

Song of the Ascetic

by quill Monday, Jan 7 2008, 12:04pm

international / philosophy / literature

attributed to Dattatreya

Throughout history some texts stand apart from the usual fare - the Avadhuta Gita is one such text -- a favourite among lovers of Truth.



Dattatreya the Triune God

Avadhuta Gita

Chapter 1

1. Through infinite grace alone, the desire for Truth Arises in wise men to save them from great fear.
2. How shall I salute formless Being, indivisible, continuous and Immutable, that fills all existence with itself?
3. The universe composed of the elements is like a mirage. To whom shall I make obeisance, I am taintless?
4. All is absolute infinite Being/Self. Distinction and non-distinction do not exist. How is it said, "It exists; it does not exist"? I am saturated with Being and filled with awe!
5. The essence and the whole of Scripture is this Knowledge Supreme: THAT I AM, formless, all-pervasive Self.

6. There is not the slightest doubt that I AM THAT,
Indivisible and limitless like the sky.
By nature stainless and immutable.

7. I indeed am immutable and Infinite of the nature of pure,
unadulterated Jnana/Intelligence.
In relation to what or whom do
Polarities such as joy and sorrow exist?

8. I have no mental concept of good or evil;
I have no physical expression of good or evil;
I have no utterance of good or evil.
I am the pure nectar, the ambrosia of Knowledge --
beyond the empirical senses and all cognisance.

9. The mind is of the form of space.
The mind is plurality.
The mind is time.
The mind is the world of phenomena.
But in reality there is no mind.

10. How can it be said the Self is visible or hidden?
I am One, beyond space and time -- continuous.

11. How is it you do not understand you are One,
Immutable, continuous Being,
Sustaining all, in all?
How can you, glorious and unfettered, be bound by polarities/binaries?

12. Know the Self always to be all pervasive, One and unimpeded.
I am the meditator and the quiescence of unbroken meditation.
Who would divide the Indivisible?

13. You have no beginning or end, birth or death.
At no time were you constrained or embodied.
The Scriptures all declare --
"All is One" - Perfection!

14. You are within and without, exterior and interior.
You are One, auspicious, existing everywhere at once!
Why are you running hither and thither, like a deluded fool?

15. Union and separation are mirages of mind
Polarities have no relevance to you or me.
There is no you, me, or phenomenal universe.
All is One, Infinity.

16. You are not that which is buffeted by the five senses
or empirical world.
You are and have always been the supreme Self/Reality.
Who is it then that suffers?

17. Therefore there is no good or evil,
birth or death, bondage or liberation.
How is it you experience sorrow and misery?
Neither you nor I have name or form.

18. It is only mind that wanders about deluded, like an unclean spirit?
Behold the Truth, the indivisible Consciousness/Self
Free from attraction and aversion.

19. You are Truth; imperturbable, immutable, One;
of the nature of supreme Bliss and Freedom;
Beyond attraction and aversion.
Who is it that seeks objects of desire; who is it that suffers?

20. The Scriptures state that Truth is without attributes, pure,
Immutable, bodiless, formless,
Existing equally everywhere at once.
Know that you are that Truth.

21. Form is mirage,
Infinity is formless, Eternal.
The need of rebirth is eliminated through this knowledge.

22. Sages say Reality is One only and the same.
Through renunciation of attachment, the mind, which is one and many,
Ceases to exist.

23. If it is of the nature of not-Self,
how can there be Realisation?
If it is of the nature of the Self, how can there be Realisation?
If it is both "is" and "is not", how can there be Realisation?
If all is one and of the nature of freedom,
Who is it that experiences Realisation?

24. You are pure homogeneous Reality, disembodied, unborn,
and immutable.
How do you think of yourself as "I know (it)" or "I do not know (it)"?

25. By such sentences as "That thou art," our own Self is affirmed.
Of that which is untrue and composed of the five elements -
the Sruti (Scripture) says, "Not this, not this." (Neti Neti)

26. As the self is filled by the Self, so is all filled continuously by you.
There is no meditator or meditation.
Why does your mind meditate shamelessly?

27. I do not know the Supreme; how shall I speak of Him?
I do not know the Supreme how shall I worship Him?
If I am the Supreme One (that is highest Truth)
who is pervasive, homogeneous Being,
how then shall I speak of Him and worship Him?

28. The individual is not the Truth, which is continuous, homogeneous, free from distinctions and superimpositions of perceiver and perceived.

How can the individual be That which is aware of Itself?

29. No substance is by nature unlimited.

No substance is of the nature of Reality.

The very Self is the supreme Truth. There is neither injury nor non-injury in It.

30. You are homogeneous Reality;

you are pure, bodiless, birthless, and imperishable.

Why then do you have any delusion about the Self?

Again, why am I deluded?

31. When the pot is broken,

the space within it is absorbed in infinite space and becomes undifferentiated.

When consciousness is relieved of content,

No difference between that consciousness and Supreme Being exists.

32. There is no pot; there is no pot's interior space.

Neither is there an individual soul or the form of an individual soul.

Know absolute Truth, devoid of knower and known.

33. Have no doubt that you are THAT which is everything everywhere

The One eternal, Self, the All, the existent and nonexistent,

34. There are no Vedas, no worlds, no gods, no sacrifices.

There is no caste, no stage in life, no family, no birth.

There is neither a path to hell or a path to heaven.

There is only the continuity of existence, Infinity/Truth.

35. If you are free of the pervaded and pervader, if you are One

and fulfilled, how can you think of yourself as known by the senses?

36. Some seek nonduality, others duality.

They do not know the Truth, which is the same at all times and

everywhere, which is devoid of both duality and nonduality.

37. How can Truth, which is beyond mind, language and qualities be described?

38. When multiplicity appears to you as false, when the body and

objects appear to you as space, then you would know Infinity,

for you there is no inconsistency.

39. Even my natural self appears to me as non-distinct

from the Supreme Self; it appears to be One, like space.

How can there be a meditator or object of meditation?

40. What I do, what I eat, what I sacrifice, what I give --
are not binding in the least - detached from action I remain pure,
unborn, undying.

41. Know Reality to be formless.
Know Reality to be changeless.
Know Reality to be pure.
Know all this to be of the nature of the Absolute.

42. You are Truth.
There is no doubt -- otherwise, what do I know?
Why do you consider Being, which is Self-evident?

43. Child, how can there be illusion and non-illusion,
shadow and lack of shadow?
All is One Truth, all this is One imperturbable Reality.

44. Free before the beginning, Free NOW, and Free after the end.
Never bound. This is sure Knowledge --
that I am naturally without blemish and Free.

45. The whole phenomenological universe,
beginning with the principle of cosmic
intelligence is not in the least manifest to me.
All is ONE without differentiation.
How can there be cultural constraints or vocation for me?

46. I know that all is One indivisible continuum -- "Self,"
which is Self-begotten and Self-sustaining; the five elements,
beginning with ether, are void.

47. The Self is without gender
(neither eunuch, man, or woman).
It is not idea or imagination.
How can you conceive that Self possesses qualities
(of joy or joylessness)?

48. The Self is not attained through practice
or by means of yoga (or by any means).
It certainly is not purified by the destruction of the mind.
It certainly is not made pure by the instructions of a teacher.
It is Itself Truth.
It is Itself Illumined -- One.

49. There is no material body
nor are there disembodied beings.
All is verily the Self/One - without peer.
How can there be the three states or the fourth?

50. I am not bound; I am not liberated --
I am not differentiated.

Neither the doer or enjoyer am I.
I am devoid of the distinctions, particular and universal.

51. As water poured into water has
no distinctions, so too oil and water to me –
All is undifferentiated Reality.

52. If you have never been bound
how can you be liberated,
how is it you think of yourself with or without qualities
(form or formless)?

53. I know your Supreme Form to be directly perceivable, like the sky.
I know your apparent form to be as a mirage.

54. I have neither teacher nor teaching, limiting adjunct nor activity.
Know that I am by nature pure, homogenous, limitless like the sky.

**55. You need not be ashamed to boldly state,
"I am the Supreme Self, God, Truth."**

56. Why do you weep, lament and suffer vexation?
You are the Self, Supreme Truth -- Reality.
Imbibe the ambrosia of Creation – One continuous existence,
Transcending all divisions.

57. There is neither knowledge nor ignorance
nor knower or known.
He who understands IS Knowledge.
It is never otherwise.

58. There is no need of knowledge, reasoning, time, space,
instruction from a teacher, or attainment.
I am naturally perfect Consciousness, limitless like the sky.

59. I have no beginning or end, birth or death.
I have no attachment to action or to the fruits of action
I am beyond the categories (good and evil).
I am Eternal Truth, stainless, without qualities.
How can there be bondage or liberation for me?

60. If God pervades all, if God is immovable, undivided,
How then can I see division?
How can He have an exterior or interior (binary qualities)?

61. The whole universe shines undivided and unbroken.
Multiplicity and plurality are simply misconceptions of mind –
And products of imagination

62. Correct perception and unbroken awareness
transcend difference and non-difference.

63. You have no mother, no father, no wife, no son,
no relative, no friend.
You have no likes or dislikes.
Wherefore the anguish in your mind?
64. For you there is no day or night, rising or setting.
How can the wise imagine an embodied state for the bodiless?
65. The Self is neither divided nor undivided -
nor has It sadness or happiness
nor is It all or less than all.
Know the Self to be Immutable.
66. I am not the doer or enjoyer -- work have I none.
I have no body nor am I bodiless.
How can I have a sense of "I-ness?"
67. I have no desire nor have I any sorrow arising from desire.
Infinity is in want of nothing - I am the One Self, vast, limitless like the
sky.
68. Of what use is vain talk
and endless conjecture?
I have revealed the Essence:
You indeed are Ultimate Truth, limitless like the sky.
69. In whatever place a yogi dies, in whatever state,
there he dissolves, as the space in a jar dissolves in the sky.
70. All locations are auspicious for the yogi,
Who is able to divide Infinity?
In whatever state or consciousness,
the yogi remains undifferentiated, Absolute.
71. Duty, pursuit of wealth and enjoyment, desire, love,
liberation, freedom and everything else is mirage.
72. I remain detached from all previous, present and future actions.
That is certain.
73. The avadhuta alone, pure in evenness of feeling,
abides content in an empty dwelling place.
Having renounced all, he moves about naked.
He perceives only the Absolute, the All, the undifferentiated Self.
74. Beyond all states of consciousness is the abode
of the wise. There one achieves quiescence.
How is it possible to be bound or free?
75. The avadhuta knows no chant or prayer
nor does he engage in ritual.

This is the supreme utterance of the avadhuta,
an expression of Infinite Being.

76. There is no relative knowledge, void or relative truth
these are the spontaneous utterances of his nature.

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