28. The nectar of the lotus feet of Mukunda [Kṛṣṇa] is forever pleasing to the community of the highest renunciants, who are devoid of all material possessions. Bring to me the unrighteous who are averse to relishing these stories, but who instead relish the bonds of the household, which is the pathway to hell.
29. Bring to me those unrighteous souls whose tongues have never spoken of the name and qualities of *Bhagavān*, whose minds have never remembered His lotus feet, whose heads have never bowed down to Kṛṣṇa even once, and who have never done any service for Viṣṇu.
30. May that *Bhagavān*, *Nārāyaṇa*, the primeval Person, forgive the offenses performed by us through our servants. Forgiveness is fitting for Him. He is magnanimous on His foolish servants, and we hold out our hands in supplication. Reverence to the Supreme Person.'"
31. [*Śrī* Śuka said:]
"Therefore, O descendant of the Kuru dynasty, you should know that the only atonement for all sins, even great ones, is the reciting of the names of Viṣṇu (*saṅkīrtana*). This brings auspiciousness to the world.
32. The mind is not purified as much by vows and other such things as it is by the exemplary devotion of those who always hear and chant about the great deeds of Hari.
33. One who has tasted the nectar of the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa never again enjoys the *guṇas* of *māyā*. These lead to vice and have been renounced by them. Others, on the other hand, afflicted by lust, strive to clean the *rajas* from the mind by [material] action. But from doing this, only more *rajas* is produced anew.
34. The servants of Yama, their minds struck with awe, from then on remembered the glories of *Bhagavān* as described by their master. Being afraid of those who have devoted themselves to Acyuta [Kṛṣṇa], they do not dare to look at them from that time henceforth, O king.
35. The great sage Agastya recited this intimate story when seated in the Malaya hills worshipping Hari."

The Tale of King Citraketu: The Dead Son Returns

Yoga Blueprint

This passages continues in the vein of a number of the previous teachings in terms of illustrating the illusory and ephemeral nature of family relationships and attachments. The stark and blunt message it adds to this is that once even the most intimate relationships are severed by death, the departed ātman *pursues its trajectory into the next life and does not even remember its previous relationships, even if reencountering those same people.*

The opening verses below point to the rarity of those who seriously commit their lives to seeking truth.

Book VI, Chapter 14

1. *Śrī* Parīkṣit said:
"Vṛtra was sinful and his nature was *rājasic* and *tāmasic*. How did unwavering devotion to Nārāyaṇa, *Bhagavān*, arise in him, O *brāhmaṇa*?
2. Devotion to the lotus feet of Mukunda rarely manifests even among the celestials who are in pure *sattva*, or among the sages whose hearts are untainted.
3. Living entities are as innumerable as the particles of dust on the earth. From those among them who are human, only a few strive for higher goals.
4. From these, for the most part, there are only a few who seek liberation, O best of the *brāhmaṇas*. And from thousands who seek liberation, only one becomes perfected and attains liberation.[31]
5. And even among thousands who are liberated and perfected, a peaceful soul who is devoted to Nārāyaṇa is very rare, O best of the sages.
6. So, given all this, how did the sinful Vṛtra, the tormentor of all the worlds, become someone with such unwavering devotion to Kṛṣṇa in that terrible conflict [with Indra]?[32]
7. I am greatly puzzled by this, O master, and eager to hear. Vṛtra impressed Indra of the thousand eyes,[33] by his valor in the battle."
8. *Śrī* Sūta replied:
"The great Śuka, son of Vyāsa, was pleased by the question of the faithful Parīkṣit. He honored him and spoke these words.
9. *Śrī* Śuka said:
'Listen attentively to this narrative, O king, which I heard from the mouths of Vyāsa, Nārada, and also of sage Devala.
10. There once was an emperor among the *Śūrasena* people known as Citraketu who ruled over the earth, O king. During his reign, the earth provided all needs.

11. He had many wives.[34] However, although he wanted progeny, he could not obtain any offspring from them.
12. Consequently anxiety afflicted this king, even though he was endowed with all desirable qualities such as good looks, youthfulness, generosity, nobility, learning, opulence, and wealth.
13. Neither his opulence, nor all his queens with their lovely eyes, nor this earth of which he was sovereign could give the emperor any satisfaction.
14. Once, the great sage Aṅgirā, who happened to be wandering around those realms, arrived unexpectedly at his palace.
15. The king honored Aṅgirā according to custom by rising to greet him and making offerings and other such things. Then, after the sage had received hospitality and was comfortably seated, the king sat nearby with attentive mind.
16. When the king had respectfully bowed down on the ground and had taken his seat, Aṅgirā returned respect to the king. He then addressed the king by speaking as follows, O king.
17. *Śrī* Aṅgirā said:
"Are you and your citizens well and in good spirits? Just as a person is protected by the seven evolutes of *prakṛti* (*buddhi*, *ahaṅkāra*, and the five *tanmātras*),[35] so is the king protected by seven *prakṛtis* (constituents of statehood: kingship, ministers, allies, treasury, fortress, army, territory).[36]
18. Truly, when a king entrusts himself to these *prakṛtis*, he secures the highest well-being. Reciprocally, the *prakṛtis*—ministers, etc.—are delivered of their cares by the king, O Lord of men.
19. Are your wives, ministers of state, servants, merchant guilds, counselors, citizens, communities, regional kings, and sons under your control?
20. If one is in control of oneself, then all these other things come under one's control; the worlds, along with their rulers, all enthusiastically offer such a person tribute.
21. But I can see that your mind is not at peace. Whether on account of yourself or of others, your face is disturbed by worry. You have some desire that has not been fulfilled."
22. Upon being confronted in this way by the sage, who actually already knew the cause, O king, Citraketu, desiring offspring, responded to him bowed down in humility.

23. Citraketu said:
"Your holiness! The sins of *yogīs* have been destroyed by dint of their austerities, knowledge, and *samādhi* insight. What is there that is not known by them about embodied beings, whether internal or external?
24. Nevertheless, since you have requested, O *brāhmaṇa*, I will disclose what is disturbing my mind, obliged by the order of your holiness, even though you already know.
25. Because I am without progeny, my possessions, majesty, and kingdom, which are so sought after by rulers of the world, do not bring any solace to me, just as things unrelated to nourishment do not bring solace to those who are hungry and thirsty.
26. Therefore please protect me, O blessed one, as I am falling into a dark [hell] along with my ancestors.[37] Instruct me as to how to overcome such a destiny by means of progeny, as otherwise such a fate is very difficult to avoid."'
27. *Śrī* Śuka said:
'Beseeched in this manner, Aṅgirā, the saintly and venerable son of Brahmā, being compassionate, offered rituals to Tvaṣṭā,[38] including a sweet dish he had cooked for him.
28. The principal and eldest of the king's queens was called Kṛtaduti, O descendant of Bharata. The twice-born sage gave the remnants of the sacrifice to her.
29. Then he said to the monarch: "A son will be born to you, O king. He will be a source of joy and also of sorrow to you." At that, Angirā, the son of Brahmā, departed.
30. And so it came to be: just from eating that sweet dish, Queen Kṛtadyuti became pregnant from Citraketu, just as Kṛttikā did for Agni.[39]
31. Because of the potency of the king of the *Śūrasenas*, her pregnancy grew gradually every day just like the waxing moon, O king.
32. In due course, the time arrived, and a son was born, causing great joy among the *Śūrasena* citizens who heard the news.
33. The king was overjoyed. When his son had been bathed, cleansed, and decorated, the king had benedictions chanted by the *brāhmaṇas*, and then arranged for the birth ceremony to be performed.
34. He bestowed upon the *brāhmaṇas* gold, silver, garments, ornaments, villages, horses, elephants, and six crores of cows.

35. The magnanimous regent also showered desirable things on the other citizens for the prosperity, fame, and longevity of his son, just like rain clouds shower on living beings.
36. Since the son had been obtained with difficulty, the affection of the saintly king for him grew every day, just as does the affection of a poor man for wealth when it is attained with difficulty.
37. And excessive affection born out of ignorance also grew in the mother, Kṛtadyuti, for her son. Meanwhile, a fever of desire for bearing children burned in her co-wives.
38. As he fondled his son every day, special affection for the wife who had given him birth grew in the king. This was not matched toward the other wives.
39. Overwhelmed by envy, by the distress of being childless, and by the indifference of the king, the other wives lamented their situation:
40. "Woe betide an unfortunate woman who is childless and not respected in her home. She is neglected as if she were a servant by the co-wives who have beautiful sons.
41. In fact, what distress is there for servant girls who are respected for their steady service of the master? But an unfortunate woman is like a maidservant of a maidservant."
42. In this way, intense hatred arose in the queens. They were tormented both by their co-wife's blessing of a son and by being neglected by the king.
43. Being unable to tolerate the king anymore, the cruel-hearted women administered poison to the infant. Their good sense had become destroyed by hatred.
44. Unaware of the great sin performed by her co-wives, Kṛtadyuti looked at her son and, thinking he was just sleeping, wandered about the house.
45. Eventually, thinking that the boy had been sleeping rather a long time, the intelligent woman requested the nurse: "My dear, please bring me my son!"
46. After approaching the supine child, the nurse saw that his eyes were turned upward and that his life airs, powers of senses, and mind had passed away. "I am doomed," she said, and fell on the ground.
47. Upon hearing the highly distressed cry of her maid, who was also wildly beating her breast with her two hands, the queen hastily entered the room and approached her son. She saw that he had suddenly died.

48. Overwhelmed by shock, she fell to the ground and lost consciousness, her hair and clothes in disarray.
49. Thereupon, after hearing the commotion, all the people living in the king's palace, men as well as women, came to the scene. They too became overwhelmed with grief, sharing in the calamity. Those who had committed the evil deed also wailed falsely.
50. When he heard that his son had died of unknown causes, the king became blind with grief. He rushed there, stumbling on the way due to intense grief inflamed by the bonds of affection.
51. Surrounded by his ministers and *brāhmaṇas*, the king fell unconscious at the feet of his dead son. Taking long-drawn-out breaths, he was not able to speak. His voice became choked up and muffled with tears, and his clothes and hair were thrown into disarray.
52. At this, when the pure-hearted queen saw her husband overwhelmed with this great grief over the dead boy, his only son, she lamented in various ways. This increased the heartfelt pain of the ministers and citizens.
53. She bathed her two breasts, beautified with ointment and *kuṅkuma* powder, with mascara-laden teardrops. Tearing at her hair, her garland in disarray, she lamented in various ways for her son in her lovely voice, like a *kurarī* bird:
54. "*Aho*, O Creator! You must be really foolish: since this death comes to the subsequent [generation] while the previous one still lives, you are acting against [the rules] of your own creation! And if this is not the case, then you must surely be an enemy!
55. Perhaps the fact is that there is no chronological order in this world in the birth and death of embodied beings, and that things happen in accordance with personal *karma*. Even then, you have severed the bond of affection for this child—and this bond was made by you yourself for the growth of your creation [in which case you must be really foolish!].
56. My darling son—after seeing your father overwhelmed with grief, you should not abandon me. I am inconsolable and helpless. Through you, we will easily cross over this darkness of [*saṁsāra*]—it is difficult to cross over without offspring.[40]
57. Get up, darling. These friends of yours of your age are calling you to play. You have surely slept for long enough and are ravished

by hunger. Eat. Drink from my breast. Remove our sorrow, and that of our friends and family, O joy of your father.
58. My good fortune is gone, O son, for I cannot see your innocent smile, happy eyes, and lotus face. I do not hear your charming voice. Or have you been taken by that cruel one [Yama, Lord of death]? Have you gone to the next world, from where there is no return?"'
59. *Śrī* Śuka said:
'As his wife was mourning the dead son with various laments of this sort, Citraketu, greatly aggrieved, wailed at the top of his voice along with her.
60. As that husband and wife were lamenting, all their attendants, men and women, wept. Everything became deprived of life.
61. The sage known as Aṅgirā knew that the king had fallen into this state of despair, that his peace of mind was destroyed, and that he was without a guide. So he arrived there with Nārada.'"

Book VI, Chapter 15

1. *Śrī* Śuka said:
"The king, overwhelmed with grief and lying next to the dead body, seemed equally dead himself. The two sages spoke to him, and enlightened him with words of wisdom:
2. 'This person for whom you grieve, O king, whom do you suppose he was to you in a previous life, or is at present, or will be in a future life? And who are you to him?
3. Just as grains of sand are brought together and then thrust apart by the force of the current, so, in the same way, embodied beings are joined and separated by Time.
4. Just as among seeds of grain, [some] seeds are productive and [some] are not productive, similarly among living beings, impelled by the *māyā* of the Lord, [some] living beings survive and [some] do not.
5. You, we, and all these moving and non-moving entities who appear contemporaneous do not [factually] exist even in the present, O king, just as we did not exist before our births and deaths, nor will we exist after them.
6. Although He is impartial like a boy [at play], the Lord of beings creates, preserves, and destroys beings by means of other beings. These beings are not independent but created from Himself.

7. The body of the embodied one is born from a body [the mother] by means of another body [the father], just as a seed is generated from another seed. But the embodied one is eternal, just as objects [like the atoms of the earth] are eternal.[41]
8. This distinction between the embodied one and the body is construed by lack of discrimination (*viveka*) and is primordial. It is imagined, just as is the distinction in an object between its universal and its individuator.'"[42]
9. *Śrī* Śuka said:
"Consoled in this way by these words spoken by the *brāhmaṇa*, King Citraketu wiped his distraught face with his hands and responded.
10. The king said:
'Who are you two who have arrived disguised in the garb of ascetic mendicants? Full of wisdom, you are the most distinguished of the distinguished.
11. There are certainly *brāhmaṇas* who are dear to *Bhagavān* roaming the earth at will disguised as madmen, enlightening those such as I who have dull understanding.
12.–15. [Such sages are] Kumāra, Nārada, Ṛbhu, Aṅgirā, Devala, Asita, Apāntaratamā, Vyāsa, Mārkaṇḍeya, Gautama, Vasiṣṭha, *Bhagavān* Rāma,[43] Kapila, Bādarāyaṇi [Śuka], Durvāsā, Yājñavalkya, Jātukarṇa, Āruṇi, Romaśa, Cyavana, Datta, Āsuri, Patañjali, sage Vedaśirā, the sage Bodhya, along with Pañcaśirā, Hiraṇyanābha, Kauśalya, Śrutadeva, and Ṛtadhvaja. These perfected masters wander about for the sake of [imparting] knowledge.
16. Therefore, O masters, please bestow the light of knowledge upon me; I am a vulgar beast, my intelligence is dull, and I am immersed in obscuring *tamas*.'
17. *Śrī* Aṅgirā said:
'I am Aṅgirā, O king, the one who bestowed a son upon you in the first place, when you desired one! And this is his lordship sage Nārada himself, the son of Brahmā.
18.–19. You are now immersed in *tamas* because of grief over your son. It is difficult to overcome. But we did not forget you, and have come here, O master, to show kindness to you. You are a servant of the Supreme Being and do not deserve to be in this situation. Do not lament: you are a *bhakta* of *Bhagavān*, devoted to the *brāhmaṇas*, O master.

20. When I first came to your house, I could have given you supreme knowledge at that time. But when I understood that you were intent on something else, then I just gave you a son.
21.–22. So now you are experiencing the suffering of those who have sons. The same holds true for those who have wives, homes, riches, prosperity, and powers of various sorts, the temporary objects of the senses such as sound—the opulences of kingship, a mighty kingdom, strength, treasury, servants, ministers, and friends.
23. These all bestow trouble, fear, illusion, and grief, O Lord of the Śūrasenas; they are dreams, *māyā*, concoctions of the mind. Their appearance is like the city of the *gandharvas* [a castle in the sky].
24. They are creations of the mind. Although they are perceived, they are not real, since they are without enduring substance. A person contemplates them with the mind, due to the force of past *karma*, and then produces further varieties of *karma*.[44]
25. In fact, this body of the embodied one is made of the gross elements of matter, the knowledge-acquiring senses and action-performing senses. It is said that it brings suffering and various afflictions to the embodied one.
26. Therefore, reflect on the true situation of the *ātman* with a sound mind. Give up the conviction that objects in the world of duality are stable. Then you will attain a state of peacefulness.'
27. *Śrī* Nārada said:
'Please accept the teaching (*upaniṣad*) of this *mantra* that I bestow on you. Meditating upon it, you will have a vision of the Supreme Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa [Viṣṇu].[45]
28. Draw near to the soles of His feet, O lord of men. In the past, Lord Śiva and other gods, after freeing themselves from this illusory world of duality, immediately attained to His glory, which is incomparable and supreme. You too will also attain the Supreme without delay.'"

Book VI, Chapter 16

1. *Śrī* Śuka, son of Badarāyaṇa said:
"O king, after this, the celestial sage granted a vision of the king's dead son to all the grieving kinsmen. Then he spoke.
2. *Śrī* Nārada said:
'O *jīvātman* (embodied soul),[46] blessings upon you! Just look at your mother and father, and your friends and relatives burning with intense grief because of what you have done.

3. Take back possession of your body for the remainder of your life. Surrounded by your kinsmen, indulge in the enjoyments bestowed by your father, and eventually ascend on to the throne of the king yourself!'
4. The *jīva* (soul) said:
'In accordance with *karma*, I have been transmigrating through numerous births—as a celestial being, animal, and human. In which birth were these two my father and mother?
5. Kinsmen, relatives, enemies, those who are neutral, friends, the indifferent, and adversaries—everyone becomes each of these in turn, in mutually reciprocating roles with everyone else.
6. Just like objects such as articles of trade or gold move about from here to there among people, so does the *jīva* move about in [various] wombs and procreators.
7. The relationships with objects and living beings among people is clearly seen to be impermanent. Yet for as long as there is a relationship with these things, there is a sense of "mine-ness" over them (that is, ownership).
8. The *jīva* is eternal and without any sense of I-ness (ego), yet when it attains a particular birth, a sense of "this belongs to me" develops in it for as long as it finds itself in that particular birth.
9. This soul is eternal, imperishable, subtle, the support of everything, and self-aware. Being a master, it creates its own universe for itself, through its own *guṇas* of *māyā*.
10. No one is dear to it, no one its enemy, no one its kin, no one foreign to it; it is the one seer (*draṣṭṛ*) of all the minds of the performers of virtuous and faulty acts.
11. The soul does not in fact accept the fruits of activity, virtuous, or faulty. It is the lord who is seated neutrally as the witness of cause and effect.'"
12. Śuka, son of Badarāyaṇa, said:
"After uttering these words, the *jīva* then departed, and its relatives were struck with amazement. They severed the bonds of personal affection, and were freed from their sorrow.
13. After removing the dead body of their relative and performing all the appropriate rites, the kinsmen gave up their affection. It is the giver of grief, illusion, fear, and distress, yet it is so difficult to give up.
14. Remembering the words of the sage, the killers of the child, who had lost their luster because of the child's murder, became ashamed.

Under the direction of *brāhmaṇas* they undertook the penance for infanticide there on the banks of the *Yamunā* river.
15. When Citraketu's mind was enlightened in this way by the words of the *brāhmaṇa*, he stepped out from the dark well of household life, like an elephant from the mud of a lake.
16. After bathing in the *Kālindī* river in the prescribed manner and performing pious rites with water, Citraketu worshipped the two sons of Brahmā silently with controlled breath (*prāṇa*).
17. The venerable Nārada, pleased that the *bhakta* king had controlled his mind and submitted to their instructions, gave him the following [prayer] to recite:
18. 'Reverence to You, *Bhagavān* Vāsudeva; let me contemplate You. Reverence to Pradyumna, Aniruddha, and Saṅkarṣaṇa.
19. Reverence to You who are absolute wisdom. You have a form of supreme bliss, and You delight in your own nature. You are peaceful and Your knowledge transcends duality.
20. Reverence to You who are situated beyond the waves of *śakti* (*māyā*) in the experience of Your own bliss. Reverence to You, Lord Hṛṣīkeśa, the Supreme. Your form is unlimited.
21. He is the One who is still not understood when words have exhausted themselves, along with the mind.[47] He has no material name and form (*nāma-rūpa*), is pure consciousness (*cit*), and transcends cause and effect. May He be favorably disposed toward us.
22. From Him this world is born, and in Him it rests and is dissolved, just like the earth with regards to the things made of earth. Reverence to that *Brahman* which is You Yourself.
23. The life air, senses, intelligence, and mind cannot know Him or touch Him. He pervades within and without, like the sky. I offer reverence to Him.
24. The body, senses, life airs, mind, and intellect, these perform activities when pervaded by His rays. Otherwise they cannot do so, just like iron cannot perform functions when it is not heated. That which is known as "the seer" (*draṣṭṛ*) in the states of consciousness [waking, sleeping, deep sleep, pure consciousness] is Him.
25. *Oṁ*. Reverence to *Bhagavān*, the Supreme Person, the almighty and omnipotent Lord. Your two lotus feet are tenderly massaged by the lotus budlike hands of the multitudes of devotees surrounding You. You are the Ultimate Supreme Being.'"

26. *Śri* Śuka said:
"After Nārada had taught this practice to the submissive *bhakta* king, he departed with Aṅgirāsa to the abode of the self-manifest Brahmā.
27. So for seven days, imbibing only water, Citraketu meditated with focused attention on that practice in the manner instructed and imparted by Nārada.
28. Then, O king, at the end of seven days, by concentrating on that practice without interruption, he attained the position of lordship over the celestial *vidyādharas*.[48]
29. Thereafter, a few more days later still, the flow of his mind became enlightened, and he attained the presence of the feet of the God of gods, Śeṣa.[49]
30. He saw the Lord, who was as white as a lotus fiber, wearing blue garments, and adorned with a radiant headdress, armlets, belt, and bracelets. He had a smiling face, and reddish eyes, and was surrounded by an entourage of perfected *yogī* masters.
31. All the king's sins were destroyed from seeing the Lord, and his subtle body became pure and cleansed. His eyes filled with tears of love from intensified devotion, and his hairs stood on end. He approached silently, and offered homage to that primordial Being.
32. With teardrops of love, he continually dampened the footstool of the lotus feet of the most praiseworthy Lord Viṣṇu. He was so choked up with love, he was incapable of offering homage for a long time as no words issued forth.
33. Then, recovering his speech, the king controlled his mind with his higher reason, and restrained his senses from external engagement. Then he spoke the following words to that personal Being, the *guru* of the universe, who is described in the scriptures of the Vaiṣṇavas.[50]
34. Citraketu said:
'O unconquerable One! Although You are unconquerable, Your Lordship is conquered by the saints (*sādhus*) whose minds are controlled. Their hearts, in turn, have been conquered by You. You are so merciful that You give Yourself to those who always engage in Your *bhakti* without any personal desire.
35. O *Bhagavān*! The emergence, preservation, and dissolution of the universe is nothing other than an expression of Your power. The [secondary] creators are partial manifestations of partial manifestations

of You.[51] Because of thinking themselves independent, they vie among each other in vain.

36. It is You who exist at the beginning, middle, and end of [everything from] the smallest atom to the entire cosmic manifestation, even though You are immune from these three [states of change]. That which remains permanent throughout the beginning, termination as well as intervening period of all beings, is none other than You alone.

37. This egglike universe is covered by seven layers of earth atoms, etc., each one ten times thicker than the previous one.[52] That place where it, along with billions and billions of other universes exist like miniscule atoms, is Ananta, the unlimited One [You].

38. There are those, thirsty for sense gratification, who [have the appetites] of animals even though they are in human forms. They worship the lower celestial beings, rather than You, the Supreme. But those blessings received from the celestials, O Lord, come to an end when the celestials themselves come to an end—just like the boons received from a royal family [when the dynasty is destroyed].

39. [Even if] desires for sensual pleasure are offered to You, O Supreme Being, they do not generate *karma*, just as cooked grains do not germinate. [This is because] You are not made of the *guṇas* but are pure awareness, while the snares [of *karma*] of the world of duality (*saṁsāra*) are attributes of the *guṇas*.[53]

40. O unconquerable One! [*Saṁsāra*] was conquered by You when You delivered the flawless teachings of *Bhāgavata-dharma*. Those sages who are free of all desires and delight in their own *ātman*, worship You for liberation.

41. The attitude of discrimination—making distinctions of I, you, mine, yours—which is found elsewhere, does not exist here among the people [following the *Bhāgavata-dharma*]. Actions performed with an attitude of discrimination are impure, temporary, and characterized by non-*dharma*.

42. What benefit is there in notions of "mine" and "other"? How much value is there in *dharma* [systems] that are harmful to oneself and others? [Such systems] are actually non-*dharma* because they are harmful to oneself, inflict suffering on others, and cause Your displeasure.

43. Your principles, which you established by means of the *Bhāgavata dharma*, do not change. The Āryans, who see no differences between the multitude of moving and non-moving entities, worship You.

44. After seeing You, all the sins of men are destroyed, O *Bhagavān*. This has always been the case. Even a *pukkaśa* tribesman, after hearing Your name once, is freed from *saṁsāra*.

45. Therefore, O *Bhagavān*, today we have had all the impurities in our minds wiped away by seeing You. How could that which was spoken by Your devotee the celestial sage Nārada turn out to be otherwise?

46. O Unlimited One, Soul of the Universe, everything performed by people in this world is known to You. What is there that can possibly be revealed to the Supreme *Guru*, just as what can be revealed to the sun by fireflies?

47. Reverence to You, *Bhagavān*, the Lord of creation, maintenance, and dissolution of the universe. The true nature of Your Being cannot be understood by imperfect *yogīs* because of their seeing things as different [from You].

48. The creators of the worlds are animated when You breathe, and when You perceive, their organs of perception awake to perception. The sphere of the universe appears like a mustard seed upon the head of Śeṣa. To Him, the Being with a thousand heads, I offer reverence.' "

49. *Śrī* Śuka said:

"*Bhagavān* Ananta was pleased when He was glorified in this way, and spoke to Citraketu, the Lord of the *vidyādharas*, O upholder of the Kuru dynasty.

50. *Śrī Bhagavān* said:

'You have attained perfection by accepting the teachings about Me delivered to you by Nārada and Aṅgirā, as well as by following that technique, and also by seeing Me.

51. I am the soul of all beings, and I cause the welfare of all beings. I am *śabda-Brahman* [the Veda] and the Supreme *para-Brahman*. These are both My eternal forms.

52. The *ātman* infuses the world, and the world envelops the *ātman*. Both of them are pervaded by Me, and both are created in Me.

53. This is just like a person deeply sleeping who sees the whole universe in himself, but, upon waking, realizes that his self is only situated in one place.

54. Such is the case with the *ātman*: when one realizes that the *jīva*'s states of consciousness, such as wakefulness, etc., are expressions of

māyā (illusion), then one should remain fixed in the knowledge that the seer is transcendent to these states.

55. Know me to be that *ātman*, by dint of whom the *puruṣa* understands the dream to be his when in the state of dreaming.[54] I am *Brahman*, bliss, beyond the *guṇas*.

56. That awareness of both the states of dream and of awakening for a person remembering them, which pervades and goes beyond them, is *Brahman*, the Supreme.

57. It is due to the forgetfulness of this My nature that *saṁsāra* exists for a person who thinks of himself as separate. It is because of this forgetfulness that a person undergoes body after body, and death after death.

58. After having attained a human birth where there is the possibility of knowledge and wisdom, if one does not awaken to the *ātman*, one does not obtain any [ultimate] benefit [from this birth].

59. Keeping in mind the hardships [accruing from chasing] desires in this world, of the contrary results that arise from them, and of the freedom from fear that comes from not pursuing them, a sage should desist from desires.

60. A husband and wife perform actions for the sake of happiness and to avoid unhappiness. But there is neither the cessation of unhappiness nor the attainment of happiness from this.

61.–62. Realizing in this way the opposite results attained by those people who think themselves clever, and realizing the subtle nature of the *ātman*, which transcends the three states [of waking, sleep, and deep sleep], and freed by one's own willpower from sense objects whether seen or heard about, a person should become My devotee and take satisfaction in knowledge and wisdom.

63. This is what is to be known as the true self-interest of those who have taken a human birth: perceiving with all one's being the oneness of the *ātman* with that Supreme. This perception is attained by means of skillful intelligence and the practice of *yoga*.

64. By contemplating these words of mine, O King, with faith and without confusion, you will quickly become perfected with knowledge and realization.' "

65. *Śrī* Śuka said:

"As king Citraketu, who had been inspired in this way, was watching, Hari, *Bhagavān*, who is the *Guru* of the universe and soul of everything, disappeared from there."