

आदिकविश्रीमद्वाल्मीकिमहर्षिप्रणीतबृहत्योगवासिष्ठः

BRAHADYOGA VAASISHTAM

JNAANA RAAMAAYANAM

[DVITEEYA RAAMAAYANAM]

COMPOSED BY

VAALMIKI MAHARSHI

वैराग्यप्रकरणम् प्रथमम्

VAIRAAGYA PRAKARANAM

FIRST SECTION
'DISPASSION'

CHAPTER ONE
[CONTEXT OF 'VAASISHTAM DISCOURSE']

Sanskrit text, Translation and Explanation

by

Narayanalakshmi

based on

[PARAMAHAMSA SHREEMADANANDA BODHENDRA SARASVATEE PRANEETA
VAASISHTA MAHAARAAMAAYANA TAATPARYA PRAKAASHA]

{परमहंसश्रीमदानन्दबोधेन्द्रसरस्वतीप्रणीतवासिष्ठमहारामायणतात्पर्यप्रकाश}

DEDICATED
TO
ALL THE SEEKERS OF TRUTH

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born in Bangalore, India, the so-called Lakshmi (Master of Sanskrit and Philosophy, and a language teacher by profession) changed miraculously into a Tejaswini (a recluse with no-identity), when she entered the sacred Himalayan region, in quest of 'Truth sublime' even as she was in her early forties.

Living alone amidst the looming mountains of the sacred land, inside a small cottage made of stone and mud, helped by a few devoted youngsters, she went through a penance of knowledge for many years, till her quest was fulfilled by the grace of Shiva.

As there was nothing more to be achieved on this planet than what state she was in, she just took to translating the 'Sacred Granthas' that were based on Upanishad-Truths, and some rare Sanskrit books of ancient literature which were slowly turning into dust, due to the lack of proficiency in Sanskrit language that covers the modern minds.

'BrhatYogaVaasishtam authored by Maharshi Vaalmiki' is a wonderful Grantha which explains the abstract truths of the Upanishads in a simplified manner, and here it is offered to the seekers of Vedic Knowledge to assist in their studies, with proper translation and explanation along with the Sanskrit verses-

- by Maa Tejaswini/Narayanalakshmi.

DETAILED VERSION OF THE AUTHOR'S SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

WHO IS NARAYANALAKSHMI?

Narayanalakshmi (pen-name), (A.R. Subbalakshmi – maiden name), also known as 'Maa Tejaswini' in her ascetic life, lived in the solitude of the Himalayan Mountains for a long period, alone in a cottage, helped by a few of the young followers, engaged in the study and contemplation of Upanishads and many other valuable texts.

She renounced her family and friends when she was in her thirties. Actually her aim was to find the truth about the existence of a god; but her penance in the White Hills, bestowed upon her the knowledge which was beyond the god-level also. Since 'Knowledge' was her only aim in life, she returned to the civilized world and mastered the concepts of Science (Physics) also as a part of her knowledge-penance.

Stabilized in her knowledge, she resides now at Bangalore, India, maintaining her vow of solitude.

EARLY LIFE

Lakshmi's spiritual quest started at the tender age of eleven, as an ardent devotee of Lord Krishna.

By the age of sixteen, she had completed the studies of all the spiritual books connected to Maharshi Ramana, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda and Shankara, as well as the Upanishads. With an un-satiated hunger for knowledge, she went through all the spiritual books written in Tamil and Kannada as well. There was nothing left unstudied. All the spiritual data was present in her mind as a realization of both Dvaita and Advaita.

Later, forced to marry and bear children, she went through a life of darkness waiting for the dawn of freedom.

She finished her Master's degree in Philosophy as well as Sanskrit, even when she was bound by continuous family duties. Her internal stress of living through a family life as against her desire for a Sannyasin's life pushed her into a severe asthmatic condition. Undaunted by the fatal disease that was consuming her life slowly, she engaged herself in improving her knowledge-level, and trained her children also to study Upanishads and YogaVaasishtam. More books were consumed, and more data was added to her brain. Nothing was left to study anymore. Some duties concerning the welfare of her children made her keep the body alive. She was stabilized as a 'witness-state of whatever the life presented her with, waiting for the freedom that the death of the body would offer some day, though she had crossed over the 'death and birth states' by her quest for knowledge.

Then the call came from her beloved flute player, her life-essence, Lord Krishna, the 'Singer of Geetaa'; and she was told to go off to the Himalayas, to lead a life of Sannyaasin. And soon, a vision of Durga, the form of enlightenment, as Mother Tejaa, reaffirmed her decision to take Sannyas, and seek the shelter of the White Mountains, the Shiva-Dhaama. Her body was instantly cured of all diseases and infirmities.

She renounced the family and friends, and with her own young children, who offered support of all kinds mentally and physically, left for the White Mountains without even the idea of where to go.

Guided by the 'Great Mother', she entered the sacred ground of Himalayas, after crossing by foot, many mountains and forest-regions. Randomly in some Aashram-outskirt, some one offered a saffron saree, and a divine voice whispered in her mind - 'you are Tejaswini from now on, the daughter of Tejaa'.

After an arduous journey of two to three weeks through the unknown mountainous terrain, they reached the valley on the banks of River Taamasi (Tons) situated under the Mountain of Kalaap.

With the support offered from the unknown unseen Mother Tejaa, she started her life in the Himalayas along with her disciple-children, lived alone, absorbing only Knowledge as her food, and gradually ascended the ladder of Aatma-Saakshaatkaara.

The mountain had a cave in its upper reaches, where the last of solar and lunar dynasty kings had performed penance for the birth of 'Kalki' (tenth incarnation of divinity, the 'Goddess of judgement').

Tejaswini lived in a small cottage made of stones at the river bank, and named it as 'Kalki Ashram'.

She and her disciple-children, lived a simple life of Rishis on the river bank for many years, cut off from the civilization, before returning to the city-life.

Now,wording her knowledge-essence into books, Lakshmi has translated many ancient Sanskrit works, and is still continuing the work.

Work

Her main works are -

BrhadYogaVaasishtam of Vaalmiki (Second Raamaayana),

Some selected works of AdiShankara,

AshtaaVakraGeeta,

BhartrhariShatakas,

'Bhagavad-Gita simplified to modern thinking',

Ramana's UpadeshaSaaram,

ShivaPuraanam (a combined presentation of Vishnu Puraana, ShivaPuraana and DeviBhagavatam),

Stories of Vikramaaditya and Vetaala,

PanchaTantram,

Kaadambaree of BaanaBhatta and PulindaBhatta,

Tirukkural of TiruValluvar,

Bhaarati-Upanishad (selected Vedantic works of Mahaakavi Bhaaratiaaar),

the Vachanas of AkkaMahadevi of Karnataka,

the coded meanings of selected Upanishad texts,

MantraPushpam and Gaayatri Mantram,

Bhagavad-Gita of Vaalmiki,

ShivaGeeta,

KathaasaritSaagara,

Tamil 'ShivaVaakkiyam' of ShivaVaakkiyar (Siddha)

GIST OF VAASISHTAM

'Vaasishtam' composed by the great Rishi Vaalmiki is also known by the names of 'Jnaana Raamaayanam', 'Jnaana Vaasishtam', 'BhadrYoga Vaasishtam', 'Mahaa Raamaayanam', 'Aarsha Raamaayanam', and 'Vasishta Raamaayanam'.

'Vaasishtam' is a simple version of the Upanishat, the concluding section of Vedas.

'Vaasishtam' is 'Aarsheya', authored by a Rishi, and contains the secret knowledge that belongs to the Rishis, the 'Seers of the Vedic hymns' (MantraDrastaaraH).

'Vaasishtam-Upanishat' contains six Prakaranas or sections.

They are, 'Vairaagya, Mumukshu Vyavahaara, Utpatti, Sthiti, Upashama, and Nirvaana'.

'Vairaagya Prakarana' contains Rama's lamentation about the disgusting nature of the world.

'Mumukshu Vyavahaara' contains the qualities to be practised by a seeker who is after liberation.

'Utpatti' discusses about how the world get produced as a conception only.

'Sthiti' tells how the 'world-idea' persists in the mind, as a conception only.

'Upashama' is where the realness seen in the 'world-appearance' slowly subsides off, through rational thinking,

'Nirvaana' is the description of the 'state of the JeevanMukta' who is in the Nirvaana state, and who is free of all the 'coverings of the misconceptions'.

The total verses contained in 'Vaasishtam' are 32,000, the Utpatti section comprising one third of the whole text and the Nirvaana section almost half of the text. 'Vaasishtam' is a 'huge dialogue session' between Rama the 'heir of RaghuVamsha', and his preceptor 'Brahmarshi Vasishta' the 'Knower of all'.

WHY THIS UPANISHAT IS NAMED AS YOGA VAASISHTA?

This great scripture with six Prakaranas is compared to a 'Shatpadee (six-footed bee)' which hums in the form of Vasishta, in front of the 'lotus faced Rama'; and both melt off into the oneness (Yoga) of the 'Honey of silence'; that is why it is called 'Yoga Vaasishtam'.

RAMA

Rama was the heir prince of Ayodhya, son of the renowned warrior Dasharatha, and was the 'Scion of Raghu dynasty'. He was also an excellent Knower, equal to Vasishta or Vyaasa, which is a fact not known to many.

'Jnaana Vaasishta Raamaayanam' - is the story of how he attained Moksha, even before he completed his sixteenth year. Later of course, he married Seeta, lived for fourteen years in the forest, killed Raavana at Lanka, took over the ruler-ship of Ayodhya, later gave off the kingdom in the hands of his sons Lava and Kusha; and finally gave up his body in Sarayu River, to bid a final farewell to the life on Earth.

Rama is said to be an incarnation of MahaaVishnu, who descended down to the BhooLoka, to save the world from the wicked Daityas (Raavana and others); yet this is not the main purpose of his Avataar. A noble personage of the higher world descends down to the lower level of mortals, not to just live a story that entertains people; rather his purpose is the 'spreading of Brahman knowledge'.

Rama spent a longer span of his lifetime in the forest regions only, and engaged himself in the transfer of knowledge he learnt from Vasishta, to many Rishis and Munis residing in the wilderness.

Reducing the 'Bhoo-Bhaara' (burden of Mother Earth) does not mean just killing demons, but spreading the 'Knowledge of the Aatman', so as to make most of the people reach out to the state of Realization.

With lesser rebirths, 'Mother Earth' indeed would feel happy.

Rama carried the 'nectar of Knowledge' given to him by Sage Vasishta, and distributed it to all the good souls he met during his fourteen years of travel through the jungles and villages of India.

Countless seekers of knowledge would have turned into 'JeevanMuktas' by his contact.

Unfortunately, we do not have any scripted form of those wonderful dialogues on Knowledge, that Rama would have had with these Sages.

VASISHTA

As his very name indicates, Vasishta was a person of strict discipline; and expected his disciples also to maintain perfect discipline. He is the 'MaanasaPutra (mind-created son)' of Lord Brahma, the Creator of this world; is also one of the 'Saptarshis (Seven Rishis)'. He was the 'family preceptor' for the kings who belonged to the 'RaghuVamsha'. Vasishta has a wife named Arundhati, renowned for her devotion to her husband. She was not less in knowledge than Vasishta, and was a revered counsellor for the ladies of the royal family.

WHAT THE BOOK CONTAINS

This text is not another philosophical view-point added to the existing lot of 'Six Darshanas'. It is just a 'training of Vichaara' (rational thinking), offered by Vasishta to the 'seekers after the Supreme Truth'.

This text does not support any theory of any philosopher, nor does it encourage blind religion, or propound a supremely powerful godhead as the Creator; and it does not support also, any body-based Yoga-practice, as usually misunderstood by the students. It is also not a Tantra text.

Vaasishtam does not also explain the Creation (Srshti) by inventing fresh terms and weird explanations; for, according to Vasishta, there exists no emergent-world at all (as an absolute reality), and he proves this very view-point by leading the student through many amazing mazes of stories, and leaves the student at the fag-end of the text, with the most wondrous vision of the Reality, where the emergent-world ceases to exist once and for all; rather the student realizes that the emergent-world was not there at all at any time, as something real.

ESSENCE OF VAASISHTAM

What is the gist of Vaasishtam? What are its main view-points?

The first Raamaayana describes the life-story of Rama, the great Ruler of Ayodhya.

The second Raamaayana, named also as JnaanaVaasishtam, talks only about 'Brahman Knowledge' that was instructed by Maharshi Vasishta to prince Rama who had not even completed his sixteenth year.

Vaasishtam is not any theory thought out by some thinker to explain the world around us. It does not propound a theory of Advaita or Dvaita. It does not state that the Supreme Godhead is Shiva, or Naaraayana, or any other deity. According to Vasishta, Reality (Brahman) is not a 'god with intelligence', though god-like beings exist as our creator-lot and care for us from some other dimension, as if it is a doll-world made for their amusement.

Do gods like Vishnu, Shiva, Umaa and others exist actually?

If we the Earth-beings, exist here in this three-dimensional world, then nothing prevents any other being residing in any other world of any other dimension, unseen by us. We the humans, are not the sole proprietors of the universe as such. 'DevaLoka' where Shiva, Vishnu, Brahmaa, Indra and other Devas live a life of their own is not denied in Vaasishtam, but 'Reality' is not an intelligent Godhead according to Vasishta.

Even this one DevaLoka that the Earth-people know of through the Puranas, is just some tiny dust-mote floating amidst the countless dust-motes of worlds that exist unknown and unseen by us.

WHAT IS THE REALITY-STATE (BRAHMAN)?

'Reality' is an indescribable state which has no mind, no intelligence, no divisions, no thinking, no words, and no purpose; is not even aware of anything anywhere; yet it exists as something that supports all that is there, and exists also as all the objects that are perceived by all the minds.

'Reality' is the essence of the knowledge that shines as the perceived world which is known by all.

'Reality' is empty of all; even the state of emptiness.

'Reality' exists as the 'potential power' that can rise as any perceived experience of any one, from a worm to a Brahmaa. 'Reality' is the changeless constant state of the Aatman.

MOKSHA/LIBERATION

'Reality' is not what you 'believe' it to be! Reality is that which is not dependent on your belief or non-belief. The 'Understanding of the Supreme truth' as rationally proved, is referred to by the term 'Moksha'.

'Moksha' is not a state that is waiting in the sky to swallow you up after you die.

'Moksha' is the 'perfect state of knowledge' that you can attain, even when you are living here, now, with no 'relevance to what you are, where you are.

'Moksha' is not the vision of a deity; 'Moksha' is not the attainment of super-powers.

'Moksha' is not the attainment of Heaven or any other place of enjoyment.

'Moksha' is not the reaching of Kailaasa, or Vaikunta.

'Moksha' is the 'Abstract Knowledge of existence' itself.

'Moksha' is the knowledge of how the world comes into existence, with you as the centre-figure.

'Moksha' is the 'Vision of Truth' that hides behind the 'lie named the world'.

Seeing the actor (Reality) behind his weird costume (world) is 'Moksha'.

You do not have to die for attaining 'Moksha'. It is not an 'after-death attainment'.

When you realize the truth, you stay liberated while living; as a better state than the non-intelligent Reality.

When the 'non-intelligent Reality' evolves to 'know itself', it is known as 'Moksha'.

'Vaasishtam' is a magic wand, that turns the 'mirage waters of the dreary desert' into the 'cool Ganges waters of the knowledge', and proves that the desert was never there at all; and that the Gangaa alone flows unhindered, as ever.

WHO IS QUALIFIED TO STUDY THIS SCRIPTURE?

This text is not an ordinary text, that any and everyone can lay hands on. It is a tough book oozing with abstract knowledge. It is the last resort for a seeker, who after studying countless books of philosophy and religion, finds no peace yet, and falls at the feet of Brahmarshi Vasishta at last, begging for help.

Others will find no use for it, because the study and understanding of the book requires extreme purity of mind and a very high intellectual level.

This book contains countless stories, big and small; yet this book is not just a collection of stories but is the array of extremely abstract thought processes, concealed within the amusing unique tales that Vasishta presents Rama with.

WHO IS FIT TO READ THIS BOOK?

If you are already a 'JeevanMukta' (liberated while living), and have understood what the 'perceived emergent world' is, if you have no attachment to any form of a deity or saint, if you are not addicted to any cult or philosophy or religion as such, if you do not have even a minuscule of desire for anything that is connected to the perceived world, if you are always silent in your own essence of truth, then do not bother; this book is not for you. Why should a person who is 'already floating blissfully in the sky of Truth', learn the 'process of growing wings'?

If you are not at all familiar with any philosophy, or Upanishads, or texts composed by Shankara and other great thinkers, and if you are not dissatisfied with the life you live as a human stuck to the Earth, if you do not have the curiosity to know 'why the world exists as the world you see' or 'why you exist as a you', if you are not interested in attaining 'Moksha the final goal' that is prescribed for all the humans by the ancient texts, then do not bother; this book is not for you.

If like Rama, you feel dispassion rising in you through the proper reasoning process, and you feel trapped in this limited structure of a human life, and want to get out of it like a man drowning in floods, then and then only get ready for the journey through the 'Knowledge path', holding the hands of the Great Sage Vasishta; you will surely reach the end of all the search.

When you start the study of this 'Great Scripture', be like a child which when fed up of all the toys and games, starts crying for its mother and collapses on her lap exhausted and tired; and then approach Vasishta like a child approaching a mother; he will indeed sing lullabies of wonderful stories, and slowly make you close your eyes peacefully in the 'bliss of Aatman'.

Approach this book with reverence and respect; for it is a knowledge that is far beyond the level of the ordinary. It is 'Vasishta in person'.

HOW TO STUDY THE TEXT

'Vaasishtam' is an experience; not a study.

You cannot read it to gain merit; or add it to one of your collection of philosophical thoughts.

You cannot also read it verse by verse and try to gather its meaning step by step, as you do with any other Sanskrit text, like Shankara's for example. You have to grasp it paragraph by paragraph; idea by idea.

As and when you move from Prakarana to Prakarana, you have to 'swell up in knowledge' (like the 'Brahman Reality').

You should be careful as to not forget off the previous instructions as if done with, so as to casually proceed to understand the later ones like reading an ordinary philosophy book.

'Study of JnaanaVaasishtam' is a 'penance of Knowledge'. You cannot hurry through it.

You have to 'expand in knowledge' as a 'JnaanaBrahman'.

After the study of the whole text, you must stay as the very 'essence of Vaasishtam', the 'very knowledge of Reality'. You must exist as the 'essence of Reality (Brahman) with a very pure mind-state'.

If you have not reached such a level of 'Brahman-state' even at the end of the study, then start once again from the beginning, and ascend the 'Everest of Vichaara', till you reach the 'Summit of Knowledge-experience'.

'Vaasishtam' is a long climb up the 'Mountain of Vichaara', where Sage Vasishta holds your hand and walks you up slowly up the rugged mountain, amusing you with intriguing stories of the highest level.

You will never be aware of the hardship of the climb at all, and will surely find yourself suddenly on the 'peak point of the Knowledge-Mountain' and will have the 'most amazing vision of Reality'.

After that, there is no coming down at all!

You can throw off the book also, as finished and done with.

The book takes you to that level of knowledge, where the book itself dissolves off in the lustre of knowledge. Even Vasishtha melts off; you also melt off; and what is left back? Only the 'silent bliss' which is beyond the grasp of words and thoughts! Later, whatever life you live here in the life-stage, nothing matters; the silence alone stands as the essence of all. Just the drama goes on, without an actor!

HOW TO ATTAIN 'MOKSHA (KNOWLEDGE-STATE)' BY THE MERE STUDY OF THIS BOOK?

Starting from 'Vairaagya Prakarana', you must develop dispassion, even as you read Rama's detailed description of the worthlessness of the world.

Next you must practise the qualities suggested by Vasishtha to purify the mind, in the 'MumukshuVyavahaara Prakarana'. It cannot happen in a day or two. The muck that is collected in the mind like hardened rock, cannot be got rid off by just reading about the qualities to be cultivated. You have to sincerely develop those qualities as advised by Guru Vasishtha.

Later, as you enter the study of 'Utpatti Prakarana', you must be in a state to wonder and analyze as to - *'where forth this world came to be about, who made it, why I am here'* and so on.

In the 'Sthiti Prakarana', you will understand how the world continues to be, as a 'product of the mind' only.

In the 'Upashama Prakarana', the waves of all the doubts slowly subside off.

In the 'Nirvaana Prakarana', your mind is silenced into a peaceful death; this is the 'first half of Nirvaana Prakarana'.

How to live in the world after such a silent state is attained, is explained in the 'second half of Nirvaana Prakarana'.

A NOTE TO THE READER

This 'Great Grantha' composed by 'Srimad Vaalmiki Maharshi' has been translated and explained based on the commentary 'Vaasishta-Mahaaraamaayana-Tatparya-Prakaasha' of 'Paramahansa Shreemadaananda Bodhendra Sarasvati'.

Since the original text contains many Sanskrit sentences that do not get confined to the verse-numbers in the exact manner, the author has numbered these verses, only where they coincide with the original.

This means that some verse numbers may be left unmarked.

Those who are cross-referencing to the 'Vaasishtam Grantha' (in Sanskrit), with the 'Taatparya Prakaasha' edited by 'Shri VaasudevaSharman', can check the Sarga (chapter) number and Verse numbers that are given in brackets, at the end of the verses. In some places the numbers are not added, since they would break the flow of the Sanskrit sentences in the Grantha.

MEANINGS OF TERMS COMMONLY USED IN 'BRHAT YOGA VAASISHTAM'

AATMAN/BRAHMAN

There is not much difference between these two terms in the actual philosophical sense.

Aatman is the individual understanding, the essence of understanding that is passing through a mind.

Brahman is the same essence bereft of a mind.

Aatman is the sunlight that enters through a window to light up a room namely the limited understanding of an individual; Brahman is the sunlight that pervades all, without divisions.

The term Aatman is derived as अत् मणिन् – to wander forth, to shine forth, to make oneself known, to murmur continuously; that which exists as something that understands something.

बृहतीति ब्रह्मन् Brahman is the same understanding essence swelled up as all the perceived worlds anywhere and everywhere at all time modes.

SATYAM is that which is the essence of existence itself, and is another name for the Reality termed as Brahman. That alone exists and not the world; therefore Brahman is the synonymous word for Satyam.

RTAM means the order, the Niyati, the coherent system that forms the essence of our world-experience.

CHIT/CHITI

That which collects the experiences as a single thread of Jeeva-experience, the Pure awareness state, the inner essence of consciousness, the Silent witness of all the actions of the Jeeva,

Self-awareness, the 'language-less awareness of one's existence', as the 'common essence' of all the beings from a worm to a Brahmaa.

CHAITANYAM- चैतन्यं - चेतनस्य भावः state of conscious awareness.

JNAATAA/JNAANAM/ JNEYAM

Jnaataa is the one who knows (through his intellect and other senses) the knowledge of an object (Jneyam) as the Knowledge of something (Jnaanam).

JNAPTI is the Knowledge-essence or the nature of understanding, is also a name of Sarasvati, the deity of Knowledge.

DRASHTAA/DARSHANAM/DRSHYAM

Drashtaa is the one who sees (perceives through the mind and senses) - the seen (Drshyam) -

as the Darshana the perceived world-scenario.

KARTAA/ HETU/ KRIYAA

The perceived world of senses and mind is an action-bound world.

The mind keeps on vibrating with the agitations connected to the perceived.

Yet, there are certain actions prescribed as duties for an individual and are known as Kriyaa, and the 'performer of such a Kriyaa' is 'Kartaa' (doer) and he has some purpose or want of a result when he performs a Kriyaa.

JAGAT - the appearing and disappearing pattern called the world.

VISHVAM - the entirety of all the divided things – all that exists as any world-pattern.

SAMSAARA- the sliding pattern-flow called the world

AANANDA - is the complete bliss; it is not the imagined joy of sense experiences; but the silence of all sense perceptions.

BHAA - means to shine, to reveal.

STHAA - means to stay stable.

SHAMA - is to subside, to stay quiet, to melt off.

AMBARA means the sky that covers our world; and also a garment.

AVANI is the place of fulfilment, field of experience, Earth-pedestal.

BRAAHMANA is a person who studies or knows Brahman.

[By birth, one is a Brahmin, through conduct he is a Dvija twice-born; through learning he becomes a Vipra; by all these three, he is known as a Shrotriya.]

ब्रह्म वेदं शुद्धं चैतन्यं वा वेत्ति अधीते । जन्मनः ब्रह्मणो ज्ञेयः संस्कारेद्विज उच्यते विद्यया याति विप्रत्वं त्रिभिः श्रोत्रिय उच्यते।

AASHRAMA means the hermitage, a place of complete rest.

RAMA – one who is pleasing in his conducted.

SHIVAM or SHIVA – the most auspicious state of Knowledge one ascends to in the journey of Aatma-Saakshaatkaara.

AGASTYA , the name of a Maharshi. He gets this name because he crossed over the ‘Aga’ the (Vindhya) Mountain, which blocked the entire sky and stopped the movement of the Sun.

MUNI is a person who has no desires, who is unaffected by pains and pleasures, who is free of attraction, anxiety and anger, and who is of a stabilized intellect.

RISHI is a MantraDrashtaa - in whom a Vedic Mantra is revealed.

BHAGAVAN is a mode of address offered to a highly venerable person who possesses the wealth of ‘Knowledge Supreme’.

DHARMA is that which supports the world.

TATTVAM is the inner essence.

MOKSHA is the state of freedom that is mentioned as the final goal for all individuals who are stuck in the framework of time and space. Moksha is the Knowledge that reveals the mystery of our own existence inside a world-scenario.

SIDDHI is the final achievement, complete accomplishment (belonging to the world or the ‘bodiless state’ of the highest level of Knowers.

SAADHANA is the practice chosen to attain the prescribed goal.

KARMA in the ancient language means the rites prescribed by the Vedas for the attainment of heaven etc. In the present context, any action that bestows a particular result is Karma.

JNAANA refers to the Knowledge portions of the Vedas, which advise renunciation of actions.

NIRVAANA means the complete annihilation of the perceived.

It is the state where the superimposition ceases to be, and only the ‘state of absolute purity’ is left back.

ITIHAASA is the incident that has happened in the past; इति ह आस so it has been; also known as history.

VEDA refers to the Knowledge texts that form the basis of all other knowledge forms prevailing in the world; and is derived from the root-sound ‘Vid’ – to know.

Vedas are not in written form; but only in the sound-form and are known as ‘Shabdās’ also.

SHABDA – refers to the world-existence actually, which is the disturbance in the Silence-state of Reality, and therefore the Veda is also a disturbance only, since it talks about the Jagat.

Shabda is not a sound – is just an agitation.

VEDAANGAS are the auxiliary texts which aid in the pronunciation and interpretation of Vedas.

SHRUTI refers to Vedas, the revelations.

SMRITI refers to the texts containing the traditional rules to be followed, and are authored by some learned person.

SHAASTRAM is the scriptural text which contains commands, instructions of knowledge, sacred precepts etc.

GURU is a term referring to any elder person like a father or teacher who has the authority to advice.

VIBHU - is the all-pervading Supremacy.

SANDHYAA is a mandatory religious ritual to be performed by the Brahmins, thrice daily.

Sandhya means salutation to Sandhya.

Sandhya literally means transition moments of the day namely the two times of twilight, dawn and dusk, and the solar noon.

Sandhya Vandanam means salutation to twilight or solar noon.

APSARAA- अद्भ्यः सरन्ति - are divine damsels produced from the mind of the creator; act as the attendants of the Devas in Svarga. (अद्भ्यः सरन्ति - उद्गच्छन्ति – Apsaraas ‘rise out of waters’; they rise from the creator to fulfil the Vaasanaas of meritorious beings. The word also means those who rise above the waters of the Vaasanaas.)

PUTRA is the son who saves the father from the hells named ‘nna and mna’.

AMRTAM refers to the nectar-state of immortal bliss.

INDRA is the Lord of all Devas. Devas are the superior species with shining bodies.

KINNARAS are mythical beings who have human figures but head of horses.

VALMIKA is an ant hill. Vaalmiki is so named because he came out of the Valmika which was built all around his body, when he woke up from his fierce penance.

BAHI/ANTA- Bahi means outside; or what you believe is outside of you; or what is imagined as an outside of you.

Antah - is what is inside; or what you believe as inside an imagined you; or what is imagined as an inside.

DYAU/BHOOMI/AKAASHA

Dyau means the space which shines. It is a higher level of existence where beings who are endowed with excellent minds exist (it is not the space above the Earth planet); Bhoomi is the stage for actions performed for fulfilling the innate desires; Aakaasha is (not just the space around you) but the principle which reveals any object in any time and space.

JEEVANAM is life; life is just a continuous array of experiences where the coherence is imagined by the mind.

JEEVA is one who has these experiences. Something which experiences something or other without a break is a Jeeva.

BRAHMAA/AJA/PARAMESHTI/SRASTAA/SRSHTIKARTAA - all these refer to the Creator of the world.

He is known as Brahmaa since he swells up as the mind-form called the world. He is also known as Viraat (the body of the world), HiranyaGarbha (the golden womb which contains the seed of world experience), Pitaamaha, the grandfather. He is AJA unborn, not having a birth. He is ‘Lotus-born’ because he rose up from the lotus in the navel of Lord Vishnu.

SAMSAARA - that which flows without a break; that which slithers away;
the worldly-existence which is the ever continuous flow of experiences for the ignorant.

BRAHMAANDA

संसारत्यस्मिन्निति संसारो ब्रह्माण्डम् it slithers in here; so it is Samsaara.

BRAHMAANDA - Cosmic egg, a single’ Brahmaa’s Creation.

There are countless Brahmaandas appearing and disappearing like the foam-bubbles of the ocean-waters.

ARGHYA - is a respectful offering or oblation to a venerable person or deity.

PAADYA - the washing of the feet of the venerable person or deity with suitable rites.

KALPA is the time-span of Brahmaa’s day where the Creation stays unbroken almost equalling thousands of Yugas.

YUGA - countless years of a Creation which is dominated by either goodness or wickedness, till it is destroyed by the Pralaya-forces.

PRALAYA – Dissolution-state of a Creation, where everything dissolves off.

NIVRTI is the state of complete rest where all agitations cease to be.

ANAGHA means a person who is extremely pure at heart with no taints of any sort.

BRAHMAN is a way of addressing anyone who is absorbed in the understanding of the Brahman-state.

VAASANAA is something which stays back after an experience as an impression, or want, or urge, or desire.

JNAATAJNEYA is a person who has understood the final truth of it all, as his innate nature.

KAAKUTSTHA, son of Vikukshi was a brave and powerful King of Solar Dynasty. His descendants were called Kaakutsthas.

IKSHVAAKU was the eldest son of Manu and ascended the throne of Ayodhya. He was the first great Sovereign of the ancient India. He had six sons. Eldest among them was Vikukshi, so named because he had a broad chest.

ARISHTANEMI is the name of a king who was perfect in his actions like the wheel running on tracks without slipping.

ASHVATARI is an animal born in a donkey by the horse; it is supposed to kill its mother in the womb itself. Being bigger in size it causes the mother to die when it is born.

PRATIHAARI is a door-keeper.

TAATA is a word used for addressing anyone with affection or endearment, elder or younger.

VADAVA, VADAVANALA - The submarine-fire which devours the water of the ocean, causes it to throw off the vapours which are condensed into rain and snow. The word is also written as Vadava and Badava.

UDUMBARA refers to the tree, flower and fruit of the Ficus racemosa (syn. Ficus glomerata).

ALAABU VEENAA is a stringed instrument made of bottle gourd.

DAIVAM

दीव्यति + व्यवहरति - प्राणिनां कर्मफलदानेनेति -दैवं

Daivam - so called because of bestowing the fruits of actions to the beings at proper times.

KRTAANTA

फलावस्थः कृतान्तः। the fruit experienced as the end is Krtaanta. He is also Kaala.

KAALA

कलयति अवश्यं, फलं संपादयति इति 'क्रिया' 'कालः' । That which definitely makes the Kriyaa fructify in time is Kaala.

DESHA

दिशति प्रयच्छति प्राणिभ्योऽवकाशमिति देश or सद्व्यवहारोपदेशः

Desha means- gives space for the animals to exist; also means advice leading towards good conduct

SAADHU VAADA a cry of 'Well-done', a cry of approbation.

GUNA – Particular quality that dominates the intellect

SattvaGuna – goodness, purity of heart, selflessness, calmness, patience

RajoGuna - action-oriented, restlessness, anxiety

TamoGuna – laziness, dullness, lethargy, extremely selfish

LOTUSES -

कौ मोदते इति कुमुदं – सिताम्भोजम् - blooms happily in water- white lotus

कोर्बलयमिव शोभाकरत्वात् कुवलयम् - beautiful like circular forms of water

कुवलयम् - इन्दीवरम् - नीलाब्जम् - blue lotus

कह्लारम् – सौगन्धिकम् सितकमलम् - fragrant white lotus

अराकाराणि पत्राणि विन्दतीति अरविन्दम् - has spoke-like petals

VRKSHA/VITAPA शाखा विस्तारो अस्यास्तीति विटपः – वृक्षः

UTAJA - hut उटेभ्यः जायन्ते इति उटजाः made of grass and leaves

SALUTATIONS

ॐ

कूजन्तं रामरामेति मधुरं मधुराक्षरं
 आरुह्य कविताशाखां वन्दे वाल्मीकिकोकिलम्।
 Salutation to the Vaalmiki-Koel bird,
 who sits on the branch of the poetry
 singing sweetly the sweet letters 'Rama, Rama', the blissful state of the supreme.

अखण्डमण्डलाकारं व्याप्तं येन चराचरं
 तत्पदं दर्शितं येन तस्मै श्री गुरवे वसिष्ठाय नमः।
 Salutation to the great Master Vasishtha, who reveals the state of Reality,
 who pervades without the division of name and form the entire sphere of the perceived
 that is filled with the moving and non-moving objects.

श्री रामाय ज्ञानरूपाय वसिष्ठशिष्याय विश्वामित्रप्रियाय
 लोकरक्षकाय मोहहरणाय नारायणस्वरूपाय नमः।
 Salutation to Rama, the form of Knowledge,
 who is the devoted disciple of Vasishtha, the form of Brahman,
 who is the beloved of Vishvaamitra, the Savior of the world,
 who removes the ignorance, and who is Naaraayana in human form.

यतः सर्वाणि भूतानि प्रतिभान्ति स्थितानि च
 यत्रैवोपशमं यान्ति तस्मै सत्यात्मने नमः। (01.01)
 Salutations to the Aatman of the nature of Truth;
 from which all beings appear, stay and dissolve off into.

ज्ञाता ज्ञानं तथा ज्ञेयं द्रष्टादर्शनदृश्यभूः
 कर्ता हेतुक्रिया यस्मात्तस्मै ज्ञस्यात्मने नमः। (01.02)
 Salutations to the Aatman of the nature of understanding;
 from which alone the concepts of
 'the knower, knowledge and the thing to be known',
 'the perceiver, perceiving and the perceived phenomenon',
 'the doer, the action and the purpose of the action'
 shine forth.

स्फुरन्ति सीकरा यस्मादानन्दस्याम्बरेऽवनौ
 सर्वेषां जीवनं तस्मै ब्रह्मानन्दात्मने नमः। (01.03)
 Salutation to the Aatman of the nature of Supreme bliss,
 from which the bliss-drops burst forth to drench the space above and the earth below,
 and which exists as the essence of life in all.

परमहंसश्रीमदानन्दबोधेन्द्रसरस्वतीप्रणीतवासिष्ठमहारामायणतात्पर्यप्रकाशाख्यव्याख्यासंवलितः

पणशीकरोपाह्वलक्ष्मणशर्मतनुजनुषा वासुदेवशर्मणा सम्पादितः

आदिकविश्रीमद्वाल्मीकिमहामुनिप्रणीतो योगवासिष्ठः।

TRANSLATION AND EXPLANATION BY NARAYANALAKSHMI
BASED ON THE 'TAATPARYAPRAKAASHA' BEGINS HERE:

वैराग्यप्रकरणम् प्रथमम्

CHAPTER ONE

CONTEXT OF THE VAASISHTAM DISCOURSE

[The entire Vaasishtam-text is discoursed by Bhagavaan Agastya to Brahmin Suteekshna, where a Brahmin named Agniveshya relates this to his son Kaarunya, where a DevaDoota had discoursed this to an Apsaraa named Suruchi, where Sage Vaalmiki had discoursed this to King Arishtanemi, where he had once discoursed this to his disciple Bharadvaaja. The text contains a detailed dialogue of Brahman-Knowledge that took place between Rama the son of Dasharatha, and Brahmarshi Vasishtha the Preceptor of the royal family. Since this auspicious Grantha is the essence of Vasishtha's discourse on 'Brahman Knowledge', this great 'Knowledge- Scripture' is named as 'JnaanaVaasishtam', and is also referred to as the 'DviteeyaRaamaayanam', since it is composed by Maharshi Vaalmiki in a poetic form, as a 'JnaanaKaavyam.'; and is the auspicious knowledge that rose from Lord Brahmaa himself, to save the beings of his Creation.]

KARMA AND JNAANA; WHICH IS THE BETTER OF THE TWO?

[The term 'Karma' in this context refers to the rites ordained by the Vedic texts.

The question is whether to perform the rites as a householder in a city, or seek the knowledge by staying in the forest doing penance. What should a Brahmin who is bound to the Fire-rites and sacrifices (Yajnas) as his ascertained duties, do in such a case? If one wants to have liberation (Moksha) alone as his goal of life, should he renounce the duties of life, and seek to a life of contemplation only? Is 'duty' a hindrance to the attainment of liberation?]

सुतीक्ष्णो ब्राह्मणः कश्चित्संशयाकृष्टमानसोऽगस्तेराश्रमं गत्वा मुनिं पप्रच्छ सादरम्। (01.04)

Some Brahmin named 'Suteekshna', troubled by some doubt in his mind, once went to the hermitage of 'Muni Agastya' and asked humbly.

(*Agastya: अगं अस्यति इति अगस्तिः। 'He who subjugated the Vindhya Mountain'*)

['Sage Agastya' relates the entire Vaasishtam-text, known also as 'MahaaRaamaayanam' to a Brahmin named 'Suteekshna' (one with a sharp intellect), who entertains a doubt as to - 'which path is conducive to the attainment of Moksha, - the performance of Vedic rites (Karma) or the analytical method of knowledge (Jnaana)?']

In other words, his doubt amounted to, who is fit for the attainment of Moksha, a householder, or a man of renunciation?]

सुतीक्ष्ण उवाच

Suteekshna spoke to Sage Agastya

भगवन्धर्मतत्त्वज्ञ सर्वशास्त्रविनिश्चित संशयोऽस्ति महानेकस्त्वमेतं कृपया वद। (01.05)

मोक्षस्य कारणं कर्म ज्ञानं वा मोक्षसाधनमुभयं वा विनिश्चित्य एकं कथय कारणम्। (01.06)

Hey Bhagavan! You know the 'real essence of Dharma'. You know the 'ascertained conclusion' of all the 'Shaastras' (Knowledge-Scriptures). I have one great doubt; please answer this for me with compassion. Practising which method shall one attain liberation, is it 'Karma' or 'Jnaana', or both?

With proper ascertainment, tell me why that is chosen as the 'means of liberation'.

अगस्तिरुवाच

Sage Agastya spoke

KARMA AND JNAANA; BOTH ARE THE SAME IN ESSENCE

(*'Karma' and 'Jnaana' do not oppose each other; but are complementary to each other.*)

उभाभ्यामेव पक्षाभ्यां यथा खे पक्षिणां गतिः तथैव ज्ञानकर्माभ्यां जायते परमं पदम्। (01.07)

The bird has to fly in the sky, using both the wings. So also, the same 'Supreme Truth' is attained by following the path of 'Karma and Jnaana' both.

(*'Supreme Truth' is the abstract knowledge about the mystery of one's own existence in the world.*)

केवलात्कर्मणो ज्ञानान्नहि मोक्षोऽभिजायते किंतूभाभ्यां भवेन्मोक्षः साधनं तूभयं विदुः। (01.08)

Just by following the 'Karma path' or the 'Jnaana path' alone, 'liberation' (Moksha) cannot be attained; but together they lead towards 'liberation'; and both when followed simultaneously, are understood as the single practice resulting in the 'state of liberation'.

STORY OF THE BRAHMIN NAMED KAARUNYA, SON OF AGNIVESHYA

अस्मिन्नर्थे पुरावृत्तिमितिहासं वदामि ते।

In this context, I will relate to you a past incident that happened long back.

कारुण्याख्यः पुरा कश्चित्ब्राह्मणोऽधीतवेदकोऽग्निवेश्यस्य पुत्रोऽभूद्वेदवेदाङ्गपारगः। (09,10)

गुरोरधीतविद्यः सन्नाजगाम गृहं प्रति तस्थौ अकर्मकृत्पूर्णां संशयानो गृहे तदा। (10,11)

अग्निवेश्यो विलोक्याथ पुत्रं कर्मविवर्जितं प्राह एतद्वचो निन्द्यं गुरुः पुत्रं हिताय च। (11,12)

Long ago, there was once a Brahmin named 'Kaarunya', son of 'Agniveshya'.

He was well-versed in the Vedas and other scriptures related to the Vedic study.

He finished his education in the 'GuruKula' (residential school), and returned home. However, he abstained from all the rites that were prescribed for his station of life, with some doubt lingering in his mind still.

Agniveshya observed his son abstaining from the performance of all the prescribed rites; chided him and spoke these words of advice as a teacher, with his son's welfare in the mind.

अग्निवेश्य उवाच

Agniveshya spoke to Kaarunya, his son

किमेतत्पुत्र कुरुषे पालनं न स्वकर्मणः। अकर्मनिरतः सिद्धिं कथं प्राप्स्यसि तद्वद। (12,13)

कर्मणोऽस्मान्निवृत्तेः किं कारणं तन्निवेद्यताम्। (01.13)

Son, what has happened to you? Why are you not performing your regular duties? If you abstain from all these works, how will you attain the final goal of life (Moksha), tell me?

For what reason you have abstained from the regular duties, explain it to me.

कारुण्योवाच

Kaarunya spoke to his father

PRAVRRTI AND NIVRTTI: WHICH IS THE BETTER OF THE TWO?

(*'Pravrtti'* means the interest shown towards the worldly life. *'Nivrtti'* means the disinterest shown towards the worldly life.)

यावज्जीवमग्निहोत्रं नित्यं संध्यामुपासयेत् प्रवृत्तिरूपो धर्मोऽयं श्रुत्या स्मृत्या च चोदितः। (01.14)

Both the 'Shrutis' (revelations of the Rishis) and 'Smritis' (authored by humans), advise a man to perform the 'Fire-rites' and 'Sandhyaa-worship' all throughout his life, which is a duty that is connected to the worldly life (Pravrtti). (*In that case I have to live as a householder, marry, beget children, and earn wealth for them.*)

न धनेन भवेन्मोक्षः कर्मणा प्रजया न वा त्यागमात्रेण किंत्वेके यतयोऽश्नन्ति चामृतं

इति श्रुत्योर्द्वयोर्मध्ये किं कर्तव्यं मया गुरो इति संदिग्धतां गत्वा तूष्णीम्भूतोऽस्मि कर्मणि। (01.16)

(Again they say that) Moksha cannot be attained through the attainment of wealth, or the performance of duties, or begetting progeny; but through 'renunciation' alone do those noble ones strive to attain that single goal of 'Immortality' (Amrtam). Since the 'Shrutis' instruct both the paths (of 'Pravrtti' and 'Nivrtti', the performance of the duties and renunciation of the duties), what should I do, hey father?

Caught in this dilemma, I have abstained from all the duties.

अगस्तिरुवाच

Sage Agastya spoke

इत्युक्त्वा तात विप्रोऽसौ कारुण्यो मौनमागतः। तथाविधं सुतं दृष्ट्वा पुनः प्राह गुरुः सुतम्। (01.17)

Having spoken thus, the Brahmin named Kaarunya remained silent. His father understood his doubt, and spoke to his son like this.

अग्निवेश्य उवाच

Agniveshya spoke to Kaarunya, his son

शृणु पुत्र कथामेकां तदर्थं हृदयेऽखिलं मतोऽवधार्य पुत्र त्वं यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु। (01.18)

Listen my son, to this great story (of MahaaRaamaayanam) which explains everything that you want to know. My dear son! Understand the subtle essence of the great text which I will relate to you in detail. After listening to the entire text, and understanding its purport fully, you can later decide your course of life, as you deem fit.

[The 'Vaasishtam text' is related to an Apsara named Suruchi by a DevaDoota (divine ambassador), who had a chance to hear it when it was related to 'King Arishtanemi' by Maharshi Vaalmiki himself, who is the author of the text.]

STORY OF THE APSARAA NAMED SURUCHI

(*'Apsaraas' are the beautiful damsels of heaven, interested only in the sense-pleasures offered by the heaven; but this lady Suruchi had developed disinterest towards all the heavenly enjoyments, and chose to spend time in solitude atop the mountain-peaks, absorbed in the 'Vichaara', the analysis of Reality, always.*)

सुरुचिर्नाम काचित्स्त्री अप्सरोगणोत्तमा उपविष्टा हिमवतःशिखरे शिखिसंवृते

रमन्ते कामसंतप्ताः किन्नर्यो यत्र किन्नरैः स्वर्धुन्योघेन संसृष्टे महाघौघविनाशिना। (01.20)

There was a lady named Suruchi (one with the taste for excellent knowledge), who was the most excellent of the Apsaraa group. She was once seated on the summit of the 'Snow Mountain' which was occupied by beautiful peacocks, where the 'passion-filled Kinnara ladies' enjoy the company of their lovers, and where the roaring sounds of the 'divine river Gangaa' destroys the hosts of sins.

दूतमिन्द्रस्य गच्छन्तमन्तरिक्षे ददर्श सा।तमुवाच महाभागा सुरुचिश्चाप्सरोवरा। (01.21)

She saw the messenger (Doota) of Indra moving in the sky.

That lady of great merits and the excellent of all Apsaraas, addressed him and said,

"देवदूत महाभाग कुत आगम्यते त्वया अधुना कुत्र गन्तासि तत्सर्वं कृपया वद"। (01.22)

"DevaDoota! Meritorious one! From where are you arriving at?

Which place are you moving towards, now? Please relate to me everything."

देवदूतोवाच

Messenger of Indra spoke to Apsaraa

साधु पृष्टं त्वया सुभ्रु यथावत्कथयामि ते।अरिष्टनेमी राजर्षिर्दत्त्वा राज्यं सुताय वै वीतरागः स धर्मात्मा
निर्ययौ तपसे वनम्।तपश्चरत्यसौ राजा पर्वते गन्धमादने, कार्यं कृत्वा मया तत्र तत आगम्यतेऽधुना।

गन्तास्मि पार्श्वे शक्रस्य तं वृत्तान्तं निवेदितुम्। (01.25)

Hey lady with beautiful eyebrows (Subhroo)! You have questioned rightly.

I will tell you everything as it happened.

The 'Royal Sage Arishtanemi of righteous conduct', felt disinterest in all the worldly affairs; gave off his kingdom to his son; and retired to the forest to engage in penance.

That king is at present performing his penance in the 'GandhaMaadana Mountain'.

I have finished my work there, and am coming from there now.

I am on my way to Indra's court, to report to him all that happened there.

अप्सरोवाच

Apsaraa spoke

वृत्तान्तः कोऽभवत्तत्र कथयस्व मम प्रभो प्रष्टुकामा विनीतास्मि नोद्वेगं कर्तुमर्हसि। (01.26)

Hey Prabhu! Tell me what all happened there! I feel curious about it all. I humbly beg of you.

Do not disappoint me or feel annoyed by my request.

देवदूतोवाच

Messenger of Indra spoke to Apsaraa

शृणु भद्रे यथावृत्तं विस्तरेण वदामि ते।

तस्मिन्नाज्ञि वने तत्र तपश्चरति दुस्तरमित्यहं देवराजेन सुभूराज्ञापितः तदा। (27,28)

Hey lady of auspicious conduct (Bhadraa)! Listen, I will tell you everything in detail.

Hey lady with beautiful eyebrows (Subhroo)! Since, King Arishtanemi was doing a severe penance in the forest, I was ordered by the King of Devas (Indra) like this.

(The term 'ArishtaNemi' means, 'one who never hurts or damages the rim of Dharma-wheel')

इन्द्र उवाच

Indra spoke to the messenger

KING ARISHTANEMI IS OFFERED THE HEAVENLY PLEASURES BY INDRA

दूत त्वं तत्र गच्छाशु गृहीत्वदेदं विमानकमप्सरोगणसंयुक्तं नानावादित्रशोभितं गन्धर्वसिद्धयक्षैश्च
किन्नराद्यैश्च शोभितं तालवेणुमृदङ्गादिपर्वते गन्धमादने नानावृक्षसमाकीर्णं गत्वा तस्मिन्गिरौ
शुभे अरिष्टनेमिं राजानं दूतारोप्य विमानके आनय स्वर्गभोगाय नगरीममरावतीम्। (28 to 31)

Hey Doota! You hasten towards GandhaMaadana Mountain filled with varieties of trees, in this air-vehicle getting accompanied by the groups of beautiful Apsaraas and many types of musicians, and adorned by the Gandharvas, Siddhas, Yakshas and Kinnaras, and equipped with all the musical instruments like Taala (cymbals), flutes and Mrdanga (drums); and hey Doota, make King Arishtanemi climb this air-vehicle, and bring him here to 'Amaraavatee city', so that he can enjoy the innumerable pleasures of the heaven.'

देवदूतोवाच

Messenger of Indra spoke to Apsaraa

इत्याज्ञां प्राप्य शक्रस्य गृहीत्वा तद्विमानकं सर्वोपस्करसंयुक्तं तस्मिन्नद्रावहं ययौ। (01.32)

After receiving Indra's command, I climbed on to that air-vehicle, which was equipped with all the things he mentioned, and went to that mountain.

आगत्य पर्वते तस्मिन्नाज्ञो गत्वाऽऽश्रमं मया निवेदिता महेन्द्रस्य सर्वाज्ञाऽरिष्टनेमये। (01.33)

After reaching that mountain, I went to the hermitage of that king, and reported to King Arishtanemi, the instructions that were spoken by Mahendra.

इति मद्बचनं श्रुत्वा संशयानोऽवदच्छुभे,

Hey auspicious lady! Hearing my words, feeling somewhat doubtful, he said,

राजा उवाच

The king spoke to the messenger of Indra

ARISHTANEMI QUESTIONS THE WORTHINESS OF THE HEAVENLY PLEASURES

प्रष्टुमिच्छामि दूत त्वां तन्मे त्वं वक्तुमर्हसि। गुणा दोषाश्च के तत्र स्वर्गे वद ममाग्रतः, ज्ञात्वा स्थितिं तु
तत्रत्यां करिष्येऽहं यथारुचि। (01.34, 35)

Hey Doota! I want to ask you some questions for which you must give the answers proper.

First of all, tell me what the good and bad qualities are in that heaven-experience.

After understanding what the real state of such a place is, I will then decide my future course of action.'

देवदूतोवाच

Indra's messenger spoke to King Arishtanemi

स्वर्गे पुण्यस्य सामग्र्या भुज्यते परमं सुखम्।

In the Heaven, the best of joys get experienced through the amount of merits one has acquired.

उत्तमेन तु पुण्येन प्राप्नोति स्वर्गमुत्तमं, मध्यमेन तथा मध्यः, स्वर्गो भवति नान्यथा।

कनिष्ठेन तु पुण्येन स्वर्गो भवति तादृशः। (01.37)

Through the excellent merit one gets the excellent pleasures of the Heaven.

Through mediocre merit, mediocre pleasures get experienced.

For the least class of merit, the pleasures obtained are also likewise.

परोत्कर्षासहिष्णुत्वं स्पर्धा चैव समैश्च तैः।

Even there (in the Heaven), the envy about the superior position of others, and competitive nature is common for all.

कनिष्ठेषु च संतोषो यावत्पुण्यक्षयो भवेत्। क्षीणे पुण्ये विशत्येतं मर्त्यलोकं च मानवाः।

For those of least merits, the joy lasts only till the merits reach their end.

The 'descendants of Manu' (Maanavas) enter the mortal-world when the merits finish off.

इत्यादिगुणदोषाश्च स्वर्गे राजन्नवस्थिताः। (01.39)

Hey Raajan! These are the good and bad features of the Svarga-experience’.

देवदूतोवाच

Messenger of Indra spoke to Apsaraa

इति श्रुत्वा वचो भद्रे स राजा प्रत्यभाषत।

Hearing these words, Hey ‘Bhadre’ (auspicious lady), the king spoke like this.

राजा उवाच

The king spoke

THE KING REFUSES TO ACCEPT THE PLEASURES OF HEAVEN

नेच्छामि देवदूताहं स्वर्गमीदृग्विधं फलम्। (01.40)

अतःपरं महोग्रं तु तपःकृत्वा कलेवरं त्यक्ष्याम्यहमशुद्धं हि जीर्णं त्वचमिवोरगः। (01.41)

देवदूत, विमानेदं गृहीत्वा त्वं यथागतः तथा गच्छ महेन्द्रस्य संनिधौ त्वं, नमोऽस्तु ते। (01.42)

Hey DevaDoota! I do not desire for the experience of such a Svarga with such qualities. I will now engage myself in a fierce penance and discard this impure deteriorated body, like a snake discarding its skin. Hey DevaDoota! You take this air-vehicle and go back the way you came to Mahendra’s presence. Salutation to you!

देवदूतोवाच

Messenger of Indra spoke to Apsaraa

INDRA IS PLEASED BY THE DISPASSION SHOWN BY THE KING

इत्युक्तोऽहं गतो भद्रे शक्रस्याग्रे निवेदितुम्।

यथावृत्तं निवेद्याथ महदाश्चर्यतां गतः पुनः प्राह महेन्द्रो मां क्षक्षणं मधुरया गिरा। (43,44)

Hey Bhadre! Having received a response like this, I went back to the presence of Shakra (Indra) to report this all. When I reported the king’s words, the entire assembly of Indra was in great surprise, and again Mahendra spoke to me soft and sweet words like this.

इन्द्र उवाच

Indra spoke to the messenger

दूत गच्छ पुनस्तत्र तं राजानं नयाश्रमं वाल्मीकेर्जाततत्त्वस्य स्वबोधार्थं विरागिणम्। संदेशं मम वाल्मीकेर्महर्षेः त्वं निवेदय। 'महर्षे त्वं विनीताय राज्ञेऽस्मै वीतरागिणे नस्वर्गमिच्छते तत्त्वं प्रबोधय महामुने तेन संसारदुःखार्तो मोक्षमिष्यति च क्रमात्'। (44 to 47)

Hey Doota! You again go there and take the king who has developed dispassion, to the hermitage of ‘Vaalmiki, who knows the Knowledge of the Supreme truth (JnaataTattva)’, for his enlightenment purpose. You present this message of mine, to Maharshi Vaalmiki like this;

‘MahaaRishi! This king has lost interest in the worldly pleasures. He is endowed with the quality of humbleness. He does not desire the pleasures of our heaven.

Hey MahaaMuni! Please explain to him the Supreme truth, so that this king who is suffering the pain of Samsaara, will attain Moksha through the proper practice.’

देवदूतोवाच

Messenger of Indra spoke to Apsaraa

इत्युक्त्वा देवराजेन प्रेषितोऽहं तदन्तिके।मयागत्य पुनस्तत्र राजा वल्मीकजन्मने निवेदितो महेन्द्रस्य राज्ञा मोक्षस्य साधनम्।ततो वल्मिकजन्मासौ राजानं समपृच्छत अनामयमतिप्रीत्या कुशलप्रश्नवार्तया।

With such an instruction I was sent back to the king by Mahendra. I took him again to the Sage’s abode, and presented the king to the ‘Sage who was born out of the ant-hill (Valmika)’ along with the message of Indra; and also reported to him, that the king had chosen to learn the path of Moksha, by disregarding the offer for heavenly pleasures. Then, the ‘Sage born out of the Valmika’ (Vaalmiki), showing great affection towards the king, questioned him about the purpose of his visit while enquiring about his welfare.

राजोवाच

The king spoke

भगवन्धर्मतत्त्वज्ञ, ज्ञातज्ञेयविदांवर, कृतार्थोऽहं भवद्दृष्ट्या तदेव कुशलं मम। (50)

भगवन्प्रष्टुमिच्छामि तदविघ्नेन मे वद।संसारबन्धदुःखार्तेः कथं मुञ्चामि तद्वद। (01.51)

Bhagavan! You know the exact duty to be performed by all.

You know 'That truth which alone needs to be known'!

You are the 'Excellent of all the Knowers'. I am fulfilled by your sight.

That itself is the greatest well-being of mine. Bhagavan!

I want to ask you this question, please answer without the denial of any sort.

How will I free myself from the 'wretched suffering of Samsaara (worldly-existence)'? Explain it to me.

वाल्मीकिरुवाच

Vaalmiki spoke

शृणु राजन्प्रवक्ष्यामि रामायणमखण्डितम्।श्रुत्वावधार्य यत्नेन जीवन्मुक्तो भविष्यसि। (52)

वसिष्ठरामसंवादं मोक्षोपायकथां शुभां ज्ञातस्वभावो राजेन्द्र वदामि श्रूयतां बुध। (01.53)

Listen hey king, I will relate to you the entire Ramayana without leaving out any portion.

By listening to it and contemplating on those instructions, you will become a 'JeevanMukta'.

I, who know my true essence, will now relate to you the 'dialogue between Vasishtha and Rama',

which contains the auspicious means of attaining 'liberation'. Listen to what I say now, hey 'Wise one'!

राजोवाच

The king spoke

को रामः कीदृशः कस्य बद्धो वा मुक्त एव वा एतन्मे निश्चितं ब्रूहि ज्ञानं तत्त्वविदांवर। (01.54)

Best among Knowers! Who is Rama? What was he like? Whose son was he? Was he bound or liberated?

Tell me in detail, all that I have to know."

वाल्मीकिरुवाच

Vaalmiki spoke

शापव्याजवशादेव राजवेषधरो हरिः आहृताज्ञानसंपन्नः किञ्चिज्ज्ञोऽसौऽभवत्प्रभुः। (01.55)

Only because of some curse, Lord Hari took the form of a king, to honour the words of the devotees, thus making the curses fructify; and because of that, became a lesser form of a Knower, by accepting the ignorant state.

राजोवाच

The king spoke

चिदानन्दस्वरूपे हि रामे चैतन्यविग्रहे शापस्य कारणं ब्रूहि कः शशाप चेति मे वद। (01.56)

Rama is of the nature of the 'Supreme blissful state'. He is the form of 'Supreme Chaitanya' (Supreme Reality). What was the cause of the curse? Who cursed him? Tell me all about it.

वाल्मीकिरुवाच

Vaalmiki spoke to Arishtanemi

सनत्कुमारो निष्काम अवसद्ब्रह्मसद्गनि।वैकुण्ठादागतो विष्णुस्त्रैलोक्याधिपतिः प्रभुः ब्रह्मणा पूजितस्तत्र

सत्यलोकनिवासिभिः विना कुमारम्।तं दृष्ट्वा ह्युवाच प्रभुरीश्वरः सनत्कुमार स्तब्धोऽसि निष्कामो

गर्वचेष्टया, अतस्त्वं भव कामार्तः शरजन्मेतिनामतः। तेनापि शापितो विष्णुः सर्वज्ञत्वं तवास्ति

यत्किञ्चित्कालं हि तत्त्यक्त्वा त्वमज्ञानी भविष्यसि। (57 to 60)

SanatKumaara, who was free of all the desires, lived in the 'abode of Lord Brahmaa'.

Once Vishnu the 'Lord of the three-worlds', arrived there and was worshipped by Brahmaa along with all the other residents of SatyaLoka, except SanatKumaara. Lord Vishnu observed him (not paying due respects to him) and said 'SanatKumaara! You are arrogant, and are acting conceited because you have conquered all the desires. Therefore you get born as a man filled with desires with the name of SharaJanma'.

Vishnu was also cursed by him like this, 'You are an all-knower; for some time-span you will lose that power, and will become ignorant'.

भृगुर्भार्या हतां दृष्ट्वा ह्युवाच क्रोधमूर्च्छितः विष्णो तवापि भार्याया वियोगो हि भविष्यति। (01.61)

Sage Bhrgu saw his dead wife and losing himself in anger said, 'Vishnu! You will also suffer the agony of separation from your wife.'

वृन्दया शापितो विष्णुश्छलनं यत्त्वया कृतमतस्त्वं स्त्रीवियोगं तु वचनात्मम यास्यसि। (01.62)

Vrindaa, the wife of the Asura king, cursed him like this, 'Because of your deceit, you will attain separation from your wife by the power of my words'.

भार्या हि देवदत्तस्य पयोष्णीतीरसंस्थिता नृसिम्हवेषधृग्विष्णुं दृष्ट्वा पञ्चत्वमागता,

तेन शप्तो हि नृहरिः दुःखार्तः स्त्रीवियोगतः, तवापि भार्याया सार्धं वियोगो हि भविष्यति। (01.64)

DevaDatta's wife, who was standing on the bank of River Payoshni, lost her life when she saw the terrifying form of NaraSimha. Her husband feeling the agony of his wife's separation, cursed NaraSimha, 'You will also be separated from your wife.'

भृगुणैवं कुमारेण शापितो देवशर्मणा वृन्दया शापितो विष्णुस्तेन मानुष्यतां गतः। (01.65)

In this manner, Vishnu was cursed by Bhrgu, SanatKumaara, DevaSharmaa and Vrindaa; so he attained the human form. I have now told you how these curses were caused.

एतत्ते कथितं सर्वं शापव्याजस्य कारणं इदानीं वच्मि तत्सर्वं सावधानमतिः शृणु। (01.66)

Now whatever words I say from now on, listen with full attention.