contemplated this truth.

Rama asked: How does contemplation arise, and what is non-contemplation? Again, we are caught in the same trap.

Vasistha replied: In fact, there is no illusion in the infinite. However, because consciousness is infinite and indiminishable, the concept of repeated contemplation of this truth arises in it.

## section VI.2 - chapter 190

bodhena bodhatameti bodhasabdastu bodhyatam bhavadvisayameva 'yamucito na  
'smadadisu (43)

Rama asked: If all this is the one infinite peace, what is the meaning of the words 'teacher' and 'student', and how does this duality arise?

Vasistha replied: The 'teacher' and the 'student' are all Brahman existing in Brahman. To the enlightened, there is neither bondage nor liberation.

Rama asked: If the diversity of time, space, matter, energy, and all the rest of it, do not exist, then how has the concept of the oneness of this diversity come into being?

Vasistha replied: The diversity of time, space, matter, energy (action), and experiencing, exist only in non-existent ignorance. There is no concept independent of this.

Rama asked: If the duality of 'teacher' and 'student' is false, then what is awakening or enlightenment?

Vasistha replied: **By awakening, awakening is attained; and the concept of 'awakening' is clearly understood. Of course, all this is comprehensible only to people like you, not to us.**

Rama asked: When thus enlightenment itself is related to the ego-sense, then it itself becomes other than enlightenment. How can such division exist to the pure, indivisible consciousness?

Vasistha replied: The light of the enlightened itself is self-awareness. The apparent division or duality is like the wind and its movement.

Rama said: If that is the truth, then is it not possible to accept the experience of diversity (the knower, the knowledge, and the object of knowledge), on the basis of the analogy that the ocean and the waves are non-different?

Vasistha replied: If that is accepted, then there is no defect in division, though the truth is that the reality is one indivisible consciousness.

Rama said: Lord, in whom does ego-sense arise, and who experiences this world-appearance or illusion?

Vasistha replied: The conviction in the reality of the object of experience alone is bondage. It is enough to know that the object does not exist. Since consciousness is all, there is neither bondage nor liberation.

Rama said: A lamp illumines objects which are seen. Even so, consciousness illumines the objects outside which are real?

Vasistha replied: The external world has no cause for its creation. An effect does not arise without a cause. Hence, it is illusory perception.

## section VI.2 - chapter 190

yathabhutarthavijnanad bhrantimatratmani sthite pindagrahavimuktte  
'smindrasyacakre kramatksayah (61)

Rama said: Whether it is considered real or unreal, a nightmare causes sorrow while it lasts. Even so is the world-appearance. By what means can we overcome it?

Vasistha replied: Just as the nightmare, and the sorrow caused by it, cease when one wakes up, the sorrow caused by the perception of the world-illusion ceases when one wakes up from that illusion, and consequently refrains from acquiring and clinging to the objects of the world.

Rama asked: How does one attain the object of one's happiness? Also, how does the solidity of the objects of this world-dream come to an end?

Vasistha replied: By examining the 'before' and the 'after', the solidity of substances ceases. By the contemplation of the truth that it is even so in dream, the belief in the grossness of these substances ceases.

Rama asked: When such belief has weakened, what does one see? How does this world-illusion cease in his vision?

Vasistha replied: In his vision, the unreal world-appearance has the character of a castle in the air, or a painting which has been washed by rain - his mind is free from vasana or psychological conditioning.

Rama asked: What happens to him after that?

Vasistha replied: The world-appearance, which exists as a mere notion, fades away. Soon, he is totally free from limitations and conditioning.

Rama asked: Surely this conditioning has gained deep roots on account of being revived in very many life-times; how does it cease?

Vasistha replied: **By the realisation of the truth that all objects and substances exist in the self or the infinite consciousness as perverted notions, his hold on those substances (and vice versa) comes to an end. The wheel of samsara stops by and by.**

Rama asked: What happens then, and how does he attain peace?

Vasistha replied: When thus the illusion of solidity of the objects has ceased, and even the effort at restraining that illusion has ceased, all reliance on the world comes to an end.

Rama asked: When this world-appearance exists as an idea in a child's mind, why does its cessation not cause sorrow?

Vasistha replied: How does sorrow arise when an imaginary object is lost? Hence, as long as there are thoughts, notions, concepts, and percepts in the mind, one should be engaged in enquiry into their nature.

## section VI.2 - chapter 190

citascetyonmukhatvam yattaccittamiti kathyate vicara esa eva 'sya vasana  
'nena samyati (67)

Rama asked: What is the mind (cittam); how does one enquire into its nature, and what is the fruit of such enquiry?

Vasistha replied: **Consciousness, becoming aware of itself as an object, is known as cittam (mind). Enquiry is what you are doing now. By this, mental conditioning comes to an end.**

Rama asked: How is it possible for this cittam to be unconditioned so that nirvana maybe attained?

Vasistha replied: Surely, an object or mental conditioning is not a reality. Hence, the cittam too is not a real entity.

Rama said: But we do experience its existence!

Vasistha replied: The world is not what it appears in the eyes of the ignorant; what is real in the eyes of the enlightened is indescribable.

Rama said: What is the vision of the ignorant? And why is it indescribable in the eyes of the enlightened?

Vasistha replied: The ignorant perceive the world as having a beginning and an end. The enlightened do not see it at all, for it has not been created at all, and hence does not exist.

Rama said: But how is it that we experience its existence?

Vasistha replied: It is experienced as an object is experienced in a dream when it does not exist in truth.

Rama asked: But, then, it is because of the previous experience in the wake state that the dream-object is experienced.

Vasistha said: Are these two experiences related to the same object?

Rama replied: On account of the impressions created in the mind by the waking state, only such experiences appear in dream.

Vasistha said: In that case, why is it that the house that was destroyed in sleep is seen to exist the next morning?

Rama said: Of course, the waking state reality is not real during dream. What appears then is consciousness (Brahman). But how does that which had not been before come into being?

Vasistha replied: It is pure consciousness that shines at all times as if all this had been experienced before, whether or not this is the case.

Rama asked: Lord, how is this illusion got rid of?

Vasistha replied: Enquire, "How can this samsara appear to exist, when it has no cause to come into being?"

Rama said: The mind (cittam) is the support for the dream-objects, and hence are mind only. Even so is the world.

Vasistha said: The mind is non-different from the mass of pure consciousness. There is naught else.

Rama said: Just as the body is not different from the limbs it is composed of, even so the universe is non-different from Brahman.

Vasistha said: Hence, the world has not been created at all. It is the eternal Brahman.

Rama said: I realise that the illusion of the creation and dissolution of the world is a pure coincidence, accompanied by illusory notions of 'I am doer' and 'I experience'.

## section VI.2 - chapter 191

ekaiva cit trayam bhutva sargadau bhati sargavat esa eva svabhavo 'sya  
yadevam bhati bhasura (10)

Rama said:

Lord, this world is filled with the supreme reality at all times and in all ways; hence, it does not arise nor does it cease. The world-appearance is an illusion; but whether it is regarded as an illusion or not, it is in reality Brahman only.

Vasistha said:

Brahman shines in itself as itself coincidentally (just as a ripe coconut falls when a crow happens to alight on it), and that is known, by itself, and in itself, as this creation.

Rama said:

Lord, tell me, how does the light of the infinite consciousness shine before the creation commences and after the creation has been dissolved, and how does it shine with a division?

Vasistha said:

Behold the light of consciousness, within yourself, by your self. Light is experienced only in relation to another. Since, in the beginning, there was no such division or duality, let this light be experienced within yourself. This light itself is the seer, sight, and the seen (object), just like the dream experience. That light of consciousness itself shines in the beginning of creation as that creation. **The one consciousness shines as the three (the subject, the object, and the experience), and, in the beginning of creation, it appears to be creation. Such is its very nature that it shines as it shines.**

Such is the experience also of dreams and daydreams or hallucinations; the light of consciousness thus shines in these also. What shines as the world in space, without beginning and without end, is this light of consciousness. The emanation of its light shines as these universes.

This light of consciousness shines naturally in us, the enlightened ones, without the division of the subject and the object. In the beginning of creation, however, there was no subject and there was no object. Somehow this ignorant division has arisen like the false appearance of a man in a tree trunk. On account of this perception of division in the beginning, such a division has continued to be experienced. But, since there is no cause for such a division, it is clear that even now only the light of consciousness shines as all this.

There is neither a waking state, nor a dream state, nor even a deep sleep state. Throughout it is only Brahman that shines from the very beginning of creation. That Brahman considers this universe as its own body; what is known as the world, is non-different from Brahman.

## section VI.2 - chapter 192

kutu asiditi mune na 'tra prasno virajate sata eva vicarena labho bhavati na 'satah (15)

Rama said:

Alas, for a long time we have roamed this infinite space, without knowing the reality, and deluded. This illusion of world-appearance vanishes when one is awakened and enlightened. Then one realises that it has never been, it is not, and it will never be. All this is pure consciousness and supreme peace; it exists as the infinite.

All this is indeed the supreme consciousness, which appeared to us to be samsara, because we had not rightly understood its nature. It is the supreme being itself that appears as the object of such statements as 'This is 'different', 'It shines like this', 'These are worlds', and 'These are mountains'.

In the beginning of creation, at the commencement of one's life in the other world, and at the beginning of a dream or of a reverie, it is consciousness alone that arises as its own object; how could there be another? More is the notion, 'I am in heaven or I am in hell'; one experiences that as a fact.

There is no seer, no object, no creation, no world, and not even consciousness; no waking, nor dreaming, nor sleep. What seems to be, is also unreal. If one enquires, "How has this illusory perception of unreality come into being", such an enquiry is inappropriate; an illusion is not a reality. Illusion does not arise in consciousness, which is incorruptible. Hence, what appears to be illusion, is also consciousness.

Illusory perception arises on account of non-understanding, like one's death in a dream; when one enquires into the nature of the reality, the illusion vanishes. It is like the fear of ghosts that exists in the mind of a young boy: it becomes deep-rooted when there is no enquiry, but, on enquiry, it ceases.

Hence, **the question 'How has the unreal come into being' is improper; there is meaning only in enquiry concerning the reality, not the unreal.** That which is not realised, when enquired into, is unreal; and, if it is experienced to be real, such experience is delusion. When a certain thing is not to be found after intense and protracted enquiry, it is surely unreal like the barren woman's son.

But, then, the unreal does not exist at all, at any time. Therefore, all this is pervaded and permeated by the mass of consciousness without any veils. What shines as the world is but the supreme being; and the supreme being alone exists in the supreme being. There is no light, and there is no darkness. The supreme being alone exists as whatever exists.

## section VI.2 - chapter 193 194

na buddhya buddhyate bodho bodhabuddherna bodhyate na buddhyate va tena 'pi  
bodhyo bodhah katham bhavet (194111 )

Rama said:

That reality, which is beginningless and endless, and which even the gods and the sages do not know, that reality alone shines; what is 'world' and what is 'object' ? Enough of this confusing argumentation concerning unity and diversity. That which was in the beginning, that peace is unchanging. Just as there is space (distance) in space, there is this creation in Brahman, the infinite consciousness. When this realisation arises in the jiva, this goblin known as samsara is set at rest, though it may still appear to be. When the sun of ignorance sets, then the heat of sorrow ceases, and the daylight known as conviction in the reality of samsara, comes to an end. Freed from ignorance, the knower of the truth engages himself in all kinds of activity as part of this pattern of birth, death, and old age etc., and continues to be, though in truth he is not.

There is no ignorance here, no delusion, no sorrow, nor pleasure. Knowledge and ignorance, pleasure and pain, are all Brahman alone. In the light of knowledge, it is realised as Brahman; in the absence of knowledge, there is nothing which can be designated as non-Brahman. I am enlightened, and all my perverse thoughts have been set at rest. I am at peace and equanimous. I am that, and I see this world as pure void. Prior to enlightenment Brahman was, but as self-ignorance; now the same Brahman is as self-knowledge. As knowledge or as ignorance, as known or as unknown, Brahman alone is at all times, just as the sky is one though it is void, it is undivided and it is blue.

I am nirvana. I am free from doubt. I am free. I am blissful. I am as I am as the infinite. I am the all at all times, or I am nothing and at peace. I am the one reality, and I am not. Wonderful is this supreme peace. What is to be gained has been gained. The perception of the objects has been abandoned. True enlightenment has dawned, and it shall never set again.

The enlightened intelligence experiences whatever there is as it is. Countless universes arise and disappear in the infinite consciousness all the time. Some are seen by some, and others are not. Who can count their number? The distinction between the organs and the organism is arbitrary and verbal; even so is that between Brahman and the universe. The former alone is; the latter is not. When this is realised, there is cessation of cravings, and supreme peace, which is nirvana.

**This enlightenment is not brought about by buddhi or intellect. Nor is it attained by the suppression of the intellect. Enlightenment is not aware of itself, for it is not an object of awareness.**

## section VI.2 - chapter 194

etavadeva bodhasya bodhatvam yadvitrsnata pandityam nama tanmaurkhyam yatra  
nasti vitrsnata (34)

Rama continued:

The awakening or the enlightenment happens by itself, just like the sun's brilliance at noon. All cravings and desires come to an end in the awakened person; therefore, nirvana arises in him without his desiring it. He is forever engaged in meditation, he is always established in his own real nature; therefore, he does not seek anything or reject anything. Like a lamp in whose light all actions take place, and in which the lamp itself is not interested, he lives and acts, but is free from volition.

The infinite consciousness alone is; it is manifest as creation, and it is otherwise known as Brahma. He who sees this, is at peace. All objects in this universe are in fact non-different from this infinite consciousness. Beyond this, the knowers of truth rest in the infinite consciousness alone; but that is indescribable and indefinable. Even expressions like 'That alone is' are inadequate and misleading.

This samsara is full of sorrow; nirvana is absolute coolness. The latter alone is the reality; the former is not. Like the uncarved figures that exist in a piece of wood, this samsara exists in the infinite consciousness - which is indivisible, but experienced diversely by diverse beings, each of whom carves out of it, as it were, what he desires - whether it is pleasure or liberation. However, all these are in essence the reality itself, even as the carved figures are in essence non-different from the wood. The life or death of relatives seen in a dream has no effect on oneself after awakening from sleep; even so, the enlightened ones are unaffected by the world appearance.

When all this is seen as the one infinite consciousness, there is no room for delusion. There is cessation of craving. Cessation of craving intensifies awakening or enlightenment; and the latter intensifies the cessation of craving. **The hall-mark of enlightenment is this cessation of craving. When the latter is absent, there is no enlightenment, but scholasticity, which is in fact ignorance or viciousness.** If these two do not promote each other, then they are obviously unreal and absent. The perfect cessation of craving born of the perfect enlightenment itself is known as liberation. When this is attained, one does not grieve, even though continuing to live.

For one who rests in his own self, and rejoices in the self, in whom cravings have ceased, and ego-sense is absent, life becomes non-volitional, and there is perfect purity. One in millions, however, is able to reach this unconditioned state of pure being.

## section VI.2 - chapter 195

prabuddhasyaiva ya pumsah silajatharavatsthitih santau vyavahrtau va 'pi sa  
'mala mukttatocyate (4)

Vasistha said:

Bravo, O Rama, you have attained enlightenment. Your words have the power of enlightenment. The unreality, which seems to exist here, disappears when it is not conceived or thought of. This supreme peace is nirvana, and this is the supreme truth. **That state in which the enlightened one exists as if he lives in the very centre of a rock, whether he is alone and at rest, or engaged in diverse activities - that is the state of purity, and that is liberation.** We live in that state, O Rama, though we are constantly engaged in diverse activity. You, too, rest in that state, and carry on your work.

Now, O Rama, please tell me how you realise that this world, though it seems to be so real, is non-existent.

Rama replied:

This world has not been created, even at the very beginning. How then can be it considered to exist now? It has no cause; how can an effect be without a cause? Change implies the cessation of one state, and the arising of the subsequent state. This is impossible in the changeless reality. If this world is an illusory appearance that is imagined to exist in Brahman, then it is only an illusion. In a dream, a moment is experienced as a lifetime; even so, in this world-appearance, time is experienced along with the sun and the moon, on which time is based.

In the infinite consciousness, there is this notion of creation with all its corollaries - time, space, etc. This non-entity appears to function and that, too, is false. The accidental arising of this notion appears to persist, and become deep-rooted.

Or, it has to be considered real. How can the false ever even appear to exist? Or, perhaps there is no such thing as the real, and nothing as unreal. Whatever is, is. That which is, is clear as the sky, full as the centre of a rock, silent, and peaceful as the stone, and infinite. Such is the creation. For, this creation exists in the pure, infinite consciousness, which is the reality of all thoughts and concepts, which together form the subtle body, as it were, of the infinite consciousness. The pure experiencing or awareness that arises in that 'body' is known as this creation. Thus, this creation itself is Brahman.

In the supreme being itself does the 'other' (creation) exist; the latter belongs to the former, and is non-different from it. It is therefore supreme peace itself. There is neither a creation nor movement nor activity. When dream is realised as dream, the false notion vanishes. Awareness drops its object (the world) and rests in the infinite consciousness.

## section VI.2 - chapter 195

brahmano 'ntarjagattaivam jagattaivopalabhyate asti cettad bhavennityam sa  
brahmaiva 'vikari tat (35)

Vasistha asked:

Why should we not assume that, just as the seed is the cause for the sprout, Brahman is the cause for the creation?

Rama replied:

The sprout in the seed is not seen as sprout, but only as seed. Hence, it is only seed. **In the same way, if this world exists in Brahman, it is only Brahman, and not the world; and Brahman undergoes no change.** Since Brahman is unchanging and formless, it is impossible to accept that it gives rise to the world, which is changing, and which is endowed with form. To say that this creation exists in the indivisible Brahman, just as a gem lies in the box, is meaningless prattle. The theory that the supreme Brahman is the support for the universe, which has a form, is also unacceptable; for, that which has a form, must perish. The concept that this world is but the dream-object that has thus materialised, is unacceptable, for the dream-objects are those which have been experienced by oneself. However, the waking and the dream realities belong to two different planes; for, the person whose death was dreamed of, is seen on waking up from dream. Thus the world has not been created, even as a dream-object; but, just as the dream-object is only consciousness, even so, all that is seen as the world, is only the infinite consciousness.

There is naught known as 'real', 'unreal', 'experiencer', nor 'experience', nor are these experienced. Whatever is, is indescribable. In the infinite consciousness, all distinctions between 'being' and 'non-being' vanish. Brahman exists as Brahman in Brahman, just as space exists as space in space. This what is known as creation is the indivisible Brahman only. Just as the seed that has been sown, begins to sprout, the movement in Brahman becomes capable of being described. All beings in the universe appear to me to be enlightened. To those who consider it real, this world appears to be real; to those who are endowed with self-knowledge, it is a false appearance. In fact, it is Brahman only.

In the vision of the knowers of the reality, all that exists (both the sentient and the insentient, the mobile and the immobile) is pure void. I am void, you are void, the universe is pure void. I salute the best of all beings, who is like the limitless space, with the knowledge that is like the limitless space, and which is free from subject-object (knower and knowable) relationship. You have transcended all the states described in the scriptures, and you remain established in the supreme non-dual consciousness.

This supreme truth is established only in total silence, not by logic, discussion, and argumentation.

## section VI.2 - chapter 196 197

darvarthamudyato bhavi yatha sampraptavanmanim bhogarthamattasastro 'yam  
tatha 'pnoti janah padam (197/6)

Rama said:

Thus, O sage, it is dear that self-knowledge is beyond the reach of the jugglery of words. How is it attained by the conflicting statements of scriptures? If it is not so attained, what is the use of these scriptures? Pray, tell me whether self-knowledge follows the instruction of the preceptor and the study of scriptures.

Vasistha said:

It is true, O Rama, that the study of the scriptures is not the cause for the attainment of self-knowledge. Scriptures are composed of diverse expressions; the supreme being is indescribable. However, I shall explain to you how the study of scriptures has come to be associated with self-knowledge.

The people of a certain village had been subjected to continued misfortune. They were starving and dying. Oppressed by poverty and misery, they began to consider ways and means of earning their livelihood. They decided that they would go into a nearby forest, gather firewood, sell it, and earn a living.

Thus they earned their living from day to day. In that forest, they found also precious stones, which lay sometimes hidden and sometimes in the open. Of the people who went to the forest for firewood, some found these precious stones, others had excellent sandalwood, others found fruits, and yet others were unfortunate even there, and found only useless firewood. Of them, they who obtained the precious stones, were freed from poverty and sorrow immediately.

As they were thus engaged in gathering firewood and making a living, one day, they found the philosopher's stone (which fulfils everyone's wishes). They obtained with its help all that they needed and desired, and lived happily for ever after. They were looking for firewood, but they eventually obtained the most precious philosopher's stone.

The villagers, in this parable, are the people of the earth. Their poverty is the worst of all poverty - that is ignorance - which is the cause of all sorrow. The forest in the parable is the spiritual preceptor and the scripture. They went to the forest for the fulfilment of their needs; people resort to the preceptor and the scripture for the fulfilment of their needs. However, in course of time, by the practice of the precepts of the preceptor and the scripture, they attain something more precious. **They who went to the forest to gather firewood got the philosopher's stone. People who resort to the scriptures for the fulfilment of their desires, attain the supreme truth.**

## section VI.2 - chapter 197

vargatrayopadeso hi sastradisvasti raghava brahmapraptistvavacyatvannasti  
tacchasanesvapi (15)

Vasistha continued:

Some people are impelled by curiosity or by doubt - what can the study of the scriptures do? - to study the scriptures; others seek to find the key to prosperity and pleasure in them; yet others study the scriptures motivated by other considerations - and just as the villagers who went to the forest to gather firewood obtained the philosopher's stone, they who study the scriptures for various reasons, obtain the supreme truth. In all this, the people are guided by the conduct of the saintly ones, who are devoted to the welfare of humanity. The people see that these saints do not use the scriptures for other than the highest spiritual gain, though they do study the scriptures. Inspired by them, people study the scriptures.

Just as some of the villagers obtained sandalwood, etc., in the forest, even so, among those who study scriptures, some attain pleasure, others wealth, and yet others guidance in right conduct. **Only these three are expounded in the scriptures; the attainment of the realisation of Brahman is beyond description, and therefore it is not found in the teachings of the scriptures.**

Not by the study of the scriptures, nor by hearing the instructions of a preceptor, nor by charity, nor even by the worship of god, is the direct realisation of the supreme truth attained. Because that is beyond all these. However, I shall tell you how these, though not the actual means, have come to be regarded as the means to self-realisation. By the practice of the precepts of the scriptures, the mind becomes pure and transparent; then, without even wishing for it, one sees the supreme truth. The scripture promotes the satvika part of ignorance, which is purity of mind. This purity destroys the tamasic (dull) part of ignorance.

By its very appearance in the sky, the sun is reflected in the ocean, without either of them desiring this. Even so, by the simple coming together of the scripture and the seeker, the truth is reflected in the latter. A child with muddy hand picks up more mud, and rubs the hands together and washes them; the hands are clean now. Even so, the scripture purifies the mind, and the clean mind reflects the truth.

There is light everywhere in the sky, but it is only when light meets with an obstruction that it is able to illumine; even so, when the scripture (or the guru) meets the seeker, there is illumination. Hence, the supreme truth is realised when one contemplates the real meaning of the scriptures with the aid of the words of the preceptor, satsanga (holy company), self-discipline, and control of the mind.

## section VI.2 - chapter 198

yadyatha tattatha yena kriyate drsyate taya anandodvegamukttena kastam  
tolayitum ksamah (19)

Vasistha continued:

Once again, I shall tell you something, O Rama, to which please lend your ear. By repeatedly listening to the truth, even an ignorant person is awakened.

To begin with, I expounded the sthiti prakaranam, in which the truth concerning the creation of this universe was revealed. After that, I expounded in the upasanti prakaranam, the means by which this world-illusion might be dispelled. After thus getting rid of this world-illusion, one should live here free from all mental agitation and distress.

One should live in this world fully established in the state of equanimity, which confers all blessings, and which bestows the highest consolation, which is the greatest wealth, and which enhances one's good fortune. Equanimity enables purity to grow. All other noble virtues follow this one. None of the blessings and wealth in the world is comparable to equanimity. It puts an end to all sorrow. Rare are those souls who are established in equanimity, to whom all are friends.

To one who is established in equanimity, sorrow is happiness, and death is new life. **Who can measure the greatness of one who is free from exultation and depression, who does what has to be done, when it has to be done, and how it is to be done, and who sees what is to be seen, as it is.** Friends and relations, enemies and kings, have the greatest trust in one who thus lives a natural life. In the course of such natural living, even if he should become angry, it does not hurt anyone. The people applaud whatever he does, and whatever he eats, even if he overpowers another or reprimands another - for he is established in equanimity. They applaud whatever he does now, or whatever he did long ago, whether good or not so good.

They who are established in equanimity, do not experience despair, whether they are subjected to happiness or to great unhappiness.

There follow brief references to some great men who gladly sacrificed themselves for the good of others, and who were totally unaffected by the worst calamities: the king Faibi, the king whose wife was insulted in his presence, Yudhisthira, the king of Trigarta, the king Janaka, the king of Salva, Sauvira, Kandapa, the demon of Kadamba forest, Jada Bharata, the noble hunter, the sage Kapardana. Two factors are important: (1) these exemplars of equanimity come from different walks of life, and (2) historically, many of them came after the period of Rama.

All of them had attained equanimity, and therefore they came to be adored even by the gods, though they were kings as well as ordinary men. Hence, one should attain equanimity in all conditions of life, pleasant and unpleasant, in honour and dishonour.

## section VI.2 - chapter 199

heyopadeyadrsti dye yasya ksine hi tasya vai kriyatyagena ko 'rthah  
syatkriyasamsrayanena va (2)

Rama asked:

When these sages are constantly immersed in the bliss of self-knowledge, why do they not abandon all activities?

Vasistha replied:

**They have abandoned all notions of 'This is desirable' and 'This is undesirable'. In their case, therefore, both the abandonment of action and the performance of action are meaningless.** Therefore, they do what has to be done, how it has to be done.

Rama, as long as there is life, so long the body lives and moves and functions. Let this continue - why should one desire otherwise? When somehow something has to be done at all times, why not do what is right? Whatever one does with a pure and clear mind which rests in equanimity, is right and appropriate, never defective. Amongst us, O Rama, there are many who are involved in defective action, but they are wise and clear-sighted.

There are some liberated ones who live the householder's life, but without attachment. There are some who are royal sages like you, who perform their royal duties without attachment, and without agitation. There are some who perform the scriptural duties and rites. There are some who are devoted to god and meditation, and to their own duties. There are some who have abandoned everything inwardly, but who live as if they were ignorant, engaged in all kinds of activities. There are some who dwell in dense forests, totally immersed in meditation. There are some who dwell in holy places. There are some who roam in distant foreign lands, in order to overcome completely all likes and dislikes. Some are constantly wandering from place to place.

Some have abandoned their natural duties, and others are devoted to them. Some behave like wise men, and others behave like mad men. Some are human, some are gods, and others are demons.

In this world, there are the fully enlightened ones, unenlightened ones, and semi-enlightened ones, who abandon right actions, too, and are thus neither here nor there. The forest-life is not essential for liberation, nor living in one's own country, nor an ascetic life, nor the abandonment of activity. Liberation is attained by one whose very nature is totally free and unattached. He whose mind is free and unattached, does not get involved once again in this samsara. O Rama, you are the supreme state. Remain what you are, free from likes and dislikes, established in the supreme truth. In that Brahman, there are no impurities, changes, veils, cravings, or aversions. There is nothing more to say.

## section VI.2 - chapter 200

ikalpam siddhasanghesu moksopayah sahasarah vyakhyatas ca srutasca  
'lamidrsastu kecana (18)

Valmiki said:

Having concluded his discourse on nirvana, the sage Vasistha remained silent. All the members of the assembly were deeply immersed in the highest (nirvikalpa) samadhi or contemplation. The very heavens resounded with the cheers of the assembled sages and perfected ones. The celestials sounded their drums and other instruments. There was a shower of flowers.

The Siddhas (perfected ones) said: **From the beginning of this epoch, we have given and heard numerous discourses on the means to liberation, but none like this.** Even animals and children will attain enlightenment by listening to the sage's words.

The King Dasaratha said: Lord, there is nothing in the world with which you could be appropriately worshipped. However, listen to my prayer, and be not offended. I adore you, and worship you with myself, my family, and the merits that I have acquired and all the good works I have performed here and in the other world. All these are thine, Lord. It is for you to command us.

Vasistha said: We are satisfied with salutations, O king. And that is enough for me. You alone know how to rule the world.

Rama said: Lord, what shall I offer you? I fall at your feet.

After him, his brothers saluted the sage. Then, the kings and the others, who had come from great distance to listen to the sage, offered flowers of worship. Vasistha was literally covered with flowers.

When all this had been completed, Vasistha said: O sages, pray, tell me if there were any defects or shortcomings or perverse teaching during the discourse.

The assembled Sages replied:

In your discourse, O Lord, there was not a single inappropriate note. It was characterised uniformly by the highest truth. You have instantly dispelled the veil of sin that had covered our minds and hearts. Our heart-lotus has fully unfolded. We salute you; you are our guru.

So saying, all of them with one voice exclaimed: "Salutations to you". Again, they showered flowers on him. The assembled sages then glorified the king Dasaratha who had convened that assembly. They glorified Rama. They saluted Rama and his three brothers. They glorified the sages Vasistha and Vismamitra. For, it is only due to the grace of all of them that they were able to listen to the supreme discourse of Vasistha, which instantly dispels delusion.

Thus, all of them worshipped and glorified the sage Vasistha again and again.

## section VI.2 - chapter 201 202

balo lilaiva tyakttasankam samsarasamsthitim yavaddehamimam sadho  
pilaamyamalaikadrk (201/29)

Then, Vasistha asked Rama:

O Rama, what else do you want to hear from me? How do you perceive the world-appearance now? What is your inner experience?

Rama replied:

By your grace, I have attained supreme purity; all the impurities have cleared away. All my misunderstandings and delusions have been dispelled. My bondage has been cut. My intelligence is pure like a crystal. My mind does not crave for more instruction.

I have nothing to do with anything - neither instructions nor any objects, neither relatives nor scriptures, nor even renunciation. I behold the world as the pure, infinite, indivisible, consciousness. The world is otherwise a void, which disappears the moment the illusion vanishes.

I shall do whatever you wish that I should do, and I shall live doing whatever I have to do or wish to do, without exultation or depression, for my delusion has been dispelled. Whether this creation becomes something else, or whether the winds of cosmic dissolution blow, or whether this country be prosperous, I am established in self-knowledge. I am at peace. My vision is clear. It is difficult for my real state to be seen and understood. I am free from hopes and desires. I shall live and rule like the other kings, whether they are enlightened or ignorant, but without mental agitation and endowed with equal vision. **As long as this body lasts, I shall rule this kingdom, endowed with a pure vision, and freed from all doubts concerning the nature of this samsara, just as a child engages itself in a play.**

Vasistha said:

Bravo, O Rama, you have truly reached the supreme state, beyond joy and sorrow, and you have transcended all that is found in this world and in the next. You will now fulfil the wishes of the sage Visvamitra, and rule the kingdom.

After the assembly once again cheered, Rama said:

Lord, just as fire purifies gold, you have purified our hearts. They who considered their body as the all, now see the entire universe as the self.

I have attained the plenum of existence. I am free from all doubts. I am full of bliss which is eternal and undiluted. I rejoice in my own heart, which will be purified by the nectarine words of supreme wisdom. By your grace, I have attained the state in which the whole world itself appears to be the eternal, immortal, and infinite reality.

## section VI.2 - chapter 203 204

yatha mayopadisto 'si yatha pasyasi sastratah yatha 'nubhavasi  
sresthamekavakyam tatha kuru (203/21)

Vasistha said to Rama:

O Rama, you have heard all that is worth hearing, and you know all that is worth knowing. **What I have said to you, and what you have studied in the scripture, now bring into harmony with your own direct experience.**

However, once again, I declare the supreme truth to you. The mirror shines with greater clarity the more it is cleaned and polished. All the objects here are the measure of one's own experience or awareness. All sounds are like the sound produced by running water. All that is seen here is the illusory appearance of the infinite consciousness. This world has arisen like a dream. What is known as the waking state reality is a dream; it is non-different from the consciousness which is the sole reality. Hence, the world is truly without form.

Tell me, O Rama, how do the earth and all the rest of it appear in this dream-city? By whom has all this been fashioned, what is their real nature, and what is their function?

Rama said:

The self or the infinite consciousness alone is the reality of all this - the earth, the mountains, etc.- and the self, is like space, formless, and supportless. All these have not been created at all. This notion that arises in consciousness is known as the mind, and it is the mind alone that exists as all this.

Time, space, and all the rest of it, are the appearance of the consciousness. Even so are the mountains nothing but consciousness. All the elements are consciousness, too. It is consciousness alone that is the essence of the characteristic of the elements, like solidity of the earth, fluidity of water, etc. In fact, however, the earth and the other elements do not exist; the infinite consciousness alone exists. It is because of the liquidity of water that the one ocean is able to give rise to waves and currents; it is because of the infinite potentiality of consciousness that it is similarly able to appear to be diverse. When the notion of solidity and hardness arises in it, it becomes a mountain; even so with all the other objects. Consciousness itself does not undergo any change in all this. The notions of 'I', 'you', etc., arise in it without any reason or cause, and they are non-different from consciousness.

The mind, buddhi, ego-sense, the five elements, and all this world-appearance, exist in the infinite consciousness, non-different from it. Nothing has been created, nothing is lost.

## section VI.2 - chapter 205

yadapurvamadrstam va na 'nubhutam na va srutam tadvarnyate  
sudurstantairgrhyate ca taduhyate (18)

Rama asked:

When, thus it is the infinite consciousness that is all this and the world is but a dream, how does this consciousness appear to be embodied in the wakeful dream state?

Vasistha said:

Whatever is seen, either in a dream or in the waking state, has space alone as support. It is born of space, and it is of the nature of space (void). This space is not other than the supreme, infinite consciousness. Nothing, not even this body, has ever been created, and hence nothing exists. The infinite consciousness experiences the existence of all this as if in a dream. This experience exists in consciousness as if it is the solid creation. The diversity that arises in consciousness on account of the limitlessness of its potentiality, appears to give rise to diversity of creatures.

Rama asked:

You described that there were countless creations. You said that they were inhabited by diverse beings with very different natures and functions. Pray, tell me, among all of them, how this creation exists.

Vasistha replied:

While expounding whatever has not been experienced before, nor seen, nor even heard of before, the teacher resorts to appropriate illustrations, with the aid of which the truth is grasped and inferred. However, you know the nature of this universe.

The one infinite Brahman alone exists, without beginning and end, without form, and without change. In the infinite space, which is permeated by Brahman, this universe exists non-different from Brahman. The universe, too, is beginningless and endless. This universe is what the infinite consciousness considers it to be within itself, whatever it experiences within itself; and the infinite consciousness itself considers that experience to be the universe; hence, it is illusory, like the dream-object of one who is dreaming.

The mountains are not hard, nor are waters fluid. Whatever the infinite consciousness considers itself to be, and wherever, that appears to be so there. A mountain arises in a dream, and exists in nothing, and as nothing; even so in this universe, for it is the dream of the infinite consciousness. Brahman alone exists as Brahman at all times; nothing is created, nor is anything destroyed. There is no diversity in Brahman, nor is there non-diversity in It. All concepts, like unity, diversity, truth, falsehood, etc., are irrelevant to it.

## section VI.2 - chapter 206

yadakaranakam bhāti bhanam tannaiva kincana tattatha paramarthena paramarthah  
sthito 'nagha (1)

Vasistha said:

**That which appears to be without any cause, that is not; therefore, that (the reality) which is, alone is.**

I shall narrate to you an interesting question I was once asked, for your clear understanding. There is an island known as Kusadvipa. In it was a city named Ilavati. It was ruled by king Prajnapti. Once, I happened to meet him. After offering me due worship, he asked me the following question:

"After the entire visible universe had been dissolved, what were the reason and the cause for the creation of the universe? What is this universe? Some part of it is always veiled by darkness, somewhere it is inhabited by worms. How did these elements that constitute the world arise, and how were the mind, buddhi, etc., created? Who is the creator of all this, and who perceives it? Who is its support?

"There is obviously no final dissolution of the universe. Whatever every living being becomes aware of, that alone it experiences. What then is indestructible, and what is real? When a person dies here, and his body is cremated, who creates a body for him in hell, to undergo the necessary experiences there? Surely not virtue (dharma) or vice (adharma), for they are themselves subtle and formless. To say that 'the other world' does not exist, seems to be equally fallacious, for it contradicts the statements of the scriptures.

"It is absurd to suggest that one who is formless can undergo experiences like punishment. Tell me also how substances undergo change here. What is the use of scriptures that deal with injunctions and prohibitions? What is meant by the scriptural declaration that the unreal alone existed at first, and that it became real later on? If Brahma the creator springs from void, why does that void not create very many creators everywhere? How have the herbs, etc., acquired their characteristics and their nature? In a holy place, at the same time, two people live, one's friend and one's enemy. The friend prays for one's long life, and the enemy prays for one's death; whose prayer will be fulfilled? If thousands of people wished, "May I be a moon in the sky", why can there not be thousands of moons shining at the same time? If thousands of men meditate and pray that they may all attain a particular woman as their wife, and if at the same time she meditates and prays that she might remain a virgin, what is the result? "

How are the fruits of funeral and subsequent rites experienced by the departed ones in the absence of embodiment?"

## section VI.2 - chapter 207

vartamananubhavanamatramohapramanakah sarirakarana samviditi mohamupagatah  
(10)

Vasistha said:

O king, listen; I shall answer your questions in such a way that all your doubts are at rest.

All things in this world are for ever unreal; but they are also real because of the consciousness that is the sole reality and their content. Whatever that consciousness decides "This is such and such", that it becomes, whether it is real or unreal. Such is the nature of consciousness.

This consciousness conceived of a body, and it becomes aware of the body. It is self-awareness that becomes aware of the body, not the other way round. At the beginning of creation, there was nothing else, and only consciousness was; and therefore, the world-appearance arose in that consciousness like a dream. In whatever manner consciousness conceived the world to be, that alone it became. What else is this world? Since the world is nothing other than consciousness or Brahman, it is declared to be so by the scriptures.

Yet, like a frog in the blind well, foolish and ignorant, **people base their understanding on the experience of the moment and, on account of their perverse understanding, they are deluded into thinking that the body alone is the source of experience or awareness.** But we have nothing to do with them. However intelligent a person may be, if he is unable to dispel one's doubts, such a person is ignorant. If self-awareness is one of the characteristics of the physical body, then why does a corpse not experience anything?

The truth is the other way round. It is the consciousness of Brahman, the infinite consciousness, that appears as this universe - just as the dream-objects appear in your consciousness. Brahman is the infinite consciousness; he conceives of this dream-city, which is the virat, or the cosmic person. This cosmic person is the creator Brahma, and is also of pure consciousness, although it is known as this universe.

Whatever was conceived of in the dream-creation of Brahma the creator alone is experienced here in that same manner. Thus the body has two states - the living and the dead. Even so, this creation appears and disappears. It has no cause other than Brahman; hence, it is none other than Brahman. Whether the body exists or does not exist, this consciousness experiences what it is aware of, anywhere, at any time, before and after 'death'. It is consciousness alone which conceives of 'the other world' and experiences it as such.

Such deluded experience does not cease until one resorts to the right means of liberation and attains awakening, when the mental conditioning and the consciousness becomes unconditioned.

## section VI.2 - chapter 208

vidhinam pratishedhanam lokasamsthaprayojanam saiva samvidi rudhatvatpretyapi  
phalada sthita (19)

Vasistha said:

Whatever the infinite consciousness conceived of and whenever, that it then experienced. Even so, boons and curses derive their power also from the infinite consciousness. It is because of the appropriate conception arising in consciousness that injunctions and prohibitions acquire their authority and their power.

It is because the embodied being here in this world could not comprehend what existed before the beginning of this creation, that it was said that non-existence alone was prior to that. However, existence and non-existence, creation and dissolution, are like the opening and closing of the eyes of the infinite consciousness. Such is the very nature of the infinite consciousness that creation arises and ceases constantly, just as, when you indulge in day-dreaming, you build and dissolve your mental images in the twinkling of an eye. However, all these are but images that arise in the infinite consciousness. It does nothing at all.

Since the infinite consciousness is everywhere, at all times, there are no barriers in it, and it can give rise to any image anywhere at any time. **Injunctions and prohibitions exist only for the preservation of the social structure here. But, since these are all established in consciousness, they are capable of yielding their fruits even after one departs from this world.**

Brahman neither comes into being, nor ceases to be. But when the subject-object relationship arises in it, then it is said to come into being; and the object is known as creation. When Brahman withdraws that relationship and exists in itself as itself, then it is said that Brahman exists as infinite space and supreme peace. These two (the existence and the non-existence of relationship) are natural to Brahman, just like movement and non-movement are natural to wind.

Old age, death, etc., as also the divisions of time, arise in the infinite consciousness again and again, even as images rise in your day-dream again and again. Even so have the herbs and the medicinal plants, as also the diverse objects, come into being in the three worlds.

The one infinite consciousness alone appears as this infinite diversity, on account of the infinite (conscious) images that arise in it. However, in and as all this, it is the one Brahman alone that shines.

## section VI.2 - chapter 209

idamapratigharambham bhrantimatram jagattrayam na sambhavati ko nama bhrantau  
bhrantiviparyayah (18)

Vasistha said:

You mentioned the case of one's friend and one's enemy praying for contrary results in a holy place. All these are determined by the infinite consciousness in the very beginning. The holiness of places and the conduct that earns merit enable one to acquire that merit in those places. Even if he has been a sinner, the load of his sin is either lightened or eliminated by the merit of the holy places. If, however, the weight of the sin is much less than the strength of the merit, then surely the sin is completely wiped out. If they are of equal strength, it is possible for two bodies to appear in the consciousness, to work out both the merit and the demerit.

Whatever notions arose in the infinite consciousness, and which exist in it, determine the effects of merit and demerit. I, you, and all this, are all governed by the images that exist in the infinite consciousness, whether these images concern merit or otherwise.

The dying man thinks that he is dying, and others are weeping for him. Even so do ideas of death and cremation, etc., arise in the others who are weeping for the dead relative. The dying man sees the world as it appears to him; but the others (the enemy who prayed for his death) think he is dead, and yet others (the friend who prayed for his welfare) consider that he has attained immortality. Thus, both the prayers are satisfied. **The three worlds are illusory products of delusion, but in it there are no divisions or contradictions. What is impossible in an illusion.**

The King asked: How can the formless merit and demerit give rise to a body?

Vasistha replied: This universe is Brahman's dream-city; what is impossible in it? In a dream or while day-dreaming, one becomes a millionaire; even so, when the Infinite consciousness begins to 'dream', one becomes a thousand (an army). Also, a thousand becomes one, as in deep sleep. Hence, it is not possible to say that something is impossible here, or to say that something happens here. Whatever is experienced is how it is experienced; hence, the knowers of truth see no contradictions or impossibilities in any of this. Such discussions concerning what is possible and what is impossible are meaningful only if they relate to a reality; but when even the world-appearance is only an illusion or a long dream, such discussions are meaningless. In a dream-like reality, the only touchstone is 'experience'; whatever is experienced, is experienced as real. What exists here is in accordance with the image that arises in the infinite consciousness.

## section VI.2 - chapter 210

cidvyoma ca 'sti sarvatra sarvam caitajjaganmayam sarvam brahmamayam santam  
jagadityapi sabditam (31)

Vasistha continued:

I shall now tell you why a hundred moons do not appear in the sky when a hundred people contemplate and pray, 'May I be a moon'. All of them do not appear in this particular sky, nor do they enter one particular moon. One person cannot enter the dream-city of another. Each one has his own dream-world, and in that dream-world he becomes the moon. Even so, it is with many men praying that they may all have a particular woman as wife. The fruit of such prayer is reflected in each one's consciousness, which each one experiences as if it were real. Surely, all this is purely imaginary - and what is not possible for imagination?

Even so does one experience the fruits of one's charity, etc., in the other world. Such charity, etc., have formed an image in one's consciousness, and consciousness itself imagines that, in the other world, it is experiencing the fruits of such charity. This is also the view of the wise men.

The King asked: Lord, how does this body appear in the first place?

Vasistha replied: What you have called the body does not exist in the eyes of the sage. It is only Brahman. Even so, the word 'dream' used to illustrate the truth of the illusoriness of the world-appearance - there is no 'dream' in the infinite consciousness. There is neither a body nor a dream in it. There is neither a waking state, nor dream, nor sleep. Whatever is, is - it is void, it is 'Om'. Enough of even such descriptions.

Between 'this' and 'that' is the body of consciousness; it is unity and diversity. Fullness (infinity) expands in infinity; and then the infinite alone exists as the world. It appears to be, but it is not what it appears to be. Wherever consciousness conceives of creation, there creation seems to exist. **The indivisible consciousness exists everywhere, and all that is also this creation. All this is the ever peaceful Brahman or infinite consciousness, which is also known as creation.**

It cannot be otherwise. All else is ignorance and perversion. This is the experience of all in the world, this is the declaration of the scriptures and the vedas. When this truth is realised, that realisation itself becomes Brahman, and this whole universe is realised as non-different from Brahman. Thus, my view is in conformity with experience and scriptural declaration. It is conducive to liberation, here and now, and hence it is the most appropriate one. When the truth concerning this tree of samsara is clearly perceived, the realisation arises that 'I am the three worlds', and there is liberation. The visible universe remains as it is, but ceases to be an object of consciousness; it merges in the infinite consciousness.

## section VI.2 - chapter 211

itthamastu yadi va 'nyatha 'stu va maiva bhudbhavatu ko 'tra sambhramah munca phalguni phale phalagraham buddhavanasi krtam parisramaih (30)

Rama asked:

What are these siddhas (the perfected ones), sadhyas (celestials), yama (death), brahma (creator), vidyadharas, and divaukasas (celestials), and their own worlds?

Vasistha said:

Every night and every day, in front of you, behind you and above you, you see the worlds of these siddhas and others. You see them if you wish to see them, and you do not see them otherwise. If one does not practise the art of seeing them, they appear to be far away. These worlds, too, are subtle and super-sensual (super-natural), and the whole space is full of them.

Just as this world is illusory and imaginary, even so are the worlds of the siddhas and celestials. By their psychic power, these worlds have been stabilised; even so, you can make the world of your own imagination or fancy stable, by intense contemplation. The siddhas or perfected ones have thus made their worlds stable; others find this difficult. This universe is filled with the infinite consciousness, and the universe is whatever image the consciousness entertains within itself.

The universe has not been created by or out of something else; no such cause existed at the beginning of creation. It is whatever notion or image arises in consciousness. In one's own imagination, a mountain arises, though in truth there is no such mountain. Such is the nature of the world-appearance, too. Therefore, the knowers of this truth live here as if they were walking trees.

All these universes that appear in Brahman exist in it as non-different from it, just as the waves exist in the ocean non-different from it. Though this universe seems to have existed for a long time, and though it seems to be a functional reality, still it is pure void, and it is no more real than an imaginary city. Though people have experienced its existence, it does not exist; even as one sees one's own death in a dream. The unreal appears to be real. The reality and the unreality of the world are two aspects of the Supreme being. Even the concept of supreme being is only a concept, not the truth. **Let it all be this way, or let the truth be different from all this. Where is the need to be confused and confounded? Abandon the pursuit of the fruits of actions. You are enlightened. Do not exert yourself in vain pursuit.**

## section VI.2 - chapter 212

kevalam tvamabuddhatvacchabdasravanabodbitah advaye brahmabodhe  
'smindvitamabhyupagacchasi (13)

Vasistha continued:

Brahman considers itself as the infinite space, because Brahman is infinite consciousness. That infinite space itself is the cosmic person in whom this world exists; but all this is non-different from Brahman, and hence, all this is Brahman. This world-appearance is otherwise an illusion, though it is seen as a reality, even as water in the mirage is unreal and illusory, though it seems to exist.

Rama asked: Pray, tell me, when does Brahman not consider itself thus.

Vasistha said: In Brahman, the infinite consciousness, the image of creation exists even now. However, though it is true that creation and non-creation exist in Brahman everywhere at all times, they do not exist independently of him, and hence, from another point of view, they do not exist. Since this creation is (like movement and wind) non-different from Brahman, Brahman does not know it as an object. Therefore, creation is without beginning and without end, and that is Brahman.

**When you are not enlightened, and when you experience an awakening by merely listening to these words, you experience an apparent duality or diversity in what is in fact non-dual Brahman.** Nothing exists here, and therefore, there are no concepts of objects; there is nothing other than the self, and the self does not conceive of an object. What appears to be the three worlds, appears to be at all times, but it is the supremely peaceful Brahman in which there is no diversity at all. It is only as long as you are not fully enlightened that you experience apparent diversity. When you are fully enlightened, you will need neither scriptures nor instructions, and you will not experience duality or diversity based on the notion of 'I' .

Rama asked: What happens when the notion of 'I' arises in the supreme?

Vasistha replied: When the 'I'-notion arises in the consciousness, the concept of infinite space arises with it; from this, the time-space continuum; and from this, division and diversity. Hence, there arise notions like 'I am here', which means 'I am not there'. When all these have arisen, the 'I' becomes aware of the subtle root-elements, from which the world-appearance arises, as also the world-experience. Thus, from Brahman, the infinite consciousness apparently comes into being, that which is not-Brahman. However, this is only apparent and not real; in reality the infinite Brahman alone exists.

## section VI.2 - chapter 213

na vinasyata etedam tatah potra na vidyate na 'sato vidyate bhavo na 'bhavo vidyate satah (11)

Vasistha continued:

Just as you questioned me just now, O Rama, you did question me once before in a previous epoch. At that time, too, you were my disciple and I was your guru. I remember that dialogue clearly, and I shall repeat it for you.

The disciple asked: Pray, tell me, Lord, at the end of the world cycle, what is it that perishes, and what is it that endures and does not so perish.

The preceptor said: My son, whatever is seen (the objects of perception) perishes, just as when you enter the deep sleep state, the dream world perishes. All these worlds, with their mountains and their directions, perish utterly; even time and the activity, as also the world order perish. All beings perish, and even the space disappears, because there is none that thinks of space, or thinks in space. Even the gods, like Brahma the creator, Visnu the protector, and Rudra the redeemer, cease to be; they do not exist even in name. What remains? Only the infinite consciousness; but even this is an inference based on the present experience.

The disciple asked: It has been said that the unreal does not come into being, and that the real has no non-being; how does this happen, and how does what is seen perish?

The preceptor said: **My son, this does not perish and, hence, it is said that 'It is not seen'. It is said that the unreal has no being, and the real has no non-being.** That which does not exist, at any time, anywhere, is already non-being. How does it perish? What is permanent in the water, seen in the mirage, and what is permanent in illusion? Whatever is seen in this universe is an illusion; and, why should not the illusion cease to be? Just as in a dream comes to an end on waking up, and the waking state comes to an end on going to sleep, all this world-appearance comes to an end. When one wakes up, where does the dream-city go? Similarly, one does not know where the world-appearance goes.

The disciple asked: Why does all this appear to be, and why does that appearance cease to be?

The preceptor replied: It is the infinite consciousness alone that appears as all this - independent of it, there is no world. Even while appearing to be all this, the infinite consciousness does not lose its own true nature or identity. Both appearance and non-appearance are aspects of consciousness, just as when your form is reflected in water, for instance, the reflection is temporary, and your own form is not. Dreaming and dreamless sleep are aspects of one sleep; even so, creation and dissolution are aspects of Brahman.

## section VI.2 - chapter 213

pratyekam sarvavastumam karta bhoktta paratparah anadinidhano dhata sarvam  
brahmatmakam yatah (41)

The disciple said:

In a dream, there is someone other than the dreamer (viz., pure consciousness, which is not divided into the dreamer and the dream). Even so, is it possible that there is someone other than the perceiver of the world-illusion?

The preceptor said:

That is so. Therefore, its real nature or form is not the world-appearance. Consciousness alone is, and it illumines whatever is; but, the appearance is experienced by another. Hence, it is the synthesis of contradictions. It does not illumine anything, and it cannot even be said to be existence. It is the appearance in the infinite consciousness. How can there be 'real' and 'unreal' in the observer?

If it is said to be seen everywhere, as all, at all times, it can also be said that it is not seen as all, everywhere, at all times. It is the reality, and it is the unreality, at all times. It is the infinite consciousness. It does not perish, and the other (the world-appearance) does not perish either. There is great sorrow only when the reality of the infinite consciousness, with its two aspects of creation and dissolution, is not realised; when it is thus realised, there is great peace.

Lord or the infinite consciousness alone is the pot, mountain, cloth, tree, grass, fire, the movable and the immovable - everything. The Lord is what is, and what is not, the void, action, time, space and earth, existence and destruction, good and evil. There is nothing which the infinite consciousness is not. It is everything, everywhere, at all times; it is not anything, anywhere, at any time.

A blade of grass is the doer and the enjoyer; a pot is both the doer and the enjoyer; a piece of cloth is the doer and the enjoyer; sight is both the doer and the enjoyer; the mountain is both the doer and the enjoyer; man is the doer and the enjoyer; each one is the supreme Lord himself. **In each of all these things, the Lord himself is the doer and the enjoyer or experiencer. For, everything is Brahman, who is beginningless and endless, and the ordainer of everything.** Hence, even creation and destruction are aspects of the one Lord or the infinite consciousness. Consciousness alone is both the doer and the experiencer, of everything, in everything. Hence, none here is the doer and the experiencer of anything, or, the Lord is the doer and the experiencer of everything. Thus, it is possible for everything (injunctions and prohibitions) to exist in the Lord, and not to exist so in truth. All this is as all this is experienced by each one.

Thus did I instruct you, O Rama. And thus have I told you all that is worth knowing. Remain established in the reality, in the state of enlightenment. Be free in nirvana, and rule the kingdom justly.

## section VI.2 - chapter 214

nasto mohah padam praptam tvatprasadanmumisvara sampanno 'hamaham  
satyamatyantamavadatadhih (14) sthitosmi gatasamdehah svabhava brahmarupini  
niravarana vijnanah karisye vacanam tava (15)

Valmiki said:

When the sage Vasistha thus concluded his teaching, there was celestial music in the sky. There was a rain of flowers. Everyone in the assembly worshipped the sage with flowers.

Then king Dasaratha said: We have gained perfect knowledge. We rest in the supreme state. Our minds and our hearts have been utterly purified of all delusions and illusions, notions and perversions, by the illuminating teachings of the sage.

Rama said: **By your grace, O lord among sages, my delusion has gone, and I have attained the supreme state. I am now fully accomplished, with my intelligence perfectly clear. I am freed of doubts. I rest in my own natural natural state, as Brahman, or in the knowledge of nirvana. I shall do as you have said.** There is nothing for me to gain, by doing, or by not doing, anything. I have no friend or enemy. How can one realise all this except through your grace; how can a little boy cross the ocean without the help of a bridge or boat?

Laksmana said: By the merit acquired by past births, we have heard the sage, and are now rid of all doubts. Visvamitra said: It is as if we had bathed in a thousand sacred Gangas (rivers).

Narada said: We have heard what we have not heard either in heaven or on earth. Hence, we have been completely purified.

Satrughna said: I have gained supreme peace and bliss. After they had all spoken, the sage Vasistha said to the king: "At the conclusion of the recitation of a scripture, the holy ones should be worshipped. Hence, fulfil all the wishes of the brahmanas. You will attain the fruits of this sacred undertaking." Then, the king invited ten thousand brahmanas from all over the country. He worshipped them. He fed them. He lavished gifts on them. Later, he adored the citizens, the servants, the poor, and the crippled ones.

After that, there was a great celebration in the capital, which included music, concerts, and dance performances, recitation of the vedas, and other scriptures. Then, all these artists were entertained with food and drinks, and lavish gifts of clothes and jewels were bestowed upon them.

The enlightened king Dasaratha celebrated the successful completion of sage Vasistha's teaching for a whole week with a variety of entertainments and religious rites.

## section VI.2 - chapter 215 216

trsnavaratradrdhabandhabaddha granthayo ' jnasya hrdis prarudhah sarve hi te  
moksakathavicarad bala hybala iva yantya bhedam (215/9)

Valmiki said:

O Bharadvaja, thus did Rama and others attain supreme knowledge and the state beyond sorrow. Even so, acquire this attitude, and live as a liberated sage, free from doubt. Truly, by listening to this scripture, you are already liberated; you are a jivanmukta. Even a young boy, listening to this, attains self-knowledge. **Even the ignorant ones, in whose hearts the bondage caused by cravings, is strong and persistent, rise beyond the state of division, by a study of this scripture that deals with liberation, even as young boys become mature men (non-boys).** They will never again be involved in samsara.

Even they who recite this scripture without understanding the meaning, they who write this (copy this) in a book, they who make someone read it, or comment upon it, they attain great merit, and enjoy life in heaven, and in the third birth attain liberation.

Valmiki said to king Aristanemi: Thus have I told you what Vasistha taught Rama. By this path, you will attain the truth.

The King said: Lord, by your grace, I have crossed this samsara. (To the messenger of the gods, the King said:) You have been a true friend to me. You may now go. I shall contemplate the truth that I have thus heard. The messenger said to the celestial: I was supremely thrilled to hear all this. I shall now go to the abode of Indra.

The Celestial said: I am truly blessed to hear all this from you, O messenger of the gods. Now you can go to Indra.

Agnivesya said to Karunya: Thus did the celestial remain immersed in contemplation. Have you heard all this well?

Karunya replied: Surely. My delusion is gone. I shall now live a life of spontaneous non-volitional activity.

Agasti said to Sutiksna: Thus did Agnivesya instruct his son Karunya: Do not doubt this teaching; for, he who doubts this, perishes.

Sutiksna said: My ignorance has been dispelled, and the lamp of knowledge has been kindled. I realise that all these objects of the world exist in the infinite consciousness, like waves in the ocean. Hence, I shall live a life of spontaneous non-volitional activity. I am truly blessed. I salute you. For, a disciple should adore and serve his guru, by thought, word, and deed. Lord, by your grace, I have crossed this ocean of samsara. I salute the supreme being, contemplating whom one realises that all this is indeed Brahman, the infinite consciousness.

Salutations to the divine preceptor Vasistha.

Om Tat Sat