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YAJNAVALKYA-SAMHITA.

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[CONTINUED FROM NO. 9.]

CHAPTER V.



H reverend masters! the best among the knowers of Brahman! deep read in the *Shastras*, tell me, my lord! by what means could the nervous system be thoroughly purified? The sage knowing the essence of Brahman, being thus asked by his wife conversant with the knowledge of Brahman, directed his kind looks towards her and began in the following manner The study, that is to say practice, of Yoga is possible to him who is devoted to the careful fulfilment of Vedic injunctions, is void of desires and weakness of mind, is careful about all the Observances and Forbearances set forth before, is free from attachment, has acquired substantial knowledge of self, is master of and at peace with, himself, ever walks the way of truth and righteousness, is devoted to the service of his Guru and parents, fulfills the duties of his ashrama (position) to the best of his abilities, and

is well behaved, always attending to the counsels of the learned. Such an one should fix his residence in a place which answers to the following description. It must be a place favorable to the performance of yoga, by being provided with abundance of natural waters and edible fruits and roots. A spot may be selected in this land, sufficiently pleasant, holy, full of divine sounds* and surrounded by knowers of Brahman, devoted to duty, and entirely peaceful. In a temple, village, city, or on the bank of a river, wherever there is within easy reach a goodly supply of water and edible fruits, etc., and the surroundings are agreeably pleasant and peaceful, a small hut should be laid out, and all approaches to it should be protected with due care. Herein the pupil may install himself and begin the practice of Yoga, washing himself at all the three prescribed times every day, remaining entirely absorbed in the performance of his religious duties, and attending or hearing lectures on the Vedanta.

There are other sages, full of learning and entirely peaceful, who have dedicated themselves to the performance of austerities, devotion to the Almighty, and careful observance of prescribed duties, who hold a slightly different opinion in the matter. In a place agreeable and lonely, protected against heat and cold, one who is devoted to the performance of the prescribed forms of religion, should after purifying himself (with a bath), and bringing the mind "to a point" † squat upon a seat not very hard, and covered with kusha-grass or the hide of a black antelope. He should assume some particular posture, after worshipping the god Vinâyaka with water, fruits, and roots, etc., and making a reverend bow to his guardian deity and his master.

He † must assume that posture only which he has well mastered, § and should sit facing either the east or north. He must keep the body perfectly straight, and hold the neck on a line with it, not allowing the breath to enter or escape by way of the mouth. The eye should be fixed upon the tip of the nose, calling up there an image of the moon, and concentrating the attention upon her bright disc exuding nectar along her bright rays. The lungs

* Referring to the voices of Brâhmanas (Brahmins) reciting the *Vedas* and other holy works.

† See *Patanjali*.—Ed.

‡ All this refers to the time of actual practice. But even when the practice is suspended for some hours, the student is not to forget all that is laid down under the head of observance and forbearance. Nor should he spend his vital energy in any fatiguing exercise or work.

§ That is to say which he can continue for an hour or more, without any sense of pain or fatigue.

(more properly, as other books have it, the belly) should then be filled with air drawn in at the left nostril, and this being done, the the mind should be directed to, and fixed upon the fire that burns at the centre of the system, locating the letter "Ra" and its sound at that point.* Having retained the vital breath in this manner for as much time as one can without pain or suffocation, it should be expired *slowly* at the right nostril. This should immediately be followed by drawing in of the breath at the same nostril, to be retained and expired at the left, in the manner just described. †

This should be secretly done six times every sunrise, sunset, and noon, and the practice should be continued according to necessity, from three or four months, even years. The nervous system then becomes thoroughly purified, and the accomplishment of this result may be inferred from consequent lightness of the body, strength of appetite with power of digestion, and the hearing of supernatural sounds. The practice should be continued till these signs permit its abandonment.

CHAPTER VI.

Henceforward I shall describe Prânâyâma (restraining the breath) in all its details. † That which is called Prânâyâma consists of Rechaka (expiration), Puraka (inspiration), Kumbhaka (retention) of the breath. These three correspond to the three letters of the Pranava (word of glory, AUM) for Prânâyâma is not apart from it. The air should be drawn in at the left nostril, till the belly is completely filled. This process may extent over a space of time sufficient for mentally repeating the word of glory sixteen times, in a measured manner, fixing the mind all the while on the first letter of it, *viz*, A. The air thus taken in, should be held within while the word of glory is repeated sixty-four times, keeping the attention centred on the second member of it, *viz*, U. Or the air may be held within for the time one can do so with ease. The breath thus restrained should then be slowly let out at the opposite nostril, and the process need not last longer than the time necessary for repeating the word of glory thirty-two times. The attention should remain centred all the while on the last letter of the word of glory, *viz*, M. The process should be repeated in the

* No measure of time is mentioned in the text with regard to the inhaling, retention, and expiring of the air. [It is dangerous.—ED.] The double process here described is *one pranayama*.

† Ra is the letter which has an occult connection with the element of fire.

‡ Let no ardent student of Theosophy take a leap in the dark without mastering the meaning of the process *in all its details*, which are not given at full length in this place.

reverse order to complete one Prânâyâma. Fill the belly by the right nostril, repeating the word of glory sixteen times, and keeping the attention fixed, all the while, on the letter M. The breath thus drawn in, should be held within while the word of glory is repeated two scores of times, with the mind fixed, for the time, on the great god (Vishnu) whose symbol is the letter A. Or the breath may be so restrained only according to one's power, being in either case allowed, at length, to pass out slowly at the left nostril. This process (*i. e.*, the whole of it) may be repeated, oh dear one, over and over again.

The time for the various parts of this process may be measured simply by repetitions of the word of glory; or in the case of a Brâhmana (Brahmin) by three repetitions of the Gâyatri accompanied with the great words† prefaced by the word of glory. Or anything enjoined by the *Veda* or by general practice may be employed and the Gâyatri may be pronounced at least forty times after the performance of Prânâyâma. A Brahmana (Brahmin) well versed in the shrutis and devoted to religion may make use of mantras drawn from the *Veda*, and never of those borrowed from other sources. There are, however, some who prefer the use of mantras derived from other sources, for the compassing of some temporal ends. The Kshatriya, too, is required to observe the same rules as a Brâhmana (Brahmin) in regard to the use of mantras in Prânâyâma. To Vaisyas inclined to be religious, and Sudras and females who have purified themselves by austerities, the wise, oh Gârgi! ordain the use in prânâyâma, of mantras peculiar to Siva or Vishnu, ending with the particle *namas* (bow—to so and so), but of no Vedic mantra nor the word of glory. The female may even use her own name‡ in a similar manner, two scores of times. In no case should Sudras and females make use of Vedic texts, though some, indeed, do permit such use to a Vaisya of good character. A Brâhmana (Brahmin) who has well studied the whole of the *Veda* should perform prânâyâma, with the Gâyatri or the word of glory, at both the twilights every day. Sixteen prânâyâmas *per diem* ought to be the rule, which, observed with regularity, purify the practitioner even of such heinous sins as

* This is what is called Prânâyâma proper, and the one described as such in ch. v is only a method for purifying the nervous system. The rule about the relation of the three parts of the process to one another need not necessarily hold in that prânâyâma.

† Great words, *i. e.* Mahâvyâhritis, *viz.* the syllables Bhur, Bhuvan, Svah. The word of glory is pronounced first, then these, and then the Gâyatri.

‡ The reading in the text is so doubtful that it is not possible to say whether "name" is the correct rendering of an illegible word in the text. The rendering given is, however, likely to be correct.

foeticide and the like. The effect of the practice is potent enough to destroy, in six months, the sins of all the previous births, and to free one even from the sin of having killed a knower of Brahman (Brâhmana, or Brahmin). Hence prânâyâma should be carefully and regularly performed every day. Those who are in this manner devoted to the practice of yoga, as also to their own religion, attain complete absolution through prânâyâma.

Puraka is the filling the belly with air drawn in from without. The succeeding retention of the air as in a sealed earthen pot (Kumbha) is called Kumbhaka. The expelling of the air is called Rechaka.

That prânâyâma which, during practice, produces perspiration is of the lowest degree; whereas that accompanied by tremour of the body belongs to the middle degree,—the highest being that whereby the body is raised upward from the ground. Till the highest degree of practice is reached the student should apply himself to the mastery of the lower stages. The breath as it were, dies within the body when the highest stage is reached. The body is then levitated into the air, the action of inhalation and exhalation being suspended, for the time. Though the action somehow takes place in the body it is not perceptible when the highest stage is reached. When the process of breathing is entirely suspended that which is called absolute (Kevala) Kumbhaka is secured; it being nothing more nor less than constant retention within of the breath, without the help of either Rechaka or Puraka. The prânâyâma performed with the help of these two is called sahita (conditional). Whether sahita or kevala, no one should neglect the performance of prânâyâma at any time; and the sahita should assiduously be practised till the kevala is reached. Absolute kumbhaka having been realized, there is nothing in all the three worlds which is beyond reach. The siddhi (occult power), called manojavitva (swiftness such as of the mind in going to and from places) manifests itself, grey hair resumes the color of youth, divine sounds begin to be heard, in short, kevalakumbhaka being reached, one is on the last stage to absolution.

Prânâyâma thus means the retention of the breath within the body, and the method set forth above brings about results which defy death itself in all and every shape. I describe to thee, however, an easier method of mastering the breath. Having filled the belly with air drawn in from without, at the time of sunrise and sunset, one should fix it by mental effort in the middle of the navel, at the tip of the nose, or at the point of the toes of each foot. This practice will guard the student against all disease and and fatigue or exhaustion. The fixing attention on the breath, at

the tip of the nose, leads to mastery over the vital airs; concentration on it at the navel conduces to the destruction of disease; and concentration on it at the toes imparts particular lightness to the body. He who draws the air in with the tip of his tongue and swallows it, feels no heat or fatigue, and is never touched by disease. He who practices this either at sunset or at sunrise, continually for three months compels, as it were perforce, oh blessed one! the goddess of speech (Sarasvati), to make her abode on the tip of his tongue; and another three months of practice frees him from the most incurable disease of any description. He who concentrates upon the breath, having centred himself within himself, at the place of the Kundalini, becomes instantly free from consumption and other diseases of the kind. He who draws in the air with the tip, and holds it at the root, of the tongue, and swallows the nectar (the juicy saliva that exudes from the top of the palate by force of the volume of air confined within) enjoys health and happiness. Or if one draws in the breath at the left nostril, and, holding it at the roof of the palate, swallows the nectar that drops on account of the heat, he becomes free from all disease. He who draws in the air with his tongue, and swallowing it carries it to the middle of the œsophagus, or the navel, or to the sides, and allows it to remain within for about twenty minutes, becomes free from disease, by continuing the practice for a month at sunrise, sunset, and noon, every day. He who practices any of these methods, of swallowing the breath, or the ambrosial juice, either for six months or three, gets rid of such inveterate diseases as cramps, dropsy, poisoning of the blood, burning of the skin, and all diseases of the mouth and throat, nay fever of any kind vanishes at once, and even the deadliest poison is digested with perfect immunity. It is needless to say more of the advantage of prânâyâma, but even grey hair turns black, and old age blooms into youth.

These, oh beautiful one! are the methods of bringing the prâna under control. One who applies himself to them, after having well mastered some one posture, with full concentration of mind and control over the sense, will come out entirely successful and happy. He should draw the apâna upward, repeating the word of glory all the while and holding it fast in the . . . , should direct a current of prâna to that point. Again he should raise the apâna to the place of the vital fire, and fuse the prâna with it at the point. The prâna may be held in the head till ecstasy ensues. This should be done by stopping the two ears with the thumbs of both hands, the eyes with the forefingers, the nostrils with the middle fingers, and keeping the mouth closed all the while. Thus indeed should all the active senses be controlled for the while, with

the hands. The prâna passes like a fine fibre of the lotus-stalk by virtue of this method, through the sushumna into the Brahma-randhra. Divine internal sounds are produced by this process, and the music resembling the sweet harmony of a Vina pervades the whole body up to the top of the head. The sound bears resemblance at first to the shrill and loud ring of the noise produced by the blowing of a conch-shell, and gradually deepens into the thunder of heavy clouds. The prâna having been fixed in the Brahma-randhra, and the mind being fused in âtman, the ascetic becomes all joy, and indeed obtains perfect mastery over the vital airs.

Other yogins of steady mind, always practising prânâyâma without rechaka or puraka (exhalation and inhalation) hold a different view. The ankle of the right as well as the left foot should respectively be pressed firmly against the left and right side of the perincœum . . . , and there should remain no space between the skin and the thigh of each foot thus placed. The trunk should all the time be held straight in a manner to keep the back, belly, and neck, in a straight line. The eyes should then be directed toward the right ankle, and the word of glory (the pranava = AUM) should be mentally repeated in a constant manner. Whoever with the mind thus brought to a point sits in a secluded spot in this posture repeating the word of glory, if he be a Brâhmana (Brahmin) or Kshatriya, or any mantra sacred to Shiva or Vishnu, if he be a Vaisya, Sutra or female, and practises yoga, succeeds in sending the prâna, the activity whereof is so much waste of vitality, to the point where burns the central fire, and is able to neutralize the wasteful effects of its action by contemplation thereon. The effects of the contemplation of the central fire manifest themselves in lightness of limbs, keenness of appetite, and power of digestion. These signs having been obtained, the prâna should be mentally removed to the point of the navel, and held there under contemplation repeating aloud the word of glory or the mantra, as the case may be. Till the mind completely loses itself in the sun whose place is at the navel the knower of this secret must persevere in this practice with patience and care. By this process of contemplation the fire at the navel expands the nerve known as Kundalini, whereinto the prâna thus finds easy access. By the expanding power of heat, and by the dilation caused by the prâna actually flowing in, the Kundalini becomes inflated and rises up to the point of the navel, the prâna thence rising at once to the seat of the Sushumna in the Brahma-randhra. When the prâna, oh beautiful one! has reached this point, the ascetic should remove it to the heart, mentally repeating the word of glory, or the mantra as the case may be, and fix it there. It should there be identified

with the âkâsa which fills the cavity of the heart, and the whole body should be filled with air, the repetition of the word of glory being kept up all the while. It is indeed then that the light of Ātman shines in native lustre like the sun in the sky. If the yogin desires to give up his connection with his mortal body, he should act in this wise. Fixing the attention then, on the word of glory, the one-lettered Brahman, and breaking through the centre of the head by contemplation on the Brahmarandhra, he may free his prâna and fuse it in the cosmic prâna which fills all space. The cosmic prâna being thus reached, and immutable firmness being gained, the ascetic should merge his Self in the light and supreme bliss of Ātman. Such a one is Brahman, oh Gargi! he is never drawn into the whirl of reïncarnation. Therefore, oh thou of beautiful make, practice prânâyâma either all the time or at the two twilights. Those who are devoted to prânâyâma reach the highest stage of bliss, being thoroughly purified by the process. There is nothing except prânâyâma which can lift one out of hell; that alone is the only boat which can land in safety on the other side those who flounder in this ocean of world-misery. Therefore shouldst thou carry out these instructions and always practice prânâyâma in the manner indicated.

CHAPTER VII.

Oh best of Brâhmana! (Brahmins)* thus far I have described the four external divisions of yoga; henceforward I enter upon a description of the four internal ones, which be thou prepared to hear with attention: The first (of these four) called Abstraction † (Pratyâhâra) consists in drawing away the senses from their respective objects in general experience. The recognition of the whole in a part (=individual self), as the result of this process is the highest abstraction praised by those who know all about Yoga. The absence of desire for the performance of those religious acts, etc., which are enjoined to all, is also a variety, and an important means of, abstraction; and is indeed the best help to yoga, being always practiced by ascetics. I now proceed, oh Gargi! to enumerate to thee the several vital points in the body, as detailed by the Ashvinikumâras, the physicians of heaven, for a knowledge of these is most essential to the success of yoga, which is none other than the unification of the micro- with the macro-cosmos. I shall set forth all these in full detail, pray attend with all your mind. The big toes of the feet, the ankles, the middle of the thighs, the root of the thighs, the hips, the middle of the abdomen, the

* Knowers of Brahman.

† In its root-sense of "drawing away from".

rectum, the centre of the body, the secret organ, the navel, the heart, the cavity of the throat, the root of the tongue and the nose, the two eyes, the middle of the eyebrows, the forehead, the crown of the head, these are the vital points in the body. Now I describe the exact position of these, one after the other.* The toes are four and a half finger breadths from the ankles, and the middle of the thighs is ten from the same. The root of the thighs is eleven fingers breadths from the middle of the thighs, the hips two finger breadths from this point, and the middle of the abdomen nine from the hips. The opening of the rectum is again the same distance (*viz*, nine finger breadths) from the middle of the abdomen, and the centre of the body two and a half from that point. The secret organ is two and a half digits above this point, and the navel is twelve digits further above. The heart is fourteen digits from the navel, and the cavity of the throat is six digits above. The root of the tongue is four digits from the cavity of throat, the root of the nose four from this point, the eye being only half a digit from that. The middle of the eyebrows is only half a digit from the eyes, the forehead three above, and the crown of the head three still further. The practitioner of yoga should carry the breath by abstraction, to these points, one after the other, and contemplate on it, in every one of them. All diseases disappear by this practice, and the actual study of yoga bears fruit. This is the opinion of those who are well acquainted with all the secrets of Yoga. Attend, oh beautiful one! to the mode of abstraction which I now describe for thy benefit. Fill the body with air from the toes of the feet to the crown of the head, and hold the air within for as much time as you can by way of Prânâyâma. Abstracting the breath from the crown of the head fix it at the forehead, and moving it thence carry it to the middle of the eyebrows, thence to the root of the tongue, to the cavity of the throat, to the centre of the heart, and to the navel, one after the other. From the navel remove it to the secret organ and thence to the centre of the body, whence again draw it into the rectum and take it to the middle of the abdomen. From the abdomen remove it to thighs and carry it still downward to the middle of the thighs. From thence abstract it to the ankles whence take it lastly to the toes and fix it there. That wise man, who in this manner, abstracts the vital breath and carries it from place to place, being able to fix it at any point at any time, is able to purify himself of all sin, and to live on while the sun and moon endure. This has been taught, for the successful practice of Yoga, even by the sage

* The measurements given here are in many cases exactly half of the actual. This is especially so in the first four.

Agastya, and all sages agree in declaring this as the best method of abstraction. He frees himself from the greatest of all diseases—this miserable world—, who having drawn the breath in is able to fix it on both sides of the Kundalini, mentally repeating the word of glory all the while. He who having drawn the breath in as above, fixes it in the cavity of the heart, realizes Ātman at no great distance in time. What can disease do to him who thus practices abstraction internally as well as externally after having filled the belly with air drawn in at the nose? He who, having fixed the air in the middle of the eyebrows and at the back of the chest, contemplates upon it with steadiness, reaches the condition of the Absolute. There is no use saying more on this subject. Be regular in your daily practice, and above all, having brought the breath to the middle of the eyebrows through the sushumnâ, fix it there under contemplation till the mind is entirely lost in it.

CHAPTER VIII.

Henceforward I proceed to describe Contemplation (Dhâranâ) of the five tattvas; hear, oh thou full of austerities! with concentrated attention. The wise who know the essence of this science, call contemplation that which consists in centering the mind full of Sama* and other qualities, in Ātman. The fixing the mind on the external âkâsa carried into the internal one which is ever-present in the lotus of the heart situate within this abode of Brahman (*viz*, the body), is also called contemplation by those who understand these things; and this is approved also by the *Tantrikas*, † the wise, and the learned. Contemplation is of five kinds; hear these severally described. It is fivefold in consequence of the contemplation of the five different gods, respectively in the five elements Prithvi (earth), Jala (water), Tejas (fire), Vayu (air), and Ākâsa (ether). The position of the first of these five tattvas is between the feet and the knees, of the second between the knees and the opening of the rectum, of the third between that point and the heart, of the fourth between the heart and the middle of the eyebrows, and of the fifth from that place upward. There are, however some, believing themselves learned in the essence of yoga, who hold a different view. They assign to Jala the region between the knees and the navel, and to Tejas that between the navel and the throat; the fourth and fifth—Vâyû and Ākâsa—be-

* These are six in number: (1) Sama, control over the senses; (2) Dama, withdrawing the senses from their objects and fixing them on Atman; (3) Uparama, freedom from all forms whether of religion or convention; (4) Titiksha, equanimity under all conditions; (5) Shraddhâ, faith in one's self, the teacher and his science; (6) Samâdhâna, complete reconciliation (with Atman).

† Mark this well.—ED.

ing left respectively to the region between the throat and the top of the forehead, and the forehead and the Brahmarandhra. But those who understand the true meaning of the *Shâstras* do not accord their assent to this distribution. For, oh beautiful faced one! if the place of Tejas were thus in the middle of the body, all effects (*viz.*, form) must rest in the cause* (*viz.*, Tejas), and become annihilated in consequence of being reduced to the state of the cause, as in the case with pots and the clay out of which they are fashioned.

In Prithvi, oh Gargi, contemplate on the god Brahmâ the lord of all, in Jala on Vishnu, in Tejas on Rudra, in Vâyû on Ishvara, and in Âkâsa on Sadâsiva. † The process of doing this in all detail is as follows: [Tabulated to avoid repetition, and for conciseness.]

Method to effect the contemplation.	Tattva contemplated.	The form of the god contemplated upon.	Letter for use	Time needed.	The result.
Fix the air in the region of..	Prithvi.	Brahmâ, the creator of the universe, with four hands.	Ma.	Two hours.	Freedom from disease.
do	Jala.	The god Vishnu with four hands, all peace and calm, with the smile of happiness on his lips, as bright as a clear piece of rockcrystal, and wearing yellow garments.	Va.	do.	Freedom from sin.
do	Tejas.	The god Rudra, as bright as the sun, with the body all besmeared with ashes, all joy and bliss.	Ra.	do.	Becoming proof against fire
do	Vâyû.	The god Ishvara.	Ya.	do.	Power to rise up in the air.
do	Âkâsa.	The god Shankara, <i>i.e.</i> , Siva, the greatest of all, of the form of a point, resembling akâsa by being of the color of a clear rockcrystal, having the crescent moon over his head, with five faces, ten hands and three eyes; all peace and joy, bearing all arms, wearing all ornaments, with one half of his body shared by his consort, Uma, the giver of all good, the cause of cause.	La.	Even a second.	Final abolition.

* For it is believed that Tejas is the cause of all form perceptions.

† Rudra, Ishvara, and Shiva are three aspects of one and the same God, and correspond to the three qualities Tamas, Rajas, and Sattva (grossness, energy, and passivity), being the destructive, protective, and enlightening aspects of Prakriti.

All the effects from Brahmâ* upward should again be drawn into their respective cause, the last being merged in Siva, the highest object of contemplation. The mind may then be merged in the essence of all—the supreme âtman.

But in this matter other ascetics who have full realization and experience of Brahman, say that effects should be merged in the cause simply with the help of the word of glory. For when the “voice of the silence” within begins to be heard after contemplation on the word of glory, the supreme purusha whose body is all joy, who is none other than absolute Brahman, whose glory is deep yellow, appears before the mind’s eye. Be thou, therefore, prepared to practice at least three prânâyâmas each time, repeating the word of glory all the while; and merging the effects in their respective causes, lose yourself in the eternal glory of the purusha just described.

Oh beautiful one! the physicians of the gods well acquainted with yoga and having full knowledge of Brahman, say this wise in regard to the utility of this process. The body is made up of the five tattvas, and is full of the three humors, Vata (wind), Pitta (bile), and Kafa (cough). The body governed by Vata is reduced in bulk by the practice of Prânâyâma, whereas that governed by Pitta does not undergo similar change. If Kafa predominates, the body becomes full in a very short time. Diseases produced by Vâta are destroyed by contemplation on Tejas *i. e.* Agni, and these as well as those produced by Kafa are removed by contemplation on Prithvi and Jala. Contemplation on âkâsa relieves diseases (such as delirium tremens, etc.) arising out of a disturbance of the three humors. The physicians of the gods emphatically declare that diseases of the last kind are easily removed even by prânâyâma. Hence, oh dear one! attend carefully to thy daily duties in this behalf and practise contemplation with due care.

CHAPTER IX.

Henceforth I begin to describe the meaning and method of what is called Absorption (Dhyâna) which, oh Gargi! hear with attention, for that alone is the cause of bondage as well as absolution.* Absorption is the identification of the mind with âtman; and this is done in two ways, whence absorption itself is regarded as of two kinds—*viz.* concrete (saguna) and abstract (nirguna). The first of these two is of many kinds. Five kinds of absorption

† Because Brahmâ is the god of Prithvi, which is at the feet.

*For, whatever a man identifies himself with, he becomes. This is an important rule in Râja-Yoga, and it may be observed, the parts of Yoga from Prâyahâra upward belong more to Râja- than to Hatha-Yoga.

sanctioned by the *Veda* are declared to be good by the wise, but only three of them are said to be very good, the best being only one—the abstract. Having well studied the positions and functions of the vital nerves in the body, and having well mastered a minute knowledge of the position, function, and action of the vital airs, and having also become familiar with the ways of those who know *âtman*, one should apply himself to abstract absorption. This is of the form of the constant mental conviction “I am Brahman”, one, eternal, without beginning, middle or end, all glorious, all purity, all pervading like *âkâsa*, endless, immovable, unsurpassed, great, small, not comprehensible by the eyes, not even of the form of *âkâsa*, without smell or taste, incomprehensible, free from change, all bliss, ever new, neither being nor not-being, the cause of all causes, the support of all, one with the cosmos, formless, without parts, unseen, within, without, everywhere, all eyes, all feet, all touch, all head. Those who are devoted to the observance of formal religion contemplate, without the body, upon the highest, eternal, and blissful *âtman*, endowing it with the form of the supreme Purusha of deep yellow color, having learned the method from some competent teacher. Or they fix the mind upon, and identify themselves with, the form of the lord *Vâsudeva*, locating it in the lotus of the heart, with eight petals, rising out of the central knot (at the navel), supported on a stalk twelve digits long, and blooming fully by force of *Prânâyâma*,—*Vâsudeva*, the cause of the universe, *nârâyana*, unborn, all-pervading, having four hands, of beautiful shape, bearing his usual insignia—conch, disc, and mace—, adorned with coronet, bracelets, and other ornaments, with eyes resembling the leaf of the lotus, having the mark of the *vatsa*-jewel on his chest, the lord of *Lakshmi*, with face as bright as the full moon, having the color of the white and red lotus, all joy, wearing a hearty, pleasant smile, as bright as a piece of spotless rock-crystal, wearing yellow garments, with the mark of a lotus on the soles of both his feet, one with the highest *âtman*, changeless, shining with native effulgence, being the greatest purusha present in the heart of all. This is called concrete absorption. The place of the object meditated upon must be the lotus of the heart, having *mulaprakriti* for its basin, the occult *siddhis** for its petals, true knowledge for its filaments, the true gnosis for its stalk and root, and blooming fully under the great sun—the word of glory. In this spot should be mentally fixed the great fire called *Vaishvânara*, sending forth its effulgence in all directions, burning all round with a bright glow, the cause of the universe—*Ishvara*—, illuminating itself from top

*Meaning occult powers, eight in number, well known as *animâ*, *mahimâ*, etc.

to toe. In this Vaishvânara, should be sought out a jet, as steady as the flame of a lamp, protected from the slightest breeze, with the great Atman shining in it in all its native splendor—immutable, resembling a dark cloud, as brilliant as the flash of lightning, as yellow as nivâra-grains, the cause of all causes. This form must be recognized as the Vaishvânara, and should be identified with one's self. This kind of concrete absorption being complete, the student becomes identified with Vaishvânara and obtains absolution.

Another method consists of realizing mentally a picture of the sun and becoming fully absorbed in it—the sun, the soul of everything under heaven, the purusha, all gold even up to the nails of his hands and feet and the hair on his body, the lord Hari incarnate. Or the god Prajâpati may take the place of the sun,—prajâpati sitting in the padmâsana-posture on the well-known lotus, having four faces, all calm, as white as the leaf of the white lotus, the object of universal veneration, and declared by the sacred texts as the endless. Absorption in this case consists in identifying one's self with one or the other thus presented to mental vision.

These three are the great paths to absolution, and the wise do indeed attain absolution by the said absorption into the sun. The highest jñâna (jnâna or gnosis) is the conviction, "I am that which is Atman" which is all light, located in the space between the eyebrows, the cause of all, pervading the whole body from the center to the top, the indescribable, which shines with immeasurable splendor.

The following is another method of absorption. Having assumed the padmâsana-posture, one should imagine himself to be all Siva, keeping the eyes fixed all the while on the tip of the nose, —Siva free from all change, the greatest god, all peace, the highest Atman, immutable, all light, immortal, and located in the middle of the eyebrows.

A different method of concrete absorption would be the realization, in the lotus of the heart, fully blooming, having the moon in the center,—of one's own Atman (the individual ego) as of undefined form, the subject of all experience, immutable, surrounded in all directions with the rays of the moon, emitting nectar, the highest purusha, bathed in streams of nectar flowing from the lotus of the head, having sixteen petals and lying with its face downward. On the whole body being filled with this nectar, the student should identify himself with this Atma-purusha. One conquers death by the practice of this absorption for six months, and becomes without doubt completely absolved within a year. To one who is alive though absolved, there is not the least possibility of being in con-

taṅ with evil or misery in any shape. It being so, it is impossible to describe the degree of happiness within reach of one who is thus absolved for ever, but the really difficult thing is indeed the being so absolved. Therefore, oh thou fair-faced one! give up all idea of the result of your acts; connect not yourself with the possible results of your duty, and devote thyself entirely to the practice of proper absorption. The wise speak of innumerable methods and kinds of absorption, but of these those described here are the principal, the rest being not as useful. The wise having realized Atman, whether concrete or abstract, within themselves, become lost in ecstasy, a course which thou too shouldst not fail to imitate.

CHAPTER X.

I proceed to describe the condition of ecstasy (Samādhi) the means of destroying the bonds of this world, for those who are entrapped in them. Ecstasy is that condition wherein the jiva (soul) is lost in supreme (Atman); in other words, the merging of the subjective ego in Brahman. As absorption in Atman goes on deepening itself, so is ecstasy brought about in an effective manner. Hence, having fixed the mind on Atman, one should not move away from it (till ecstasy is induced). This rule applies to all things, and one becomes whatever he identifies himself with, and falls into ecstasy over the subject thus brought under contemplation. As a volume of water, after entering the ocean, loses its individuality so is self lost in the Self in ecstasy. This, oh gārgi! is to be remembered in this connection. One attending to all religious duties in a regular manner, and having full control over his mind, should reason out the teachings of his preceptor into full-grown conviction, and should become firmly attached to that conviction after consulting as often as necessary with the wise and the learned. He should then apply himself to the method of bringing about union (yoga) of Atman (jiva-soul) and paramātman, and should, from signs and indications internal as well as external, given by age, etc., determine the moment of his death. He should then remain perfectly calm, ever in bliss, in full control of his senses, devoted to duty and to the good of all, and should pass over his lore to his son together with all secret mantrās he may know, and should complete the remaining samskāras* to his mortal body. Then he should withdraw to some holy spot, situated in a pious country, and resorted to by the wise and the learned.

*Such as becoming a Sannyāsin etc. It is customary even to the present day by orthodox Brāhmanas (Brahmins), even while on death bed, to formally renounce the sacred thread, and put on brown cloths, in token of having become Sannyasin.

Having there spread the kusha-grass or the skin of a black antelope on the ground, he should squat upon it in the padmāsana-pasture, protecting his body with proper mantras, and sitting with the face towards the East or the North. He should then close the nine orifices of the body and should concentrate all his mind upon the light of Atman, the formless cause of all, situate in the âkâsa in the lotus of the heart made to open by force of Prânâyâma. The prâna should at the same time be carried to the crown of the head, and the great cause, all bliss, should be fixed by way of contemplation on the spot between the eyebrows. He who gives up the ghost in this manner with his mind fixed on Atman, and repeating the word of glory (aum) which is the symbol of Atman, becomes Atman (Brahman). The wise must practice this yoga which reveals the true glory of Atman, in order that it may be of use to them at the last moment. For, it is said by the wise that whatever the thing one contemplates upon at the last moment, he becomes it, in consequence of being full of it. Those who are peacefully devoted to duty, give up the body while in the condition of yoga, being one with the Self. Those who attend to their prescribed duty, not losing sight of the highest gnosis accompanied with this yoga, and remain unaffected by the results of their acts, have absolution, oh gârghi! within the very palm of their hand. I have thus described in full detail what has been indicated by Brahmâ as the best way to absolution. It behooves thee, Gârghi! having mastered this yoga with its eight subdivisions, and having obtained the condition of nirvâna, to give up all intercourse with this false world of mâyâ (illusion).