

# YOGA VASISTHA IN POEM

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## CHAPTER VI



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#### 11. The Story Sikhidhvaja and Chudala

(This story includes three smaller stories woven into it to highlight certain important points: Story of the Precious Stone, Story of the Philosophers' Stone and Story of the Wild Elephant.)

**Swami Suryadevananda**

Edited by Sivananda-Usha

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

## 11. The Story of Sikhidhvaja and Chudala

### PART I: SIKHDHVAJA AND CHUDALA

Some things appear in abundance  
Sometimes they are not seen for a while  
Disappearing and reappearing again  
In the same or in different forms

There once lived king Sikhidhvaja and queen Chudala  
Both were noble, virtuous and dutiful  
They shared interests of the spiritual way  
Helping each other evolve in life's journey

One day the queen pondered life's meaning  
She started direct inquiry into the truth  
Reflecting and seeing within herself  
Examining previously unconsidered notions

### QUEEN CHUDALA'S DIRECT INQUIRY

Who am I and what is this ignorance  
Just how did delusion arise within  
The body and sense organs are not self  
Both are dependent on the mind

This mind too I consider to be inert  
For it is directed by the ego-sense  
It thinks and entertains notions  
Prompted by the intellect or buddhi

This intellect too is inert as well  
It too is directed by the ego-sense

This ego-sense is inert as well  
It is dependent on that which exists

That which exists is pure consciousness  
Entangled somehow with these faculties  
Though this is not possible as it is infinite  
It is ignorance masquerading as reality

I am that self which is pure consciousness  
Dwelling as the individual in this body  
I am aware of all these faculties  
They cannot be me—I am pure awareness

Yet somehow I've forgotten my essential nature  
As pure consciousness—the only existence  
Such is the power of the self—consciousness  
It becomes whatever it conceives itself to be

It seems to abandon its own nature  
Somehow taking on unreal limitations  
Seeing itself as only objects in confusion  
Experiencing itself as something else

#### **VASISTHA'S COMMENTS**

Thus contemplating within herself  
Queen Chudala became enlightened  
Attaining what was to be known  
Feeling great joy and peace within

She directly saw reality within herself  
Supreme consciousness as the only truth

Untainted by any impurity or limitation  
Consciousness became self-aware in her

Consciousness alone manifests as all  
Body, mind, intellect and the senses  
Apart from consciousness nothing is  
World appearance is consciousness alone

All that is known by different names  
All is consciousness—there is naught else  
In it there is no division of subject-object  
This arises in one's mind as delusion only

#### **CHUDALA CONTINUES CONTEMPLATION**

I am pure consciousness, free of ego-sense  
Birth and death do not exist in me  
I have realized self—indestructible am I  
I see now all forms are manmade only

What is seen and the seer are really one  
All happens in the self or consciousness  
I have attained to perfect quiescence  
There is no this, no 'I', no you or other

#### **VASISTHA CONTINUES**

Chudala grew introverted day by day  
Rejoicing more in the bliss within  
Free from all craving and attachment  
Neither rejecting nor running after things

In a short time she realized the truth  
This world is only an appearance

She shone in the radiance of inner light  
Abiding as the self—most effulgent

Seeing her in such a peaceful state  
Her husband, king Sikhidhvaja, then inquired  
What was it that made this difference  
As he clearly felt she had some attainment

#### CHUDALA ANSWERS SIKHIDHVAJA

I have abandoned the form assumed  
It is an appearance, not the truth at all  
I am radiant because I've attained truth  
The joy of reality ever shines in the heart

I am the true ruler of the universe  
Not the finite being earlier mistaken  
All limitations have been abandoned  
I seek nothing, want nothing—I am the all

I'm happy with whatever comes naturally  
I see the self as truth—in all and everywhere  
That which is myself is the only existence  
There is naught else—self alone exists

#### VASISTHA CONTINUES

Unable and unwilling to understand  
The king dismissed her words as delusion  
Calling her experiences childish fancies  
Though still conversing with her affectionately

The queen realized the king's mindset  
Unwilling and thus unable to understand

She continued her role and her duties  
Inwardly steady and abiding in self

Three ways one sees all things  
First is pursuing what is desirable  
Feeling that it will promote happiness  
But realizing it is quite the opposite

Second is what is considered detestable  
One feels avoiding it is happiness  
Not realizing the avoidance itself  
Is the greatest sorrow self-inflicted

Third is what one is indifferent to  
This brings neither of the opposites  
Indifference is not callous cold disregard  
But one knows objects are appearances

#### VASISTHA: ON GAINING PSYCHIC POWERS

Psychic powers are also called siddhis  
The deluded pursue these attainments  
The sage of self-knowledge avoids them  
As self-knowledge is the supreme attainment

All achievements depend on four factors  
Time, place, action and means utilized  
Action or effort is the supreme factor  
Attainments are not possible without it

Immature people have faith in technique  
They feel some act or trick to be most important

They exert, but from behind this limitation  
And fail because being, not trick, must exert

The whole being must rise and exert  
Doing what needs to be done as duty  
When this inner need itself exerts  
Things come with hard work but no struggle

#### **VASISTHA: ON AWAKENING KUNDALINI**

Abandon unrelated and opposing habits  
Learn how to close the body's apertures  
Master a good posture that can endure  
Have pure diet and cleanliness

Contemplate the meaning of teachings  
Found in the scriptures and holy ones  
Good company is absolutely essential  
As is right conduct in all aspects of life

Inwardly renounce things and attachments  
Not as an act but in truth—you must feel this  
Sit comfortably and practice pranayama  
Without allowing rising thoughts to interfere

Thoughts and feelings will rise and fall  
No need to interfere and suppress them  
Gradually bring the life-force under control  
This life-force sustains and animates all

Deep within there is a nerve passage or nadi  
It is known as antravestika—source of other nadi

Existing in all beings, resting coiled at its source  
It is in contact with all avenues of the body

Within the body dwells the supreme power  
Known as kundalini—the prime power  
When prana or life-force from the heart  
Reaches kundalini awakening happens

Kundalini begins to move within oneself  
Giving rise to awareness in many ways  
It is the seed of consciousness and understanding  
All other energies unleash when it flows

Kundalini's functions appear as diversity  
It is the body, elements and life-force  
It is mind, intellect, ego-sense as well  
It is inhalation and exhalation sustaining life

#### **VASISHTA: ON PHYSICAL AND MENTAL ILLNESSES**

If the downward or the upward pull  
Of this inner energy is excessive  
And is not arrested in some way  
Death comes about as an effect

If the movement of energy is balanced  
So it neither goes up nor comes down  
There is unceasing harmony and balance  
All diseases and ills are quickly overcome

Physical and mental ills are sources of pain  
Appearing sometimes together, sometimes not

Both are rooted in ignorance and wickedness  
Both end when self-knowledge is attained

Ignorance gives rise to likes and dislikes  
Disrupting the inner balance and harmony  
Causing the inner energy to move erratically  
Leading to physical and mental ills as effects

Ignorance weakens will and mental restraint  
Opening the door to poor, unhealthy habits  
Useless company, indulgence and wicked thoughts  
All weaken the pathways of energy's flow

Environments must be healthy in every way  
Surroundings, clothes and one's company  
Be ever vigilant as earlier impressions surge  
Unhealthy ones can try to subvert aspiration

Minor physical ills are best corrected  
By a healthy, proper mental attitude  
Moderate physical ills are overcome  
By treatment, prayers and right action

Serious physical ills come to end  
Only when self-knowledge is attained  
Mental ills are all rooted in ignorance  
They cease on attaining self-knowledge

Physical ills often arise from mental ills  
In confusion, the path is not clearly seen  
Life-forces are agitated in confusion  
Clogs result in nadis or energy pathways

By right understanding and right action  
The mind becomes whole, pure and healthy  
Life-forces then flow unobstructed  
Diseases cease as the body heals itself

#### **VASISTHA: CONSCIOUSNESS AS ALL THIS**

Though infinite consciousness alone exists  
It manifests differently as all that we see  
Without undergoing any change at all  
Ever unchanged while appearing to change

Just as space is space alone everywhere  
A room and walls does not alter space  
Consciousness ever stays consciousness  
Light that animates and sustains all in itself

Slight movement of thought generates all  
Elements, bodies and this world you see  
Appearing one way here, another there  
It alone is the substance of all these forms

Distinctions and divisions do not exist  
They are all creations of the perceiver  
Good, bad, latent, patent and such  
All are notions only, not the reality

All forms that feel themselves separate  
Distinct and not part of the one that exists  
Feel so because of their conditioning  
The individual is alone responsible for it

Thought is the seed of appearing diversity  
From thought the trunk and branches come  
Diversifying as leaves, flowers and fruit  
All of it is the seed appearing diverse

#### **RETURNING TO THE MAIN STORY**

Many psychic powers came unsought  
To queen Chudala—the enlightened  
She felt best to continue ordinary existence  
Never exhibiting or talking of attainments

Her husband the king remained ignorant  
Though she made attempts to awaken him  
Even enlightened beings with powers  
Cannot awaken those choosing ignorance

The instruction of preceptor to disciple  
Is but a tradition, words do not liberate  
Enlightenment requires purity of mind  
The disciple has to purify his consciousness

#### **STORY OF THE PRECIOUS STONE**

A wealthy villager was walking home once  
He had lost a copper so began to search  
Being a miser he searched in bushes too  
Thinking and calculating the copper's value

For three days he searched the dense forest  
Searching areas he'd never even walked  
Unmindful of the taunt of spectators  
Suddenly finding a most precious stone

The cause of finding the precious treasure  
Was his miserliness and search for the coin  
No instruction received, the taunting endured  
Even so is the case in preceptor's teachings

The preceptor teaches without teaching  
Words can never take one to truth's discovery  
The disciple foolishly looks for appeasement  
From words and techniques which increase vanity

Sometimes the preceptor uses teachings  
To make a point of something beyond them  
The disciple must be alert to understand  
The medium used and what is indicated

It is not that instruction is unnecessary  
But it does not bring about enlightenment  
The sun of enlightenment is ever here  
People face their own clouds of ignorance

#### **BACK TO THE MAIN STORY**

Sikhidhvaja the king dwelt in delusion  
Devoid of self-knowledge he floundered  
Sunk in grief by many errors and mistakes  
One day he contemplated the need for solitude

He resolved to repair to the forest  
As yogis had done to have self-knowledge  
He announced his intention to queen Chudala  
And asked her not to obstruct his intention

Chudala tried to help Sikkidhvaja see  
That it was not the time for this change  
The heart and mind must change first  
Before one tries to change the environment

The king felt she was being possessive  
And resolved to leave quietly at night  
Then at midnight on some pretense  
He rode away to a remote dense forest

#### PART II: SIKKIDHVAJA IN THE FOREST

Far, far away from all habitation  
He found a place deep in the forest  
There he built a cottage for himself  
And equipped it with all that was needed

Things he felt an ascetic should have  
Plates of wood and utensils of bamboo  
Earthen drinking cups, pots for flowers  
Deer skins for the cooler months

He quickly drew up a plan for the day  
First part was for meditation and japa  
Second part he gathered flowers and food  
Bathing and worship upon reaching the cottage

In the third part he ate a frugal meal  
Consisting of gathered roots and fruits  
Rest of the time was spent in japa  
He spent most of his time in that cottage

#### QUEEN CHUDALA'S REACTION

Chudala realized just what had happened  
Seeing all directly within through meditation  
She saw that her husband was caught up  
In a routine and time was passing by

She ruled the kingdom respected by all  
Spending her quiet hours in meditation  
Eighteen years passed in this way  
While her husband still followed his routine

She became aware of her husband's state  
He had still not attained enlightenment  
Though he had forgotten her and the kingdom  
He lived as an ascetic but was still deluded

Merely living an ascetic life in the forest  
Is not going to bring about an inward change  
The ego that takes you there continues to thrive  
In the newly created atmosphere

#### CHUDALA THOUGHT

My husband is the same person inwardly  
Though clad in skin and bark in the forest  
Matted locks too, but so lonely within  
Time hardened the skin and his heart

Those close to you can never be taught  
They insist on preexisting relationships  
My husband will spurn any help that I offer  
As he will feel I am but an ignorant girl

I must disguise myself and try to help him  
As his delusion increases day by day  
Thus thinking she transformed herself  
To appear as a young and radiant ascetic

### PART III: CHUDALA AND SIKHIDHVAJA

Instantly she appeared in her radiant form  
Sikhidhvaja felt a celestial had come  
Instantly he adored the radiant ascetic  
Chudala as an ascetic accepted his worship

She praised Sikhidhvaja's rugged austere life  
Praising all he had renounced for the forest  
Giving up his kingdom for a cottage  
It was indeed like treading the razor's edge

Sikhidhvaja praised the young ascetic  
Thanking him for the blessing of a visit  
He spoke of wife and kingdom  
Noting there was some resemblance

He felt most blessed by the holy visit  
And asked to know more about the ascetic  
To what did he owe such grace and blessing  
To be enlightened by insight into the truth

### THE ASCETIC'S (CHUDALA) REPLY

A holy sage was once meditating  
In a cave on the banks of a river  
Upon ending his meditation and rising  
He heard sounds of women nearby

Looking closer, he saw them bathing  
The noise was from their playfulness  
In their beauty he was overcome with lust  
His mind momentarily lost its balance

Though he was a sage of great learning  
A liberated one—free from desires  
His limitless consciousness was shaken  
In that moment lust invaded his mind

### THE ASCETIC: ON THE DUAL FORCES

The body of all beings is subject to sway  
By the dual forces of like and dislike  
As long as one is embodied—ignorant or wise  
The dual forces can dance and create havoc

Satisfying pleasure does not appease appetite  
Pleasure's appeasement is an experience of pain  
As when the self—reality—is forgotten  
The object of experience attains expansion

If there is unbroken awareness or vigilance  
There is light within—so this does not happen  
Dual forces may rise, they fall the same way  
One abides as awareness—free of its sway

Events and conditions may come and go  
Impressions are not created in the mind  
Older impressions cannot act out at all  
As awareness is also pure subjectivity

Ideas of pleasure and pain may arise  
They are just like winds rustling about  
But if awareness is lost for even a moment  
Passing winds will assume a sense of reality

Bondage is subjection to pleasure and pain  
Without subjection there is enlightenment  
Unbroken awareness is itself equilibrium  
One realizes pleasure and pain do not exist

Pleasure and pain are one's reactions  
They do not exist in things or the world  
When ignorance gets no fuel for delusion  
It is enlightened—reabsorbed in consciousness

#### **THE ASCETIC: ON PLEASURE AND ENERGY LOSS**

The individual agitates the life-force  
Life-force extracts vital energy from the body  
This energy descends as seminal energy  
And discharged naturally during pleasure

#### **THE ASCETIC: ON NATURE**

Brahman alone existed as Brahman  
Somehow some ripples appeared within  
All accidental coincidence in Brahman  
Different forms and nature—all called nature

From such nature of self the universe was born  
Sustained by self-limitation due to conditioning  
Alternating between order and disorder  
Giving rise to periods of conflict and peace

#### **THE ASCETIC: BACK TO THE SAGE**

The sage quickly regained self-control  
And gathered the seed which had been spilt  
This he put in a pot to nurture in time  
This seed grew into an enlightened one—myself

I have said a little about things and myself  
Now, kindly tell me why you are here  
Please speak truthfully—just as things are  
Truth is the cornerstone of ascetic life

#### **SIKHIDHVAJA REPLIED**

O radiant and enlightened one  
You know all but still ask of me  
I shall speak truthfully just as asked  
My story begins as king Sikhidhvaja

Dreading samsara I have abandoned  
Kingdom, wife and all royal pleasures  
Wandering and performing austerities  
I have yet to find peace and tranquility

My mind has not known rest at all  
Though I do not indulge in vain activity  
Living unattached and alone in this forest  
Still I am dry and devoid of fulfillment

I have practiced yogic methods ceaselessly  
But go from sorrow to greater sorrow  
Even simple joys that come naturally  
Torment the soul and seem poison to me

### THE ASCETIC INSTRUCTS SIKHIDHVAJA

Direct inquiry leads to self-knowledge  
The way beyond all sorrow and suffering  
Devoid of self-knowledge, ever are we bound  
Our suffering is the effect of our ignorance

Actions themselves do not bind  
Conditioning is limitation and bondage  
Just as seeing a ghost instead of a post  
Fills one with fright and great sorrow

Neither conditioning nor limitation  
Has any reality or substance really  
Still they create such great havoc  
Giving rise to foolishness of all kinds

Conditioning is the seed of mind  
When it ceases the mind ceases too  
One who has attained self-knowledge  
Has crossed samsara—is never born again

Sages crossing this dire samsara  
Declare self-knowledge to be supreme  
Why then do you continue in ignorance  
By clinging still to foolish notions

Thinking that you are now an ascetic  
Living here in this forest in austerity  
Feeling: 'this is my pot, stick and cottage'  
Why not inquire directly into the self

Why not strive directly for enlightenment  
Inquiring into the nature of bondage  
Why are you wasting your life here alone  
Instead of seeking enlightened company

### SIKHIDHVAJA REMARKS

O sage, everything you say is true  
I am freed of foolishness, O guru  
I have taken refuge in you—enlighten me  
To the way beyond grief and suffering

### THE ASCETIC CONTINUES INSTRUCTION

If you are receptive and eager to learn  
You will benefit from my instruction  
It is your responsibility to see beyond words  
Words are used to indicate lies beyond them

If one is not serious, disciplined and attentive  
Teaching is fruitless—a useless exercise  
You must intend to receive that which is conveyed  
With the whole of your being in attentiveness

### STORY OF THE PHILOSOPHERS' STONE

There once lived one who was wealthy and wise  
Most successful though unaware of self  
He engaged in austerities for the sole purpose  
Of acquiring the gem—philosophers' stone

Since his effort was most intense  
The jewel appeared to him very soon  
Uncertain he was that this was the gem  
For how could such be achieved so soon

His mind was still striving and suffering  
Still doubting that this was the stone  
Thinking his austerity to be too ordinary  
For this achievement in such a short time

With this doubt and inner confusion  
He did not take the jewel that appeared  
Not destined to get it even though there  
What is ignored disappears quite soon

When one is sincere in spiritual practice  
Psychic powers called siddhis arise  
If one foolishly pursues these powers  
Insight that also comes vanishes—ignored

This man reengaged himself in austerity  
Still for the purpose of the precious stone  
Then once seeing a shiny glass piece  
He mistook it for the precious gem sought

Greedy and deluded he picked it up  
Thinking this would fulfill all his dear wishes  
Renouncing family, friends, wealth and all  
He went to a forest to harvest the glass piece

Nothing but great calamities came  
There he suffered for his foolishness  
Foolishness is the greatest disaster  
It adorns the head of all suffering and calamity

#### STORY OF THE WILD ELEPHANT

This story resembles yours in many ways  
Listen attentively to its deeper import  
The story of a very strong elephant  
Equipped with the most powerful tusks

Its rider had imprisoned him in a cage  
Making him work hard, inflicting him with pain  
The elephant struggled to free itself  
Whenever the rider was away from him

Once after three days of struggle  
The elephant freed itself finally  
The rider found out and tracked him down  
Alighting on the elephant to his surprise

The rider slipped, falling to the ground  
The elephant saw his enemy before him  
Overcome with pity, he simply went away  
Compassion is seen even in wild beasts

Those bent on evil don't change their ways  
The rider gathered his friends for the task  
A vicious ambush for the elephant was set  
A huge pit—making it impossible for him to escape

They cleverly lured the elephant to trap  
And lo, he fell in and was again bound  
Made to undergo tremendous suffering  
The sad fate of those missing opportunity

If one ignores opportunities offered  
To break away from existing bondage  
They will return strengthened in force  
And subject you to a fresh charge of pain

Ignore the false satisfactions of freedom  
Thinking you are free invites sorrow  
Foolishness is bondage, O holy one  
'Tis foolish for the bound to imagine they're free

Though the self alone exists in truth  
The foolish are snared by ignorance  
Those firmly established in foolishness  
All that *is*—is but an expansion of foolishness

#### LESSONS: STORY OF THE PHILOSOPHERS' STONE

The one searching for the gem is you  
With knowledge of scriptures and learning  
Still peace eludes you at every step  
You are not at rest within yourself

The precious stone is real renunciation  
This alone puts an end to all sorrow  
Total renunciation is total gain  
You've renounced much for the ascetic life

The ego-sense still needs to be renounced  
The heart must fully abandon the mind  
When one abandons movement of thought  
There is realization of the Absolute

You are overcome with renunciation's thought  
An impression created by your renunciation  
Real bliss arises within naturally  
When there is total renunciation

One who has real total renunciation  
Is not agitated by anything at all  
Though winds come with all of their might  
The oak stands still and unperturbed

Worries are but movements of thought  
These movements are known as mind  
If thoughts still operate you must know  
The mind still has much it has not renounced

When the mind is agitated, world appears  
It stays as long as thoughts dwell within  
As long as thoughts continue to operate  
There is no total renunciation

Hence when thoughts arise in your heart  
Renunciation leaves you like the gem  
Taking along freedom from thoughts and worry  
For you failed to recognize its true spirit

Abandoned by the jewel of renunciation  
You clung to the glass of austerities  
This has increased your sorrow manifold  
You've abandoned joy for this sorry state

You fell into a self-created foolish trap  
Mistaking austerity for real renunciation

Abandoning kingdom, wealth and wife  
Attaching to this pathetic ascetic life

You're more worried now than ever before  
About meals, animals and the weather  
Firmly bound by thoughts and their offshoots  
Only imagining you have some real gain

#### **LESSONS: STORY OF THE WILD ELEPHANT**

You are the wild elephant in the forest  
With tusks of wisdom and dispassion  
Ignorance is the rider inflicting sorrow  
Ignorance overcomes blind strength always

The cage is a cage of your desires  
They get stronger in time, unlike iron  
As the elephant broke out of the cage  
You renounced all and came to this forest

Psychological abandonment is another thing  
Not as easy as leaving things physically  
As the rider was alerted to the elephant's escape  
Ignorance trembles during renunciation

When pursuit of pleasure is abandoned  
Ignorance flees from you instantly  
Coming here you wounded this ignorance  
But you failed to abandon it psychologically

Therefore ignorance has risen in you  
It remembers well its earlier wound

So it has trapped you now in asceticism  
You should have abandoned it mentally too

You are strong and endowed with wisdom  
But the rider of ignorance has trapped you  
You're now imprisoned in asceticism's well  
And all the while you think you're free

Why didn't you listen to your wife's words  
She is indeed a true knower of truth  
But even if you felt that you were right  
Why didn't you abandon all psychologically

#### **SIKHIDHVAJA TO THE ASCETIC**

I've renounced kingdom, palace and wife  
What else could I have renounced  
Why do you say it is not renunciation—  
That I have not renounced everything

#### **THE ASCETIC REPLIES**

Kingdom, palace, wealth and wife  
These are not yours to begin with  
The best part you have held back  
Renounce that totally without residue

#### **SIKHIDHVAHA RESPONDS**

If all those things are not really mine  
I then renounce this forest and hermitage  
Surely this now constitutes renunciation  
Have I completely renounced everything

### THE ASCETIC REPLIES

The forest and hermitage are not yours  
How do you feel you renounce them  
The best part you have held back  
Renounce that totally without residue

### SIKHIDHVAJA RESPONDS

You say these are not mine either  
I then abandon staff, skin and cottage  
Saying this he sprang up and gathered  
All his possessions, however small

Instantly he created a large bonfire  
And burnt all things to ashes and dust  
Proclaiming he'd renounced all activities  
All that was sacred and secular too

Thank you for awakening me, O sage  
I've now abandoned delusion, carried long  
Victorious, I've now renounced everything  
Do you feel there is anything I have left out

### THE ASCETIC REPLIES

You have not renounced everything  
Do not pretend as if you really have  
The best part you have held back  
Renounce that totally without residue

### SIKHIDHVAJA RESPONDS

There is only one thing left to renounce  
This filthy body of leather and bones

I shall now renounce this wretched thing  
And surely achieve total renunciation

### THE ASCETIC REPLIES

Why destroy this innocent body  
Abandon anger which blinds you now  
You have nothing to do with this body  
It is enlivened, sustained and made to act

Real renunciation is beyond this notion  
Renounce that which agitates this body  
Sin and evil will then come to an end  
Or they will rise again in a new body

That alone is total renunciation  
That will make you a supreme renouncer  
Renounce the sole cause of all mischief  
That which makes one revolve in foolishness

### SIKHIDHVAJA RESPONDS

O, radiant sage, I hear your words  
But I'm not able to know what to renounce  
Pray, instruct me on the sole cause of all  
So I may see clearly what renunciation is

### THE ASCETIC REPLIES

The mind should be renounced, O noble one  
Call it the individual, jiva or even prana  
It is what created tremendous confusion  
The seed of all sorrow, suffering and grief

Abandoning the mind is renunciation  
The mind causes great distress in the heart  
Its agitation affects one and others too  
'Tis great joy in one who is mind-less

Diverse experiences and stages in life  
The firmness of holy ones as well too  
Are all modifications of the mind only  
Mind's abandonment is true renunciation

Once you renounce this unstable mind  
Truth will be experienced at once  
All notions and diversity will come to an end  
You will know peace that passeth understanding

By trying to renounce what is not yours  
You create division within yourself  
You cannot renounce everything as such  
All exists in the one infinite consciousness

Rest in the stage of total renunciation  
'Tis like a quiet lamp without any fuel  
But in the quiet stillness you'll still shine  
With the supreme brilliance of your nature

Just as you'll still exist after renouncing  
Consciousness ever exists after mind's gone  
Nothing will change but changing within  
You'll transcend all sorrow completely

You'll go beyond birth, old age and death  
Entering into eternity and infinity

All else is a sheer waste of time  
Self-created delusion and bondage

In renunciation exists highest knowledge  
Utter emptiness overflows within itself  
Abandon the mind and notion of renunciation  
Then remain where you are—what is the harm

#### **SIKHIDHVAJA ASKS**

Holy sage, kindly do instruct me  
As I have taken refuge in you  
What is the nature of this mind  
How to abandon it once and for all

#### **THE ASCETIC: ON THE MIND**

For the wise, renunciation is easier  
Than renouncing rule over a kingdom  
For fools, renouncing is as difficult  
As it is for simpletons to be king

Subtle impressions are conditioning  
These form the nature of the mind  
The utter destruction of the mind  
Is the extinction of all conditioning

The 'I-idea' is the mind-tree's seed  
It arises in the absence of self-knowledge  
Uproot this tree—root and branch  
And rest in the space of the heart

'I' is the seed of the mind-tree  
It grows in the field of ignorance

Creating division where none exists  
A trick, an illusion—it is called maya

Only after the 'I-idea' takes root  
Does intellect or buddhi arise within  
From then it expands most vigorously  
Notions and concepts are its substance

The trunk of this tree is the body  
More conditioning the food that sustains  
Its branches reach great distances  
Its fruits are joys and sorrows

This is a vicious mean-spirited tree  
Endeavor to uproot and fell it  
Beware of its branches and fruit at all times  
By the spirit of detachment and renunciation

The spirit of detachment and renunciation  
Stops nourishment and weakens the tree  
You must then uproot this tree completely  
This is the primary task before you

Uproot the tree by relentless self-inquiry  
Directly discover the nature of self  
The fire of inquiry will fry the seed  
Ongoing inquiry will set the tree afire

Ignorance arises in pure consciousness  
As an effect of the non-existent ego-sense  
It is most shameless, vile and persistent  
It keeps returning even when thrown out

It returns only because we deal with effects  
Go after the cause and see what happens  
Every experience is the effect of some cause  
Destroy the cause of returning experience

Experience does not rest on objective reality  
As objects come and go as effects you see  
Pursue the cause and you may discover  
There is none—the effect vanishes too

If the parent is unreal the child is unreal  
The creator too is non-different from truth  
All that seems to have proceeded from him  
Has truth as its substance, form as appearance

The creator is non-different from reality  
Hence, creation is non-different from reality  
This has to be realized directly for oneself  
To get rid of ignorance and the ego-sense

The delusion of the world-appearance  
Has attained expansion by reaffirmation  
When water freezes into a block of ice  
It serves as a seat or something similar

Only when ignorance is finally dispelled  
Does the original state manifest itself  
All notions have to be seen to be unreal  
The deception ceases when inquired into

Brahman is one without a second  
Without cause, effect or purpose

Being the all—what purpose can there be  
World-appearance is but a delusion

The objectivity we feel of this world  
Has to be seen and known as unreal  
The experiencer of ego-sense does not exist  
Realize this and recognize you are the all

#### **SIKHIDHVAJA'S REALIZATION**

Lord, eternally grateful I am to thee  
For this awakening and realization  
Neither mind nor ego-sense exists  
I am pure, awakened—there is naught else

#### **VASISTHA'S COMMENTS**

Sikhidhvaja entered deep meditation  
Having awoken—fully enlightened  
You are instantly free from modifications  
Once the light of self is directly seen

Coming out of meditation he then inquired  
For further understanding of the truth  
"When reality is indeed indivisible  
How does any division arise in it"

#### **THE ASCETIC: ON APPEARANCE AND REALITY**

Well asked, O enlightened one  
This is all that remains to be known  
All this will cease at world-cycle's end  
Remaining only as a trace essence

That itself is pure consciousness  
Also known as Brahman or nirvana  
Most minute, yet infinitely large  
Creation is sub-atomic in its expanse

The universal self exists as this universe  
As the ocean with waves appearing in it  
World-appearance is a but a mere ripple  
In the infinite ocean of pure consciousness

Infinite consciousness pervades all  
Holding all together from within  
A total absence of division or duality  
Everywhere, at all times, in all forms

Extremely subtle is this—pure experiencing  
Neither experiencer nor experience  
One cannot say anything about it at all  
Words necessarily omit some things

Causeless and hence the cause of none  
Neither doer, action nor instrument  
Eternal, absolute consciousness it is  
Pure self-knowledge—supreme existence

'World' and 'ego-sense' are words only  
They have no corresponding reality  
Empty notions, non-different from space  
This has to be realized as the supreme self

Whatever consciousness realizes itself to be  
That it becomes instantly—here and now

Due to confusion consciousness sees itself  
As embodied and as the world outside

The supreme self alone shines here as all  
'World' and 'ego-sense' are only notions  
Having no existence independent of self  
Consciousness shines as consciousness

Neither seed nor cause for this world  
All you see is an experience only  
Apart from experience nothing exists  
What exists is infinite consciousness

The infinite exists as pure experiencing  
That alone is this universe expanded  
There is no substance or outsideness  
Pure experiencing is consciousness

Indestructible—it cannot be modified  
The changes you see are experiences  
A trick of consciousness within itself  
Consciousness alone exists—naught else

Matter and thought have no existence  
There is neither world nor ego-sense  
Remain in peace free of conditioning  
All questions cease on self-realization

The mind does not have any existence  
That which shines is infinite consciousness  
Giving rise to notions like mind and world  
All are reflections within infinite consciousness

The absolute is formless pure consciousness  
Forms cannot come from the formless  
A notion about something felt to be real  
The mind is a bundle of such limiting notions

Just how can the mind be real at all  
Can a divider exist in the indivisible  
Appearances are reflections in consciousness  
The mind and world are but notions

The reality that is seen as the world  
Is beginningless, uncreated, indivisible  
Illimitable, formless and unchanging  
Reflections of Brahman within itself

If there is no world, where is 'you' and 'I'  
Know these directly to be but notions  
Giving rise to bondage and self-destruction  
Realization of I's non-existence is freedom

Bondage and liberation are notions too  
Consciousness is aware of both of them  
You must realize you are not the ego-sense  
To be free and rest in pure awareness

When pure awareness rises, notions subside  
Perfection ensues without agitation  
This universe exists as carvings exist  
Within an uncarved block of granite

To see the universe without conditioning  
Without intervention of the mind

Without notions and perversions  
This is called nirvana or perfection

When this truth is clearly realized  
When duality is completely discarded  
Peace that passeth understanding remains  
Your indescribable and true nature

Without cause, there can be no effect  
Without seed, trees cannot come forth  
How then from the formless Brahman  
Comes this universe as something real

Brahman comprehended by ignorance  
Is called universe—real and compelling  
When consciousness knows itself to be  
Something other—it takes on ignorance

This ignorance or veiling is self-destructive  
Be it momentary or through birth cycles  
Such delusion can only be rent asunder  
When self-knowledge is directly experienced

The unreal appearing as the real  
Is called ignorance and confusion  
Non-comprehension of the truth  
Is comprehension of untruth—ignorance

When the mind's non-existence is realized  
One sees that ego-sense does not exist  
What exists is infinite consciousness  
All notions based on ignorance cease

There is neither unity nor diversity  
Neither confusion nor delusion  
Nothing comes and nothing goes  
Everything is consciousness—that you are

When all desires have been abandoned  
The mind becomes utterly quiet  
Earlier existing coloring washes away  
These teachings are then comprehended

Earlier efforts are not wasted though  
Effort in conditioning takes you so far  
All conditioning must be abandoned  
For clarity to find its way home

When one is freed from all conditioning  
When all impurities have been removed  
The teachers words enter the heart  
And resonate, awakening the self

Earlier you dwelt in ignorance  
Varied notions of 'I' and 'mine'  
Now on abandoning them completely  
The truth is directly seen in your heart

As long as the heart sees the mind  
Ignorance lasts and creates havoc  
When the heart sees itself or light  
You are enlightened and liberated

Mind and conditioning are synonymous  
As long as these are felt near and dear

One must suffer ignorance's consequence  
This is by choice and never an imposition

There is no mind in liberated ones  
Consciousness functions unobstructed  
They live in pure light of consciousness  
While the ignorant function in the mind

When there is destruction of the mind  
There is also destruction of all sorrow  
One attains unending happiness and joy  
One abides in utter equanimity

All joys of this world and even heaven  
Are worth nothing more than a copper  
One who clings to its fleeting pleasures  
Himself forsakes his highest welfare

The direct method of self-knowledge  
Is the best and safest way back home  
Indirect methods are full of dead-ends  
Where one only thinks there is attainment

Whatever sorrow there is anywhere  
Know it to be a result of mental craving  
If you establish yourself in equanimity  
You'll rest in the non-different eternal

There is only infinite consciousness  
Brahman is the only existence  
All else is in the mind of spectators  
Mental limitation experiencing itself

#### VASISTHA'S COMMENTS

Sikhidhvaja engaged in deep meditation  
Free from all modifications in consciousness  
Chudala abandoned her ascetic disguise  
And returned to her palace to resume her duties

After some time she felt to visit him  
To see if he was still inwardly awake  
Sikhidhvaja was still in deep meditation  
And did not hear her calling to him

Using her psychic powers she deduced  
A trace of individuality still existed in him  
She fanned that spark till it grew into a flame  
Sikhidhvaja awakened from his meditation

The most latent desires are disguised as sattva  
They are still seeds, no matter the guise  
Like sparks, they can be fanned into flame  
So one has to be alert and eternally vigilant

These latent desires in sattvic guise  
Are so because of an inner imbalance  
When sattva is in total equilibrium  
Agitation in body or mind do not happen

Sikhidhvaja opened his eyes to find  
The ascetic just there, looking at him  
He prostrated, expressing his gratitude  
For the instructions and guidance received

He expressed his experiences in detail  
Most thankful for the showering of grace  
He now understood total renunciation  
As renunciation of all mental modification

After spending some time in the forest  
Discussing many things of interest  
Chudala felt that he was now ready  
To know the truth of her identity

She also felt that he should return  
To the palace and resume his duties  
There was no point in continuing to dwell  
In the forest now that clarity was achieved

As long as there is oil in the lamp  
It continues to burn ever bright  
So also when there is conditioning  
Ignorance's darkness keeps one bound

The lamp of Sikhidhvaja was now dry  
The oil of ignorance had been purged  
His whole being was in utter equanimity  
She felt he should do his natural functions

She explained the truth of her identity  
Why she had to assume the disguise  
We cannot learn from those closest to us  
As the mind insists on how it relates

Learning takes a disciple's heart  
One who is awake and stays alert

One who has the requisite discipline  
To find out the truth for himself now

Till an awakening has happened within  
Anything said will not be of much use  
As the cup of one's inner receptivity  
Is turned upside down and will not hold

It is pointless to instruct the unawakened  
They are sleeping—best to let them lie  
Awakening—they will themselves seek  
Ways to end the tyranny of the mind

This story has many subtle teachings  
Contemplate them carefully—gain wisdom  
Know what it is that really binds  
And what must be done to overcome it