

Mahabharata Series

Japa, Dhyana, Pranayama

Compiled by: G H Visweswara

PREFACE

I have extracted these contents from my other comprehensive & unique work on Mahabharata called **Mahabharata-Spectroscope**. (See <http://www.ghvisweswara.com/mahabharata-2/mahabharata-spectroscope-a-unique-resource/>). Whereas the material in that was included in the order in which it appears in the original epic, in this compilation I have grouped them by meaningful Topics & Sub-topics thus making it much more useful to the student/scholar of this subject.

This is a brief compilation of the contents appearing in the great epic Mahabharata on the topics of Japa (muttering prayers, chanting or repeating sacred names or mantras), Dhyana (meditation) & Pranayama (breathing in a controlled way through the nostrils). Many passages in Dhyana refer to *pranayama*. It contains some very interesting paragraphs on how to perform japa & dhyana. There is not much material on how to perform Pranayama.

I hope the readers will find the document of some use in their study on this subject.

Please see <http://www.ghvisweswara.com/mahabharata-2> for my other topic based compilations based on Mahabharata.

G H Visweswara

gh.visweswara@gmail.com

www.ghvisweswara.com

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Japa, Dhyana, Pranayama in Mahabharata

Japa

Performing *japa-yajna* & its consequences

(Extracts)

Yudhishtira questioned: What fruits will accrue for one who does *japa*? Which *loka* will be obtained by those who do *japa*? Tell me comprehensively about the methods of *japa*. What is the essence of the word '*jaapaka*'? Is this in any way related to *sankhya-yoga* or *dhyana-yoga* or *kriya-yoga*? Is it a part of any *yajna-vidhi*? What object is called '*japya*'?

How to perform japa

Bhishma replied: (Shl 7, 8) **Two paths of Sankhya & dhyana described by munis who view everything equally, depend and also do not depend on japa.** (These two paths depend on *japa* till purification of mind is accomplished and do not depend on it once that is done). (Shl 9) In both these paths *mano-nigraha* (subjugation of the mind) & *indriya-samyama* (restraint on the *indriyas*) are necessary. (Shl 11, 12) The following *yajnas* are promoters of *yoga-karyas*: *satya-nishta*, *agni-paricharya*, living alone (*ekanta-vasa*), *dhyana*, *tapas*, *dama*, *kshama*, no jealousy, limited consumption of food, withdrawing from pleasures of the senses, limited talking and *shama*. **For the brahmachari who practices japa-yajna all other karmas will retract.**

(Shl 14) The method for practicing *japa-yoga* is as follows: The doer of *japa* should sit on a *kushasana*. He should hold *darbhe* in his hands. He should tie his hairs (*shikhe*) with *darbhe*. He should be surrounded by *darbhe*. The middle of his body should be covered by *darbhe*. (Shl 15) He **should bid good bye to the attractions of sensory pleasures. They should never be thought about. Should achieve equilibrium of trigunas and merge the mind in the mind (*manasyeva mano dadhat*).** (Shl 16) While doing *japa* of *samhita* which brings all round auspiciousness, *paramatma* should be meditated upon through the *buddhi*. *Japa* can be given up once the *samadhi* state is reached (In that state only *brahma-bhava* remains & everything else drops).

Effect of japa-yajna

(Shl 17, 18) He becomes purified by *tapas* and gains complete victory over *indriyas*. He becomes free of *kaam*, *krodh*, *lobh* & *moha*. He will transcend dualities. He will neither feel sorrow for anything nor will he be interested in anything. **He will never consider himself as the cause for karmas or as doer of deeds. Whatever he does will be done without the feeling of 'I'.** (Shl 19) He will never develop *ahankara* at any point of time (Believes that everything happens according to god's will). He will not get interested in accumulating *artha*. Even when he is humiliated he will not humiliate others. He will never become *akarmanya* (not doing karmas). He will be engaged in *karma-yoga*. (Shl 20) He will always be interested only in actions relating to *dhyana*. He will know the truth only through *dhyana*. **By attaining the state of samadhi through dhyana, he will gradually give up japa & dhyana-karma.** (Shl 21) **In that state he will experience the indescribable ultimate bliss.** At that time he does not desire *ashta-siddhis* etc. He will become totally & always free of desires and will enter Brahma. (Shl 22) If he does not wish to worship the body of *chaturmukha brahma* (*brahmakaaya nishevanam*) then the *pranas* will go out. The *jeeva* will attain *kaivalya-pada* (absolute unity, eternal emancipation). Such a yogi will never be reborn. He will attain *mukti*. (Shl 23) After attaining *atma-samadhi* the yogi will become free of *rajo-guna*, will be pure, calm and will attain *amrita-swaroopa* (like nectar), *vishuddha atma* (completely pure). (Shanti parva; Mokshadharm; Adhyaya 196)

Blemishes in japa-yajna lead to naraka

Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 1) Grandfather! You have said that a *jaapak* (one who does *dhyana-yoga* along with *japa*) will attain *uttama-gati*. Will they all attain the same state? Could they also go to other states? Tell me about this.

Bhishma said: I will tell you how *jaapaks* can also go to *naraka* in various ways. Listen attentively.

(Shl 3) **That jaapak who does not implement all the rules stated earlier and does them partially will go to narak.** (Shl 4) One who does his *japa* with disdain, who has no liking for his *japa* and one who does not enjoy bliss in it will all undoubtedly go to *narak*. (Shl 5) **Those who flatter their ego**

saying they have done a large number of *japas* will go to *narak*. Those who humiliate others will also go to *narak*. (Shl 6) Those who do *japa* enchanted by variety of pleasures and thinking about them and are always thinking of the fruits they wish to have out of *japa* will go to *narak*. (Shl 7) In case the *jaapak* obtains *ashta-siddhis* and he gets interested in them only, it will become like *narak* for him. He will not become free of the bondage of these *ashtaishwarya*. (Shl 8) **That *jaapak* who does the *japa* with desires and is keenly interested in some desire will get a body suited for fulfilling that desire in his next birth.** (He may be born as a king if he strongly desired a palace. By thinking about *paramatma* he will attain him and by thinking about pleasures of the senses he will get a birth suited for fulfilling them). (Shl 9) That *jaapak* whose only interest is pleasures, who has no discrimination and has a fickle mind will attain an unsteady/perishable state or will go to *narak*. (Shl 11) If a *jaapak* makes a resolve that he will complete the practice of a certain *japa* system/count and if he does not complete it and loses interest in *japa*, he will go to *narak*.

(Shl 12) Yudhishtira questioned: Even if *jaapak* is established in *Brahmabhava*, due to which reason can he get a rebirth?

Bhishma said: (Shl 13) Dharmaja! (If he remains untouched or uncorrupted by *raaga* etc and stays established in pure *brahma-bhava* there is no rebirth). However, if he is blemished due to *kaam* etc feelings he will attain *narak*. **While *jaapak* system is very auspicious it is possible that there could be other impurities in practicing it.** (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; Adhyaya 197)

Compared to *paramdhama*, all other *lokas* are *naraks*

Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 1) Grandfather! Due to blemishes in *japa-yajna* what kind of *naraks* will the *jaapak* go to? I am very curious to know about it. Kindly tell me.

Bhishma said: (Shl 2) You are born with the *amsha* of Yamadharmā. Therefore by nature you are a *dharmisht*. Listen to these words attentively. (Shl 3, 4) The places that belong to the most intelligent *devatas* are called '*niraya*'. They are of many shapes & colours. The fruits you obtain in them are also quite varied. They have *vimanas* which can go wherever desired and have assembly halls. They have different sports/play areas and golden lakes with lotuses. (Shl 5, 6) Many *divya-lokas* (divine lokas) such as that of the four *dikpalakas* (Varuna, Kubera, Indra and Yama), of Brihaspati & Shukra, Marudganas, Vishve-devatas, Saadhyas, Ashwini devatas, Rudradityas, Vasus etc **are *naraks* from the view point of the 'abode' of Paramatma.** (Shl 7) **The divine abode of Paramatma is devoid of fear of destruction. It is beyond characterisation. It is not affected by the *pancha-kleshas*. It is free of lovable & not lovable and birth & death. The *trigunas* which cause these feelings of duality do not exist there. It is also free of the eight *puris* (*bhuta, indriyas, manas, buddhi, upasana, karma, prana and avidya*). In that divine abode there is no past, present or future.** (Shl 8) It is also free of the four *lakshanas* (*drishti, shruthi, mati and vijnati*). It is also devoid of the four *pramanas* (*pratyaksha, anumana, upamana & shabda*). In that place there will be no joy due to obtaining what is liked or bliss of enjoying them. It is totally free of sorrow and efforts. (This essentially means a state which transcends *trigunas*). (Shl 9) **Time takes birth from that abode. Time has no supremacy there. There Paramatma is the lord of time.** He is also the lord of *swarga*. (Shl 10) After reaching that abode, those who have attained the state of absolute unity will have no sorrow. The abode of Paramatma has these qualities. **Other *lokas* are characterised by impermanent pleasures. Compared to the abode of the Paramatma they will appear to be *naraks*.** (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; Adhyaya 198)

Other ways of performing *japa*

Son to his father brahmana: (Shl 32) I will be dedicated to the *yajna* of peace, will be *jitendriya*, will be absorbed in *brahma-yajna* and live in *muni-vritti*. **I will perform *vak-yajna* in the form of *japa & swadhyaya*, *mano-yajna* in the form of *dhyana* and *karma-yajna* in the form of *agni-hotra* and care of guru etc.** (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; Adhyaya 75)

Faith as a key factor

Birds to Jajali: (Shl 8) Great brahmana! *Shraddha* (faith) is the daughter of Surya. Therefore her name is Vaivasvati. She is also called Savitri & Prasavitri (one who gives pure birth). *Vak* (speech) and *manas* are more external than faith. ***Shraddha* (faith) is decisive faculty. *Manas* is one which desires and gets doubts. Therefore *manas* is external to faith. Further outside it is *vak* or speech.** Meaning that, in *japa, dhyana* and acts of dharma faith is the greatest factor. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 264)

Benefits of performing japa

(Shl 154) By giving very generous donations the giver becomes much liked by the taker. By talking very sweetly the speaker becomes dear to the listener. **One who does *homa, mantra, japa* etc for other's accomplishment** becomes loved by the one who achieves success. (Shanti parva; Aapadharna; Adhyaya 138)

Power of Gayathri japa

- (Shl 85) Markandeya: For a brahmana who does Gayathri japa thrice a day without fail, even the planets positioned in wrong places (in horoscope) cannot do any harm nor give any bad results. The good results of well-placed planets will be emphasised.

Even the most fearsome ghosts (*bhoota, preta, pishacha, rakshasa*) cannot come near a brahmana who does Gayathri *japa* thrice a day. (Vana; Markandeya samaasya; Adhyaya 200)

- *Maharshi* Vyasa to Yudhishtira: ..(Shl 37) One who sits in a sacred place, eats small quantity of food (*alpahara*), remains committed to non-violence, has given up *raga-dweshya-maana-apamana*, remains silent, and recites Gayathri *mantra (japa)* will be cleared of all sins. (Shanti; Rajadharmanushasana; Adhyaya 35)

- Markandeya: There are three types of *shuddhis*: *Vakshuddhi, kriya shuddhi & jala shuddhi*. One who does these *shuddhis* & chants Gayathri *mantra* thrice a day will not have any sin attached to him. (Vana; Markandeya Samaasya; adhyaya 200)

- (Shl 68) If the Gayathri *mantra* is repeated when travelling in ship or in any vehicles or in King's palace, it causes great *siddhi*. (Shl 69) One who repeats this *mantra* will not have fear of kings, *pishachas, rakshasas, agni, jala, vayu* or poisonous animals. (Shl 70) One who repeats this with a pure mind will establish permanent peace in all four *varnas* and particularly in the four *ashramas*. (Shl 70) The house in which it is repeated with faith will not catch fire (accidentally). Children will not die in that house. There will be no serpents in that house. (Shl 73) If Gayathri *mantra* is repeated in the midst of cows they will develop affection for that person. During journey in all states this *mantra* should be repeated. (Anushasana parva; Daandharma; Adhyaya 150) (GHV Note: This *adhyaya* is not included in Bhandarkar Research Institute edition. The set of *shlokas* do not look cohesive. But it contains some useful information)

Power of other mantra japas

- Indrota *muni* to Janamejaya: (Shl 30) By reciting (*japa*) thrice *aghamarshana-mantra* while standing in water, one can obtain the same fruits as successfully completing *ashwamedha-yajna*. (Shanti parva; Aapadharna; Adhyaya 152)

- **Pankti-pavanas**

Bhishma said: Now I will tell you about *pankti-pavanas* (those who will purify or make the group sacred by their presence). You should ensure that brahmanas are such persons and they should be invited for *shraaddhas*.

(Shl 25) All brahmanas who have completed their studies and Veda *vrats*, are *snataks*, and are dedicated to virtuous conduct should be considered as *pankti-pavanas*. Now I will tell you about *paankteya* brahmanas. You should consider them as *pankti-pavanas*. (Shl 26, 27) **Those who repeat (*japa*) the *trinaachiketa mantra***, who worship the *panchagnis*, **who read *trisuparna mantras***, who know the six *vedangas*, those born in the tradition or family of scholars in Veda or preachers of Brahma *vidya*, those who sing Samaveda, who sing *Jyeshtha sama*, who are obedient to parents and those who are *shrotiyas* for ten generations are all *pankti-pavanas*. (Anushasana parva; Daandharma; Adhyaya 90)

Gita & Japa

I am Bhrgu among the great rishis; I am the single syllable OM among words; **among *yajnas* I am the *Japa-yajna***, and among the immovable, the Himalaya am I. (Gita 10:25)

Limitations of japa

Sanatsujata: (Shl 19) If there is no absence of desires (*nishkaama*) there is no possibility of realising God by virtuous acts like building wells, lakes etc. **An *ajnani* cannot attain immortality by**

performing *homa, japa, yajna & yaagas*. Such a person will not attain peace even at his time of death. (Udyoga; Sanatsujata; Adhyaya 45)

Japa as a key quality

- Bhishma said: (Shl 2, 3) Bharadwaja! Only that person who has had the *jatakarma* etc *samskaras*, who is clean (internal & external purity), who has studied/studies Vedas well, who performs the *shatkarmas* (six karmas: there are two groups of these; (i) *adhyayana-adhyapana, yajana-yaajana, daana-pratigraha*; (ii) *sandhyavandana, snana, japa, homa, devata-puja and atithisatkara-vaishvedeva*, is engaged in *shoucha, sadachara*, who consumes only *yajna-shesha*, who is loved by the guru, is dedicated to practicing *vratas* and who is *satya-nisht* is called **brahmana**. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharm; Adhyaya 189)

Qualities of mumukshu

Bhishma: (Shl 15) He should always be contented. He should have clear & happy face and *indriyas*. He should have no fears. He should be engaged in *japas* like *pranava* (OM). He should always practice disinterest and be silent. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharm; Adhyaya 278)

Japa as remedial measure

When it can work

- Bhishma: (Shl 3, 4) When man is prompted by fate to wage a war, scholars first find out from their divine intuitive knowledge (*jnana-drishti*) whether *daiva* is favourable or not. In case it is unfavourable, the scholars who know the needed procedures perform such *japa-homa* or remedial measures to appease the *daiva*. They perform these auspicious activities and douse these troubles. (Shanti parva; Rajadharmanushasana; Adhyaya 102)
- **Swayambhu Manu: On sins & atonements**
(Shl 6) If a specific atonement is not stated, *japa-tapa-homa-upavas* done regularly, *atma-jnana-sadhana*, bathing in sacred rivers near which such virtuous people live, all these are atonements which result in purification. (Shanti; Rajadharmanushasana; Adhyaya 36)
- Kamandaka: (Shl 20) The duties in such circumstances have been laid down by *acharyas*. The king should blame his sins. That is, should repent for his sins. Should study the Vedas. Should honour the brahmanas. (Shl 21) Should fix his mind especially in practice of dharma. Should marry a girl from a noble family. Should serve brahmanas who are thoughtful, wise and forgiving. (Shl 22) **He should chant Gayathri mantra standing in water**. Should be clean. Should always be joyous. Should develop company of *dharmatmas*. Should banish sinners from the kingdom. (Shl 23) Should please everyone with sweet words and good deeds. Should praise good qualities in others and should tell others that, 'I am yours. Treat me as your own'. (Shl 24) **That king who practices these will soon be freed of his sins and will be honoured by all**. There is no doubt in this. (Shl 25) Follow/practice the dharma your *gurus* teach you exactly. You will achieve success and fame by the grace of gurus. (Shanti parva; Rajadharmanushasana; adhyaya 123)
- **Bhishma: Acharyas have suggested following measures to wash the sins of accumulating money by the path of adharm:** (Shl 13, 14, 15) He should study the three Vedas. He should serve the brahmanas. He should please the brahmanas with sweet words and good deeds. He should be generous. He should marry a girl from a high & noble family. When serving the brahmanas he should introduce himself. He should praise the good qualities in others. **After bath, everyday he should chant maha-mantras**. Should be soft natured. Should not talk much. Even though people will call him as sinner, he should not mind it. After doing many difficult to accomplish *punya-karmas* he should enter the society of brahmanas and *kshatriyas* (**Reformist punishment**). (Shl 17) **One who does atonement in this manner will clear his burden of sins and become respectable to many**. Then he will enjoy many kinds of pleasures. He will also protect himself by virtue of the good deeds he has done. He will obtain great fruits in this *loka* and *paraloka*. (Shanti parva; Aapadharm; adhyaya 134, 135)

When it may not work

- Yudhishtira to Arjuna: .. (Shl 40) **Shruti states that for a man who indulges in *parigraha* (acceptance, acquisition) and *sangraha* (accumulation) (meaning one who is not a *tyagi*), practice of dharma (*atma-darshana*) will not be possible.** Moreover, it is my personal experience also. (Shl 41) By desiring kingdom and wealth, I have accumulated a heap of sins. This has become the cause for several birth & death cycles. **Veda itself states that *parigraha* (taking, acquisition) results in sin. Performance of *yajnas, daan, japa* etc does not remedy its sins completely.** It is not possible to do repentance corresponding to the *parigraha*. Therefore the heap of sin grows and becomes the cause for birth and death cycles. Once in that cycle, you cannot get *moksha*. That is why it is better not to indulge in *parigraha*. (Shanti; Rajadharmanushasana; Adhyaya 7)
- Ashma to king Janaka: (Shl 35) Medicines, *mantras, japa-homa* etc cannot protect the person who is in the grip of old age or death. (Shanti; Rajadharmanushasana; Adhyaya 28)
- Dharma vyadha: (Shl 51, 52) **Repentance can remove many sins.** Repenting for the wrong deeds done & deciding not to do such things prevents committing such acts again. **Repentance can remedy the sins which are not remedied by *japa, tapa, tirtha-snana, punya kshetra yatra* etc.** (Vana; Markandeya Samaasya; Adhyaya 207)

Some examples in Mahabharata

- **Bhishma on bed of arrows**
...Bhishma took refuge in yoga, the essence of Upanishads, and with full concentration started *pranava-japa* (Om-kara) and was lying in the bed of arrows awaiting Uttarayana. (Bhishma; Bhishmavadha; Adhyaya 119)
- **How Yudhishtira's day began**
Extract: He went to the bathroom. There 108 persons were waiting for him with golden vessels filled with water. They had all finished their bath and were wearing clean white clothes. The king was wearing light clothes and sat down to be bathed in perfumed (*chandana-yuktha*) water. Before that strong & trained wrestlers massaged his body with fragrant medicinal liquids. Then the king wore pure white (like a white swan) and light cloth on his head to absorb the water in his hairs. Then he smeared *harichandana* all over his body, wore a garland, wore light clothes which would not tire him, and sat down facing east with his palms folded. **Then he did *japa* of Gayathri *mantra*.** (Drona; Pratigya; Adhyaya 82)
- **Shwetadwipa**
About people in Shwetadwipa: (Shl 36) We saw those great people who **were doing *brahma japa*** with folded palms everyday facing Northeast. **They were doing a *japa* called *manasa*.** (Shl 37) Shrihari was feeling very pleased with their *japa* that was done with totally focussed minds. There was a very bright divine lustre in each of the residents of that island. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharma; adhyaya 336)
- **Arjuna regains *tejas***
Recollecting that Arjuna had killed Jayadratha in the war, they poured arrows on him. Arjuna who was covered with arrows on all sides became confused. His bow Gandiva and his gloves slipped away from his hands. He lost consciousness but still the Saindhavas were shooting arrows at him. *Devatas* were scared that Arjuna had lost consciousness. They discussed certain rituals to help him. **As suggested by them all *devarshis, saptarshis* and *brahmarshis* started to chant *mantra* for his victory. As a result, Arjuna's *tejas* started to increase.** Then he took up his bow and started to fight fiercely. (Ashwamedhika parva; Anugita; Adhyaya 77-78)

Dhyana

How to perform dhyana

- Bhishma continued and said: (Shl 2) Yudhishtira! Now I will tell you about **four types of *dhyana-yoga*** by knowing which *maharshis* attain eternal *siddhi*. (Shl 3) Son of Kunthi! Those who are free of the blemishes of this *samsara* (*kaam, krodh, lobh, moha* etc) and free from the blemishes that come from birth (*sattwa, rajas, tamas*) and are firmly established in the *satya-swaroopa* will not

return (to this earth). (Shl 4) **Pursuers of *dhyana-yoga* should transcend dualities. They should always be driven by *sattwa-guna*. They should be free of all blemishes. They should practice *niyamas* or prescribed regulations strictly. Should study *shastras* which preach *nissanga* (no-attachments), have no contradictions and which bring peace to the mind.** (Shl 5) A *muni* should gather all his *indriyas* (*indriyas-grama*) (Withdraw the mind from all *indriyas* just as a tortoise pulls in its organs), become still like a log of wood, and should have a mind focussed only on *dhyana*. (Commentary: *Indriyas* enjoy only through *manas*. To gather & pull the *indriyas* inward can only be done through the mind. Without the attention of the mind the senses cannot function. We know this from our experience. This process of withdrawing the mind from the senses, merging them in the mind and then merging the mind in *atma* is called *pindikarana*. Then the body will be still like a log. **For doing *dhyana* there should be some subject. Mind does not stay focussed for long on 'nothingness' or 'no-subject'. As taught by guru, have a 'subject' and then mind should be deployed totally on it.** (Shl 6, 7) A *muni* who knows *dhyana-yoga* and has the strength of mind should not hear a sound, should not experience any touch, should not see any form, should not grasp any taste and should not smell any thing worthy of smelling. **One who practices *dhyana-yoga* should not desire anything which perturbs the *indriyas*** (Mind should not be allowed to flow out towards objects of senses through the five *indriyas*. Separating the mind from the *indriyas* is a key first achievement in *dhyana-yoga*). (Shl 8) Then the dedicated person, having given up seeking the pleasures through the *indriyas* should gather all these five in his mind. The fickle mind along with the *indriyas* should be deployed in the *dhyana* of *paramatma*. (Shl 9) **It is the nature of mind to wander on several subjects.** It has five doors called *panchendriyas*. It stays firmly on impermanent subjects. A *dheera* should first deny such a mind of its escape routes and focus it on *dhyana-marga*. (Shl 10) **When the yogi gathers together *indriyas* & *manas*, then *dhyana-yoga* starts.** Thus I have explained to you the first *dhyana-marga*.

(Shl 11) The mind, which is the sixth organ of *atma*, thus having been gathered together & focussed on *dhyana* will stay on it only for a short while and soon jumps towards other things just as lightning in the cloud (It must be pulled back again, and again focussed on the single subject).

(Shl 12) Just as the drops of water on a lotus leaf are never stationary and keep rolling all over the leaf, **the mind of the *sadhaks* of *dhyana-yoga* will also be quite fickle in the beginning.**

(Shl 13) The mind focussed in the heart will stay still on that only for a short while. It enters the path of *prana-vayus* and travelling along it becomes unsteady like the wind itself. It retracts from *dhyana-yoga*. (Shl 14) **The *sadhak* who knows about *dhyana-marga* should not feel upset or distressed when this happens. He should push aside laziness and envy and again try to focus the mind through *dhyana*.** (Shl 15) When a yogi starts *dhyana* in his mind, first *vichara* (pondering, examination), *viveka* (discrimination) and *vitarkas* (doubts, conjectures) will arise. (Shl 16) **Even if the mind feels distressed when attempting *dhyana* one should have patience.**

He should not feel upset (*klesha*) for any reason. He should always be trying to achieve auspiciousness through *dhyana-yoga* (*Kleshas* are five: *avidya* (ignorance), *asmitha* (egoism), *raaga* (vehement desire or passion), *dwesha* (hatred) and *abhinivesha* (intentness, perseverance)). (Shl 17, 18, 19) If heaps of sand or ash or dried cowdung are made wet by water they will not become completely wet immediately. Only a small part will be wet. Rest will be in the form of dry powder. But if by pouring water gradually they are mixed with it, they become dough-like and become wet completely. **In the same way, a yogi should wet the group of *indriyas* gradually with the water of *dhyana-yoga*.** After having done so, he must withdraw the *indriyas* gradually in the mind. If done so, *chitta* will attain good peace.

(Shl 20) Yudhishtira! A *muni* dedicated to *dhyana-yoga* should first establish mind and five *indriyas* in *dhyana-marga* and then by doing daily practice of *dhyana-yoga* he will achieve ultimate peace of mind. (Shl 21) **The divine happiness that such a *yogi* attains cannot be gained by mere hard efforts or mere *daivayoga*.** (Shl 22) A yogi will be experiencing such ultimate bliss through *dhyana-yoga* and will always be engaged in *dhyana-karya*. Yogis who are thus dedicated to *dhyana-yoga* will attain sorrowless and eternal *nirvana* (*moksha*). (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmas; adhyaya 195)

- *Siddha purusha* said: .. (Shl 46) Just as even though a man has kept his treasure in his room, keeps on thinking about it only, in the same way a *sadhak* should control his inconstant *indriyas* through mind and look for the *atma* in his body. When doing this he should not become careless/lose concentration. He should be alert. (Shl 47) **One who is devoted to *dhyana* in this manner will soon develop a clear mind and realise Parabrahma Paramatma in the cave of**

his heart. Once he has *atma-sakshatkara* he will know the nature of *mool-prakriti*. (Ashwamedhika parva; Anugita; adhyaya 19)

- Son to his father brahmana: (Shl 32) I will be dedicated to the *yajna* of peace, will be *jitendriya*, will be absorbed in *brahma-yajna* and live in *muni-vritti*. I will perform *vak-yajna* in the form of *japa* & *swadhyaya*, ***mano-yajna* in the form of *dhyana*** and *karma-yajna* in the form of *agni-hotra* and care of guru etc. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 75)
- Vyasa said: (Shl 5) The Paramatma who is secretly hidden in all beings cannot be perceived through the *indriyas*. *Jnanis* who have a subtle vision realise him through highly subtle & great *buddhi*. (Shl 6, 7) **A yogi realises the *amrita swaroopa Paramatma* by merging *manas* along with *indriyas* & *indriyarthas* in the *antaratma* through the *buddhi*, by not thinking about a variety of subjects that can be thought about, by engaging the mind well trained by *vidya* in *dhyana-yoga* and by giving up the feeling of 'I'**. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 246)
- Uma (consort of Maheshwara) said: (Shl 1-3) Oh worship worthy Shankara! I wish to know the holy procedures of *Vanaprashthis* who live on the beautiful banks of rivers, near mountain streams, bowers in the vicinity of rivers, in mountain regions, in forests and in sacred places having plenty of fruits & roots.

Maheshwara said: (Shl 8) They should practice yoga and obtain mastery in *asanas*. They should conquer *kaam* & *krodh*. **They should live in forests where only the valorous can live and should meditate sitting in *Virasana***. (Shl 9) They should be engaged in accomplishment of yoga with total concentration. (Anushasana parva; Daandharma; adhyaya 142)

- Siddha purusha to kashyapa: I will tell you how a person who meditates and practices yoga while being in seclusion will find accomplishment in yoga. Listen. (Shl 33) **In this manner, meditating upon the subtle paths seen while directed by guru, mind should be concentrated upon that part of the body where *atma* resides. Mind should never be on anything outside the body.** (Shl 34) Mind, having folded all the inner and outer matters in it, should be concentrated only on that area where *atma* dwells. (Shl 35) **At that time of meditation when one 'sees' the *atma*, there will be no external matters in the mind that has merged with *atma*. Mind will be clean like a mirror. *Atma darshan* is possible only when such clean state prevails.** (Shl 36) **Meditation with complete concentration on *atma*, who is in the silent inner heart, should be done by taking control of *indriya* & by sitting in an uninhabited part of forest.** (Shl 37) Mind should also be focussed for meditation on teeth, jaws, tongue, throat, neck, heart and *hrdaya-bandhana (nadi marga)*. (Ashwamedhika parva; Anugita; adhyaya 19)
- Bhishma to Yudhishtira: (Shl 141) At evening times (meeting of day & night, twilight) taking bath or eating meals or study of Vedas should not be done. At that time one should do meditation with a pure mind. No other work should be done. (Anushasana parva; Daandharma; adhyaya 104)
- Bhishma: (Shl 24) Some yogis merge the mind in *buddhi* through *dhriti* and even while bearing the body go beyond the *prana*, *indriyas* etc states and approach the extremely subtle Parabrahma (These are ***jeevan muktas***). (Shl 25) Some others, following the steps stated in *shastras*, reach the *Brahma-sthana* through *buddhi* and realising 'that', at the time of death stay in the *atma bhava* and with self-support attain that Brahma (***videha-muktas***). (Shl 26) Some others make Paramatma the *Shubha-avalambana-murthy* through *dharana yoga* and worship him very well. Some yogis worship and approach him as something appearing as *vidyullekha* (bright as the flash or streak of lightning) and called as *vidyut*. Having burnt all their sins with *tapas* approach him closely at the time of death. All these are *mahatmas*. They all attain *paramagati*. (**Commentary: 24th shloka** describes *jeevan-muktas*. They experience the bliss of *mukti* even though in the gross body by rising to the *atma-sthana* which is beyond the body. 25th *shloka* talks about *videha muktas* who remove all supports to the mind and stay in the *brahma-bhava* which remains and then giving up the body attain Parama-pada. 26th *sholka* talks about those who meditate upon him as ***shubhashraya murthy* and about those who meditate upon him as pure light only.** All these have destroyed their sins through *tapas*. All will attain *parama-pada*). (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 217)

- Yajnavalkya: (Shl 13-17) Oh king of Mithila! **The entire group of *indriyas* should be concentrated in the mind after rejecting the five blemishes viz *shabda, sparsha, roopa, rasa & gandha* of *panchendriyas* and suppressing all new thoughts and karmas. Then *manas* should be established/fixed in *ahankar*, *ahankar* in *buddhi*, and *buddhi* in *Prakriti*. In this way yogis merge everything in a systematic manner and then meditate upon Parabrahma who is *kevala-swaroopa* (oneness), is without *rajas*, is pure, permanent, endless, without changes, resides in all, indivisible, undecaying, immortal, eternal and governor. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharna; adhyaya 316)**

Dhyana & dhaarana

Yudhishtira, Vyasa said: (Shl 1) Shuka! Just as a person who falls in a river is carried away with the current, sinking & rising in the waters, in the same way human being who has fallen into the floods of the river of *kaal* (*kaal-pravah*) will go with its current, sinking & rising. **In case he desires to come out of the current he has to depend on the boat of *adhyatma-jnana*.** (Shl 2) Those *dhiras* who have acquired firm & clear knowledge of truth (*tattva-nishchaya*) help even other confused people to cross with the help of their boat like knowledge. But the confused & the fools can neither help themselves to cross nor help others.

Dhyana as a part of *dwadasha yoga*

(Shl 3) **A *muni* with single minded focus should destroy all blemishes like *kaam, krodh* etc in him and take recourse to the 12 yogas viz *desh, karma, anuraga, artha, upaya, apaya, nishchaya, chakshus, ahara, samhara, manas & darshan* and practice *dhyana-yoga*.** (Commentary: *Dwadasha-yoga*: (i) *Desh* = place: The place you sit should be level. He should be sacred. There should not be stones, fire or sand. It should be silent. He should be supportive to the mind. He should not hurt the eyes. He should not be very windy. Such a lonely cave is best suited for *dhyana*. (ii) *Karma*: Food, pastime, activities, sleeping and waking hours should be limited/regulated and according to a discipline. (iii) *Anuraga*: There must be devotion and eagerness to realise god (iv) *artha*: should possess only absolutely needed things (v) *upaya*: Should sit in a posture suited for *dhyana* (vi) *apaya*: Giving up attachment or interest in worldly affairs and relatives etc (vii) *nishchaya*: having faith in gurus and statements of Vedas (viii) *chakshus*: Fixing the sight at the tip of the nose (ix) *ahara*: consuming only pure and *sattwik* food (x) *samhara*: withdrawing the *indriyas* & *manas* from seeking the objects of senses (xi) *manas*: Freeing the mind from resolves and changes and focussing only on Paramatma (xii) *darshan*: Viewing the grief that occurs when faced with ageing, death, sickness etc with indifference (*vairagya*)). (Shl 4) **The person who wishes to gain the best *jnana* should control his speech and mind using his *buddhi*. One who wishes peace of *atma* should, with the help of *jnana* thus gained, merge his *buddhi* in *atma*.** (Shl 5, 6, 7) Whether the person is highly dreadful or knows all the Vedas or is devoid of knowledge of Vedas even though a brahmana or is a dharmic or is engaged in *yajnas* or who has done heinous sins or a great man or one who is living a very difficult life, **if he follows the above said twelve yogas, he will cross the most inaccessible ocean of birth and death.** (Shl 8) In this manner if the person practices these twelve yogas until *siddhi* is attained and is always thinking and investigating about the Brahma, he will go beyond the *shabda-brahma* (There are three meanings to this as per commentators: Will go beyond the fruits obtained by practicing the prescribed karmas of Vedas; will go beyond *Prakriti*; will go beyond the dos & donts of Vedas and attain Parabrahma).

Dhyana-yoga compared with a chariot

(Shl 9-12) This *dhyana-yoga* is a beautiful chariot. Dharma is the place where you sit in this chariot. Modesty is its cover. *Upaya-apaya* are its wooden frame to which yoke is fixed. *Apana vayu* is its axle. *Prana vayu* is its yoke. *Buddhi* is longevity. *Jeevana* is its tether (*bandhan*). *Chaitanya* is the supporting pole under the frame. *Sadachara* is the felly of the wheel. This chariot is bearing eyes, skin, nose and ears. *Prajna* is nave of its wheel. All the *shastras* are its whip. *Jnana* is its charioteer. *Kshetrajna* (or *Jeevatma*) is sitting as the traveller in this chariot. He is making the chariot go forward slowly. The chariot is moving forward pulled by faith & *dama*. The subtle quality of *tyaga* is following the chariot. This auspicious chariot is moving on the sacred path of *dhyana*. Thus *Jeevatma* through the chariot called *dhyana-yoga* will attain Parabrahma.

The seven dhaaranas

(Shl 13) **I will tell the method by which to very quickly attain Parabrahma *tattva* applicable to the person who has the desire to sit in this chariot of *dhyana-yoga* and is eager to attain the imperishable**

Paramatma. (Shl 14) The *sadhak* will remain silent and achieves success in seven *dhaaranas* related to *prithvi, jala, tejas, vayu, akash, buddhi & ahankar* (In Patanjala yoga, *dhaarana* is defined as holding the *chitta* steady at one particular point). (Shl 15) The *sadhak* can sequentially achieve authority/control on *prithvi, jala, tejas, vayu, akash & buddhi*. Then the *sadhak* will gradually attain the unmanifest *brahmaishwarya* (First he should try *dhaarana* on *prithvi-tattva*. By doing this he will attain authority over this *tattva*. Then he should merge the *prithvi-tattva* in *jala-tattva* and focus the *chitta* on *jala-tattva*. This will help him gain authority on *jala-tattva* and so on sequentially upto attaining Parabrahma-paramatma).

Experiences during the seven step dhaarana yoga

(Shl 16) Now I will tell you about how the victory over *prithvi-tattva* etc is gained by yogis dedicated to *yogabhyas* and **the experiences before attaining *brahma-sakshatkar* of a yogi who does the *dhyana* according to the *dhaarana* method described** (These have been stated in Shwetashwata Upanishad also). (Shl 17) When the *sadhak* sits down for *dhyana* giving up the pride on his gross body, he develops a subtle vision and therefore he will see certain signs. **First when he is at the stage of *prithvi-dhaarana* it will appear as if a light mist of winter has covered the whole sky.** This is the first form in his series of experiences. (Shl 18) This will gradually go away. Then the second form will be seen. (Shl 19) **The whole sky will appear as if filled with water.** He will also see water in his *atma*. After some time the water will vanish in the sky and the **form of *agni* will be seen.** (Shl 20) **Once this form of *agni* goes away the *sadhak* will see the *vayu-tattva*.** It shines wearing a yellow cloth and looks in the form of golden hued wool. (Shl 21) *Agni* dissolves in *vayu* and after victory over *vayu-tattva* its subtle form merges in the sky. **Only blue sky will remain.** In such state the *manas* of the yogi who wishes to attain *Brahma-bhava* will be in a highly subtle form. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharm; adhyaya 236)

Effects or powers of dhaarana yoga

(Shl 22) Now listen to the fruits of *dhaarana yoga* after all these signs have occurred. Once *parthivaishwarya* (gaining victory over the *prithvi-tattva*) is obtained the yogi gets the power to create. **That yogi, having become as imperturbable as Prajapati, can create living beings from his body.** (Shl 23) One who has gained *siddhi* on *vayu-tattva* can, without anyone's help and **just with his finger, shake the entire earth.** This is what we have heard. (Shl 24) One who has attained *siddhi* on *akash-tattva* becomes all-pervasive like the *akash*. **He gets the capability to make his body vanish. One who has attained the *siddhi* of *jala-tattva* can drink the waters of huge lakes (Reminds of the story that Rishi Agastya drank the whole ocean).** (Shl 25) The person with *siddhi* of *agni-tattva* develops a form with so much *tejas* that no one can look at him or douse that *tejas*. **If *ahankar* is conquered all the five *bhutas* (*pancha-bhutas*) come under his control.** (Shl 26) *Buddhi* is like the *atma* for *pancha-bhutas & ahankar*. After conquering that *buddhi* yogi gains the complete wealth of *jnana-yoga*. That yogi gets comprehensive and blemish-free understanding (*pratibha*). (Shl 27) In the same way, he will merge in the unmanifest from which this manifest world which is cause for the emergence of these *pancha-bhutas, ahankar & buddhi*.

Yoga & dhyana

Vasishta said: (Shl 6) Maharaja! I will answer properly all the questions you have raised. First listen to what I say about yoga.

(Shl 7, 8) **The main duty of yogis is indeed *dhyana*. It is *dhyana* which is the main strength of a yogi. Scholars of yoga talk about *dhyana* in two ways.** First: **Concentration of the mind.** Second: ***Pranayama*.** In *pranayama* again there are two types: *saguna-pranayama & nirguna-pranayama* - the *pranayama* in which the mind is associated with *saguna* and in which mind is associated with *nirguna*.

(Shl 9) Janaka raja! Practice of yoga (*yogabhyasa*) **should not be done** while defecating, urinating & eating. One should be practicing yoga at all other times. (Shl 10, 11) A wise yogi should become purified and should withdraw the mind from the objects of senses (In yoga system of philosophy they accept a *tattva* called Ishwara beyond even the 25th *tattva*. *Sankhyas* do not accept Ishwara & talk of only 25 *tattvas*). Through the means of twenty two *preranas* the non-inert *jeevatma*, whom scholars say as the form of *atma* & that which is beyond the *Prakriti* of 24 *tattvas* has to be guided to the Paramatma (**22 *preranas***: The entire body from the tip of the toe upto the top of head has to be filled by inhaling air through the nostrils. Then, first stabilising the air in *brahma-randhra*, it should be pulled from there and stabilised in the forehead. In this manner, pulling the air from one point to another sequentially it should be stabilised in the following 18 points: centre of brows, eyes, tip of nose, tip of

tongue, hollow of throat, centre of heart, centre of navel, penis, abdomen, root of thighs, middle of thighs, knees, *chitimoola*, shank, spread of the feet, toes. These are known as 18 *preranas*. Apart from this *dhyana*, *dharana*, *Samadhi* & *sattwa-purusha-anyata-khyaati*—difference in *Purusha* & *buddhi*—join to make it 22). (Shl 12) We have heard from *gurujana* that with 22 types of *preranas* we can know Parabrahma Paramatma. **Only one with purified mind will be worthy of practicing this yoga-vrat. It is impossible for some one who has outward oriented mind to practice yoga-vrat.**

(Shl 13) A yogi who is free of all kinds of interests & attachments, who eats limited food and is a *jitendriya* should concentrate his mind in *atma* either in the first quarter of the night or last quarter of the night. (Shl 14, 15) Oh king of Mithila! **When the yogi binds/stabilises the *indriyas* with his mind, binds/fixes the mind with his intelligence, and becomes still as a stone or a stub of tree trunk which has no movement or vibrations, becomes firm like a mountain, then he is called a yogi by those who have known the ways & practices of yoga.** (Shl 16, 17) When a yogi does not hear any sound even if it is happening, does not smell anything even though there is a smell, does not feel any taste even if a delicacy is placed on his tongue, does not see even if someone comes near him, does not feel any touch even when someone touches him, **when his mind has no desires or resolves, has no attachment of I & mine towards anything**, does not experience anything just like a log of wood, then he is said to have reached purified state and to be in yoga.

Realisation of atma in dhyana

(Shl 18) In such state the *sadhak* shines steadily like a lamp in a place with no breeze. At that time there will be no relationship between him and his *linga-sharira*. At that time he attains only upward movement and not sideward movement. (Shl 19) **Then the *sadhak* can realise the *atma*. Child! Persons like us (yogis) after ‘seeing’ the Paramatma in the ‘cave’ say that the *antaratma* in the heart became ‘known’ to us.** (Shl 20) **To a yogi devoted to *dhyana*, *atma* will be ‘seen’ like fire without smoke, Sun with its rays and like the lightning in the sky.** (Shl 21) Mahatma brahmanas who are courageous, dedicated to the *shastras* that teach Brahma realise the birthless & *amrita-swaroopa* Brahma in the caves of their heart. (Shl 22) Those who have realised him call him minuter than the minutest (*anuronu-anu*), bigger (*mahat*) than *mahat* (*mahadbhyo mahattaram*). Such Parabrahma *tattva* though it resides in every living being, cannot be seen by anyone. (Shl 23, 24, 25) **The creator Paramatma has to be realised in the cave of the heart through the lamp of *manas* fuelled by the clarified butter of *buddhi*.** He is beyond the great darkness and is devoid of *tamoguna*. Therefore he has been called ‘*tamonuda*’ by experts in Vedas. He is pure, has no *tamoguna* and no body. He is called by the name *alinga*. Realising him in the cave of the heart is the yoga of the yogis. What other characteristic can yoga have? In this way yogis ‘see’ the greatest Paramatma who has no birth or death and is the one that must be realised by all. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 306)

Sankhya jnana & Yoga

Yudhishtira! Yajnavalkya said: (Shl 1) Great king! I preached you *sankhya jnana*. Now I will tell you *yoga jnana* as I have heard and **as I have found in my own experience**. Listen.

(Shl 2) **There is no *jnana* that equals *sankhya jnana*. There is no *bala* (strength) that matches *yoga bala* (*naasti sankhya samam jnanam, naasti yoga samam balam*). The goal of both these is same. Both these avoid death.** (Shl 3) Due to ignorance people say that *sankhya* & *yoga* are different. But we feel with certainty that they are same. (Shl 4) Whatever *brahma-tattva* yogis realise, the same is realised by *sankhyas* too. **That person who knows both to be same knows *parabrahma-tattva*.**

(Shl 5) *Rudra (prana)* is the main among *yoga-sadhanas* (*Prana vayu* is the main means for yoga). **By controlling *prana*, yogis can travel in ten different directions with this body itself.** (Shl 6) A yogi with his *yoga-bala* leaves behind the gross body on this earth, and by using the subtle body with powers of *anima* etc *ashtaishwaryas* (eight powers) happily travels around the *lokas* till the time of dissolution. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 316)

Gross & subtle yoga

(Shl 7) Great king! **Scholars say that in Vedas two kinds of yogas are described viz *sthoola* (gross) and *sookshma* (subtle). *Sthoola yoga* gives *anima* etc eight powers and *sookshma yoga* consists of eight components viz *yama*, *niyama*, *aasana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*, *dharana*, *dhyana* & *samadhi*. There is nothing other than these two.** (Shl 8) The main means of *sadhana* of

yogis is said to be of two types: *saguna & nirguna (sabija, nirbija)*. This is the statement of *yoga shastra*. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 316)

Pranayama & dhyana

(Shl 9) **Controlling the *manas* along with *prana-vayu* in *pooraka* (inhaling deeply to fill), *kumbhaka* (holding the breath) & *rechaka* (exhaling) is *pranayama***. Focussing the mind on a single object with *prana-vayu* is also called *pranayama*. (According to classical commentators holding the *manas* in *prithvi* etc places is *saguna pranayama*. Concentrating on *atma-vastu* is *nirguna pranayama*). (Shl 10) *Saguna pranayama* bears *nirguna manas* (along with *prana*, *manas* will also be merged in *saguna*). **If during *pooraka*, *kumbhaka* & *rechaka* no deity is focussed upon but these are done purely as physical practice, it will cause excess of wind. Therefore *pranayama* should never be done without a target object** (without a *mantra*). (Shl 11) During the first quarter of night *prana-vayu* should be excited/directed in 12 ways. Then in the second & third quarter one should sleep. Again in the fourth quarter it should be excited in 12 ways. (Classical commentators say that nine *chakras* like *mooladhara* etc, and the three places called *samashti*, *kaarana* & *nishkala*—these twelve locations should be excited through *pranayama*. In one *pranayama* there are three types of impelling viz *rechaka*, *pooraka* & *kumbhaka*. If four *pranayamas* are done it becomes 12 impellings. This would also mean that in the two quarters four *pranayamas* each should be done). (Shl 12) In this way after bringing *manas* under control, the *jnani* who is calm, *jitendriya*, living alone & *atmarama* merges the mind in Paramatma. There is no doubt about this.

(Shl 13-17) Oh king of Mithila! **The entire group of *indriyas* should be concentrated in the mind after rejecting the five blemishes viz *shabda*, *sparsha*, *roopa*, *rasa* & *gandha* of *panchendriyas* and suppressing all new thoughts and karmas. Then *manas* should be established/fixed in *ahankar*, *ahankar* in *buddhi*, and *buddhi* in *Prakriti*. In this way yogis merge everything in a systematic manner and then meditate upon Parabrahma who is *kevala-swaroopa* (oneness), is without *rajas*, is pure, permanent, endless, without changes, resides in all, indivisible, undecaying, immortal, eternal and governor.** (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 316)

Factors that help in dhyana

- **Bhishma:** (Shl 8) Great brahmana! *Shraddha* (faith) is the daughter of Surya. Therefore her name is Vaivasvati. She is also called Savitri & Prasavitri (one who gives pure birth). *Vak* (speech) and *manas* are more external than faith. ***Shraddha* (faith) is decisive faculty.** *Manas* is one which desires and gets doubts. Therefore *manas* is external to faith. Further outside it is *vak* or speech. **Meaning that, in *japa*, *dhyana* and acts of dharma faith is the greatest factor** (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 264)
- **Bhishma:** (Shl 5) A *mumukshu* (one who desires *moksha*) should give up anger through forgiveness. He should give up desires by stopping making of resolves. By serving *jnana*, *dhyana* & *sattwik gunas*, he should destroy sleep.
... (Shl 15, 16) The following are the means to yoga: ***dhyana*, *adhyayan*, *daan*, *satya*, *lajja*, *saralata*, *kshama*, *antah-shuddhi*, *bahir-shuddhi*, *ahara-shuddhi* & *indriya-samyama***. *Tejas* increases by practicing these. These wash away all the sins that the *sadhak* may have. By this all the resolves of the *sadhak* will be accomplished. *Vijnana* will emerge in the heart. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 274)
- **Bhrigu to Bharadwaja:** (Shl 29) By eating very light meal (*laghu-ahara*: just enough to survive), by being in *dhyana* in the first & last *yaamas* (3 hours) of night and by having a pure mind scholar can realise *paramatma* in himself. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; Adhyaya 187)

Indriya nigraha & dhayana

- **Dharma vyadha:** ***Indriyas* alone are the cause of both *swarga* & *naraka*. Controlling the *indriyas* gives *swarga* & losing control on them gives *naraka***. This control over *indriyas* is *yoga vidhi* & is the basis for *tapas* and results in emancipation or hell.

Our body is like a chariot drawn by six horses (*indriyas*). **That charioteer who can control the six horses simultaneously & skilfully can take the chariot smoothly wherever he wishes.** Only by steadfastness they can be won. Intrinsic quality of *indriyas* is to be unstable & constantly changing. These *Indriyas* take control of the mind & drive it as they want. The mind under the control of *indriyas* drags the *buddhi* along (without allowing it its discriminative abilities). This is just like a powerful wind blowing away a boat as it wishes. Humans easily yield to the *indriyas*

thinking that in it lies great happiness. But one who understands the ephemeral nature of this happiness by deep discriminative thinking controls the *indriyas*, devotes himself to **dhyana** and attains permanent happiness. (Vana; Markandeya Samaasya; adhyaya 211)

- **Story of king Alarka**

Pitrus (forefathers) then told Parashurama the story of king Alarka. (Shl 1) Oh great *dvija!* Scholars cite an old episode in this matter. You should listen to it and practice the same.

In the past there was a *rajarshi* called Alarka. He was a great *tapasvi*, *dharmajna*, *satyavadi* and *dridha pratijna* (firm in resolve). He conquered this earth with his archery and later fixed his mind in the *sookshma tattva* (subtle principle). After having fought many wars and building kingdoms, he gave up all those karmas and while sitting under a tree searching for *sookshma tattva*, he had a thought. (Shl 5) **My mind has become very mighty. It has become mightier than all. If I were to conquer such mind I will have gained permanent victory. Now I am surrounded by enemies in the form of indriyas.** Therefore instead of fighting with external enemies I will aim my arrows towards my inner enemies. (Shl 6) **This mind makes everyone do various kinds of works due to its unsteadiness.** Therefore I have to conquer it and bring it under my control. Therefore now I will aim my sharp arrow at the mind and release it.

Then the mind said: (Shl 7) Alarka! These arrows of yours cannot touch me in any way. They will pierce your vital parts. Once that is pierced you will die. Examine if there are other kinds of arrows which can destroy me. After hearing this he thought for a while and said: (Shl 9) This nose of mine, in spite of enjoying variety of smells, keeps on desiring more and more. Therefore now I will aim my sharp arrows at my nose. Hearing this, the nose said: (Shl 10) Alarka! The arrows you wish to release will not hit the target in any way. They will pierce only your vital parts. Then you will die. Therefore examine if there are other arrows which are capable of destroying me. (Shl 12 to 24) Same thing repeats with tongue, skin, ears, eyes & *buddhi*.

Then Alarka did severe *tapas* to obtain arrows that can kill all these. But he could not get arrows which will directly pierce these and kill them. Then that great and capable king started to think with full concentration. **After thinking for a long time, Alarka realised that there is no means other than yoga for his purpose. Then he focussed his mind, sat in right asana** (posture) **and took refuge in dhyana yoga. Then with the single arrow of dhyana yoga he destroyed all indriyas. Then through dhyana yoga itself he merged his mind in atma and attained para siddhi.** Surprised that all *indriyas* were defeated just by *dhyana yoga*, he said this *shloka*: (Shl 31) Difficult, difficult! We were interested only in external actions so far (*aho kashtam yadasyabhih sarvam bahyam anustitham*). Being thirsty for enjoyments we were worshipping only kingdom (we were depending on kingdom to please the *indriyas*). **After a long time I have realised that for ultimate happiness there is nothing better than dhyana yoga** (*iti pashchat maya jnatam yogannasti param sukham*). (Ashwamedhika parva; Anugita; adhyaya 30)

- Vidura: (Shl 10) **Those who are dedicated to the dhyana of the God (bhagawan) will live according to the shastras and protect themselves from the bondage of the indriyas.** But ordinary people do not realise even if *yamaloka* (abode of death) is standing before them (Commentary: For those who are slaves of the *indriyas*, at the time of enjoying the pleasures there is no awareness of the existence of death. They believe that the life of sensual pleasures is eternal). (Stree parva; Jalapradanika upa-parva; Adhyaya 2-7)

Dhyana as an attribute/aim

Of Satya

Bhishma replied: .. (Shl 8, 9) *Satya, samata, dama, not having matsara, kshama, lajja, titiksha, not having asooya, tyaga, dhyana of Paramatma, aryatva, unbroken dhairya and ahimsa*—are the thirteen forms of *satya*. (Shanti parva; Aapadharma; adhyaya 162)

Of Apramada

Sanatsujata: (Shl 34) **Eight qualities of apramada are:** *satya* (speaking truth), **dhyanam** (unbroken meditation), *samadhanam* (keeping the mind calm & peaceful), *chodyam* (self enquiry), *asteyam* (not stealing other's wealth/belongings or not understanding *atmaswaroopa* wrongly), *brahmacharya*, *asangraha* (not wanting to possess/not possessing wife, children & property etc). (Udyoga; Sanatsujata; Adhyaya 43)

Of Paramatma

Greatness of Mahadeva

- Upamanyu's mother to Upamanyu: Bhagawan Shankara is in the heart of living beings in the form of *prana (prana-roopa)*, *mano-roopa* and *jeeva-roopa*. He is *yoga-swaroopa*, *yogi*, **dhyana-swaroopa** and Paramatma. It is possible to grasp Bhagawan Parameshwara only by *bhakti bhava* (pure devotion). ..
- Sri Krishna's *stuti* of Parameshwara when he appears before him after six months of *tapas*: .. (Shl 421) *Buddhi, mati & lokas* are established in you. **Those devotees who seek refuge in you single mindedly will become dhyanis, nitya yogis, satya-sattva and jitendriyas.** (Anushasana; Daandharma; adhyaya 14)
- Tanu muni's Shiva stuthi: .. (Shl 32) That *adhyatma gati* obtained by those dear devotees who are always meditating upon bhagawan, that divine *gati* that has been assured for those *atma-jnanis* who do not desire rebirth, it is you who are that ultimate *gati*. (Anushasana; Daandharma; adhyaya 16)
- Bhishma to Yudhishtira: (Shl 11) It is this Shri Krishna himself who took different *avatars* and killed *daityas*. He took the form of a *danava* and became Bali, the monarch of *daityas*. **He is the aim of all meditation** and is also the form of past, present and future. He is the one who protects this whole world. (Anushasana parva; Daandharma; adhyaya 158)

Value/gains of dhyana yoga

Attaining Paramatma with dhyana

- Brahma said: (Shl 6, 7, 8) People who are intelligent (*buddhivid*), have quality of goodness, **experts in dhyana yoga, nitya yogis**, always truthful, *jitendriyas, jnanavan*, not greedy, have conquered anger, have clear mind, are brave, have no *mamakar* and have no *ahankar* **will become liberated and attain Paramatma.** Those who know the greatness of the best of all, Paramatma, will obtain auspicious states. (Ashwamedhika parva; Anugita; adhyaya 40)
- Brahma said: . (Shl 22) Such *mahatmas* who are **engaged in in dhyana yoga without ahankar & mamakar** will obtain superior and great *lokas*. (Shl 23) *Jnanis* who are great among *atmavids* **who have realised atma by depending on dhyana yoga** will merge into *avyakta* Paramatma who is a heap of happiness. (Shl 24) **Achievers (sadhaks) who have no ahankar & mamakar and practice dhyana yoga will enter avyakta atma in this loka itself.** After death they will go to the superior *lokas* of *mahapurushas*. (Shl 36) A *sadhak* achieves serenity in the *antah-karana* through clearness in *buddhi*. **Just as one sees dreams without the body participating, in the same way when in dhyana yoga, realising atma without participation of body is the characteristic of prasada.** (Ashwamedhika parva; Anugita; adhyaya 51)
- Devaduta to Mudgala: (Shl 38-39) Above Brahmaloaka there is *Vishnupada* which is Pure, Timeless & divinely bright (*jyoti-swaroopa*). That is the highest position. It is also called *Parabrahma Sthana*. Those who have no attachment (me, mine etc), no ego, are beyond duality, have transcended *indriyas (samyatendriyah)*, **are immersed in dhyana & yoga**, attain that position. (Vana; Vrihidraunika; adhyaya 261)
- Sanatsujata: (Shl 24) For one who is a *brahmavid* any humiliation or abuses do not affect in any way. His mind does not get upset or disturbed by blames. He does not feel elated by praise. He does not feel sad that he did not do *agnihotra* or *adhyayana*. Since he has already attained the full results (*phala*) of these, he does not even have a need for them. For a *sadhaka* this *vidya* related to *brahma* gives a firm mind (*sthira-buddhi*). **One who is absorbed in meditation (dhyana) i.e. dheera certainly gains such brahmajnana.** (Udyoga; Sanatsujata; Adhyaya 46)
- Bhrigu: (Shl 29) By eating very light meal (*laghu-ahara*: just enough to survive), **by being in dhyana in the first & last yaamas** (3 hours) of night and by having a pure mind scholar can realise Paramatma in himself. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharma; Adhyaya 187)

- Manu to Devaguru: Realisation of Brahma**

(Shl 9) *Devaguru!* Understand that ***jnana*** is that which establishes the existence of ***jneya*** (the knowable), the **Paramatma**. When *buddhi* which has the quality of *jnana* joins with *indriyas* it flows out towards objects of senses. (Shl 10) **When *buddhi*, free of karmas and *indriya*'s attributes stays in the heart, then by virtue of *samadhi* obtained by *dhyana-yoga* **Brahma-vastu is realised.**** (Shl 11) If the same *buddhi* combines with attributes of *indriyas* it falls from the proximity of *Paramatma* and flows towards sense objects just as water flows down from mountain top. (Shl 12) **But when the *sadhak* gets back *nirguna-dhyana* (attribute less meditation) then he comes to know the **Brahma-vastu.**** (Shl 13) That mind, which from the beginning is always engrossed in objects of *indriyas*, and is looking only at objects of pleasure of senses, will not be able to see the *nirguna-tattva* (The truth without attributes). (Shl 14) **Brahma-vastu can be attained by focussed meditation (*dhyana*) while restraining all the *indriyas* which are like doors of the body.** (Shl 15) Just as the *pancha-bhutas* go back after *trigunas* are destroyed, **as soon as the *indriya-gunas* decay, *buddhi* retracts all the attributes of *indriyas* in itself and stays firmly in *jnana*.** (Shl 16) When the determined *buddhi* gets fixed in the *jnana* within itself then it becomes *jnana-maya* (full of *jnana*). (Shl 17) **When the mind, which is normally engrossed in *shabda* etc qualities due to its contact with *indriyas*, becomes enriched with the qualities arising due to *dhyana-yoga*, then it gives up all the attributes related to *indriyas* and attains *nirguna Parabrahma*.** (Shl 18) There is no example in this world to equal that unmanifest Brahma. How can anyone make such *Parabrahma-vastu* a subject of description where there is no entry for *vani* (speech) (*yato vacho nivartante*)? (Shl 19) By purifying the *antah-karana* (inner instruments) by *tapas*, logical thinking, *shama*, *dama*, practice of karmas in accordance with *varnashrama* and study of *shastras*, one should desire to realise Parabrahma. (Shl 20) One who is devoid of qualities like *tapas* will be following the *adhyatma-marga* only externally. Moreover, since *Paramatma* transcends *gunas* or even intrinsically he does not become a subject of logic. (Shl 22) Just as the *panchendriyas* are different/distinct from their actions such as *shabda*, *sparsha* etc, in the same way **Parabrahma-vastu is completely different from *Prakriti*.** (Shl 23) In this manner all living beings are involved in the cycle of birth and death. They also retire from this *samsara* due to the help of *Prakriti* only. By so retiring they attain liberation (*moksha*). (Shl 24) *Purusha*, *Prakriti*, *buddhi*, *shabda* etc five sense objects, ten *indriyas*, *ahankara*, *manas* and five *mahabhutas*—the group of these 25 principles are called by the name '*bhuta*'. (Shl 25) These *tattvas* are created by nature. The second creation takes place by way of sexual mating. (Shl 26) By following the path of *dharma*, auspiciousness increases. Inauspiciousness increases by taking the path of *adharma*. The person who is attached to sense objects is forever in the *Prakriti* (this world). The *virakta* (person who is indifferent towards worldly objects) gains *atma-jnana*. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 205)
- Manu to Brihaspati: (Shl 24) **We can realise the Parabrahma by *dhyana-yoga* through purified and keen mind. But it cannot be described in words** because mind has to be understood by mind only. *Darshana* (vision, doctrine) has to be understood by *darshana* only. In the same way, **Brahma who is a form of *jnana* can only be realised by purified *jnana*.** (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 206)
- Bhishma: (Shl 20) **Only those *mahapurushas* who have *jnana-chakshu* (knowledge-sight) can talk meaningfully about **Brahma-vastu.** It is possible to realise the Brahma-vastu **only by** withdrawing the *indriyas* & *manas* from external sense objects and doing *dhyana* with focussed *chitta*. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 216)**
- Brahma said to *maharshis*: (Shl 56, 57) That person who knows *brahma tattva*, **sits in seclusion at the time of death and meditates upon the Paramatma in the heart will**, like *vayu in akash*, be freed of all kinds of attachments, will become free of *pancha koshas* and without any anxiety will attain *Paramatma*. (Ashwamedhika parva; Anugita; adhyaya 46)
- Vyasa said to Yudhishtira: (Shl 14) The person with following six characteristics will attain completeness and will attain *moksha*: not having grief, not having feeling of mine, calmness, clearness of mind and not having envy. (Shl 15) **That wise man rich in *sattwa-guna* who has the above said six characteristics and either by *yajna*, *daan* & *tapas* or by *shravana* (hearing), *manana* (reflection, thinking), *nididhyasana* (profound & repeated meditation) realises the *atma* that is within the body, will retain the *atma-bhava* even after death.** (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; Adhyaya 251)

- Parashara: (Shl 11) A dam built properly across the river will not breach for any reason. Such a dam will be full of water. Similarly the dam of dharma built with the framework of *shishtachar* (practice or conduct of the learned or virtuous) will never be destroyed. Because of such 'dharma-dam' *punya* will increase at every step. (Shl 12) **Just like the *Suryakanta-mani* (lens?) gathers the *tejas* of Sun, the *yoga-sadhak* through meditation will grasp the *brahma-swaroopa*.** (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; *Adhyaya* 298)
- Bhishma: (Shl 31) Just as an alert/careful archer pierces the target with full concentration, **a yogi who has full concentration in meditating upon *Paramatma* can undoubtedly attain *moksha*.** (Shl 32, 33) Just as a skilled man carries a vessel filled with oil on his head and climbs the stairs without spilling it by having full & steady concentration on it, when a yogi with a mind united in yoga merges the *atma* with *Paramatma*, his *atma* becomes highly pure, steady and equal to the *tejas* of Sun. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; *Adhyaya* 300)
- Yajnavalkya: (Shl 55) Oh son of Kashyapa! When the *sadhak* is always thinking of *Paramatma* and meditating upon him, he will be freed of the contact of *Prakriti* and will realise the 26th *tattva* viz *Parabrahma* *Paramatma*. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; *Adhyaya* 318)
- Bhishma: (Shl 111) Yudhishtira! Therefore you should worship *Brahma* who is beyond *Prakriti*, is *mahanta*, is sacred, auspicious, pure and *moksha-swaroopa*. If you worship the *yajna* called *jnana* with the understanding of which is *kshetra*, you will become a *rishi* who knows *tattva*. (Shl 112) **By constantly meditating & thinking about the *tattvas* that Yajnavalkya preached, *sadhak* can attain *Parabrahma* *Paramatma* who is eternal, indestructible, auspicious, *amrita* like and griefless.** (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; *Adhyaya* 318)

Other siddhis

- Dharma vyadha: One can be in cruelty related profession & still lead a pious life without cruelty. **Even if a man has bad character, by constant meditation of the supreme lord he can become noble.** Even if one is cruel to animals, he can be *dharmic*. (*Vana*; Markandeya *Samaasya*; *adhyaya* 207)
- Maharshi Vyasa to Yudhishtira: .. (Shl 8) *Tapas, yajna, vidya, bhaikshya* (begging), *indriyas-nigraha, dhyana, ekantha, santosha, shastra-jnana*—these are activities which bring *siddhi* to brahmanas. (Shanti; Rajadharmanushasana; *adhyaya* 23)
- Bhishma said: .. (Shl 7, 8) Those persons who are beyond *sattva, rajas & tamoguna*, who even though associated with external sacredness and impurity **are always engaged in *dhyana*** (meditation), *upasana* (worship) etc, who are keen on sacrificing/giving up everything, who are omniscient, look upon all with equality, who have achieved *atma shuddhi* (self purification) by having clean practices **are the forms of best *tirthas*.** (*Anushasana parva*; Daandharma; *adhyaya* 108)
- Bhishma said: (Shl 27) The root cause for these defects is *ajnana*. Therefore only when these are totally uprooted, the man is purified. Then he will be liberated from the shackles of *samsara*. **Just as a chisel made of iron loses its sharp edge as it cuts iron, *buddhi* honed with *dhyana* destroys defects born of *tamoguna* and along with it is itself destroyed too** (As long as *trigunas* are in *buddhi* it will be different from *atma-vastu*. But once it transcends *trigunas* it merges with the *trigunatita* *Paramatma*. Therefore *buddhi* which destroyed the defects self-destructs also in the process). (GHV: A beautiful way of presenting). (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; *adhyaya* 212)
- Vyasa: (Shl 10-13) Following types of *satkarmas* increase *tejas* and destroy sins: *dhyana* (meditation), *vedadhyayan* (study of Vedas), *daan* (giving to charity), *satya-nishta* (dedication to truth), *lajja* (modesty), *saralata* (simplicity), *kshama* (forgiveness), *shoucha* (cleanliness & purity), *achara-shuddhi* (clean practices), *indriya-nigraha* (control of senses) etc. **All desires are fulfilled for one who is engaged in *dhyana* & *adhyayan*. He will also gain the special knowledge about *Brahma*. A yogi should have same feeling towards all.** Whether he gets something or not, he should be content with whatever he gets without efforts. He should desire to attain the

brahma-pada by clearing all sins, become *tejaswi*, eat modestly and have control over *kaam* & *krodh*. (Shl 14) **A yogi should concentrate *manas* & *indriyas* and establish them in *atma* in the state of meditation which should be done in the first & last quarter of night.** (Shl 15) **Just as water will flow out even if there is a small hole in the hide bag holding water, even if one of the five *indriyas* is not under control the *prajna* of man will weaken.** (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 240)

- Yudhishtira to Draupadi: (Shl 35-37) How do karmas acquire *paap* or *punya phalas*? **And how do *pravritti* and *nivritti* (engagement & disengagement) happen in karmas is a *deva-rahasya* (secret of gods).** Common people do not understand this subtlety of dharma, get confused and mistake *vidya* for *avidya* and vice versa and unable to achieve *shreyas* keep taking birth in different forms. The *maya* of *devatas* is secret. They guard these secrets. Yogis who are calm (*shantha*), *daantha*, *alpa-santhushta* (easily contented), who have given up desires, who have cleared their sins with *tapas* **can understand this subtlety or secret by deep & focussed meditation.** (Vana; Arjunabhimana; Adhyaya 31)
- Bhishma replied: (Shl 2) Vedas have stated dharma which will result in *swarga* for all *ashramis*. **But to get *sadvastu* (*atma-sakshatkara*) a *tapas* consisting of *shravana* (acquiring knowledge by hearing), *manana* (reflection, understanding) & *nidhidhyasana* (contemplation, profound and repeated meditation) has to be done.** There are several paths to dharma and effort done in any of the paths is not wasted. There are many ways for accomplishing dharma. Each finds his own path. None are wrong. No effort done for *atma-sakshatkara* is wasted. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; Adhyaya 174)
- Namuchi said: (Shl 4) Devaraja! **If you do not withstand the grief it causes illness.** Enemies will be happy to see you grieving. Will the danger go away by grieving? No. Grieving does not help in any way. (Shl 5) Indra! That is why I do not grieve. **All this luxury & splendour will be destroyed one day.** By grieving for wealth, which has the quality of perishability, our appearance will be spilt. Radiance will be lost and longevity will reduce. **Dharma will also be destroyed.** (Shl 6) **The person who has clearly understood this should drive away the sorrow that has come due to enmity and meditate on the auspicious Paramatma seated in our hearts.** (Shl 7) When man does that all his goals will be fulfilled. There is no doubt about this. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; Adhyaya 226)
- Bhishma: (Shl 20) All the following result in happiness: restraint of *indriyas*, forgiveness, courage, *tejas*, joy, truthful speech, modesty, non-violence, not having bad habits and efficiency. (Shl 21) **A learned person should not spend all his life satisfying his interest in sinful or auspicious deeds alone but should try to focus his mind in meditation on *Paramatma*.** (Shl 22) Man does not experience the fruits of other's good or bad deeds. He experiences the fruits of whatever types of karmas he has done himself. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; Adhyaya 290)
- Narada to Shuka: (Shl 22) Our longevity which is reducing continuously does not stop even for a wink of an eye. When our bodies themselves are impermanent we have to think what really is permanent. (Shl 23) **Those who realise through *buddhi* the *Paramatma* who resides in all beings, who is beyond mind and become interested in meditation, will cross the ocean of *samsara* and find the greatest path.** In future, they will never grieve for any reason. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; Adhyaya 330)

Charactristics of *dhyana yogis*

- **Bhishma:** (Shl 28) From the angle of *shastras* it is possible to see the subtle differentiators in yogis. Such a yogi believes that *Parabrahma vastu* is the greatest which is distinct from *akash*, who is *avyakta* and *adhishtana* for *laya*. He will be free of *rajas* & *tamo gunas*. He does not do any kind of *parigraha* (accepting). **He will always be devoted to and engaged in *dhyana-dharana*.** (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 217)
- Vyasa said: (Shl 7) A brahmana who is free of delight, arrogance and anger will not be destroyed for any reason. Brahmana increases his *tejas* by *daan*, study of *Vedas*, *yajna*, *tapas*, modesty, simplicity and control on *indriyas*. With these he also destroys his sins. (Shl 8) **An intelligent brahmana should thus get rid of his sins by way of *dhyana* & *adhyayan*,** eat very modestly,

gain victory over his *indriyas*, gain control over *kaam* & *krodh* and should desire to attain *brahma-pada*. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 235)

- Vyasa: (Shl 19) That brahmana who has closed all doors of his body which are protected without being careless and is always engaged in the *dhyana* of *Brahma-vastu* is called a *shishya* (learned, wise, superior) & *atmaarama* (rejoicing in one's self or supreme spirit). (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 251)
- Bhishma: (Shl 47, 48, 49) Yogis who have no passion, are very wise & learned, are *mahatmas*, who have gained victory over *kaam*, *krodh*, cold, heat, rain, fear, grief, breathing, things which make a person feel happy, difficult to win unhappiness, horrible thirst, touch, sleep and difficult to conquer laziness, with the wealth of *dhyana* & *adhyayana* realise the subtle *atma* through *buddhi*. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 300)
- *Rishi* Devasthana advises Yudhishtira: ... Yudhishtira! In this manner, all men, by practicing appropriate dharmas at the right time, realise *atma*. ... (Shl 9) some give up everything and become devoted to silent meditation. (Shanti; Rajadharmanushasana; adhyaya 21)
- Maheshwara to Umadevi: (Shl 84, 85) **One who is *mumukshu*** should be free of all kinds of attachments and bonds of friendship (interests) and should spend his time in abandoned houses or under a tree or river banks or sands of river. **He should establish Paramatma in his *atma* and should be in meditation all the time.** (Shl 86) **One who has mind fixed in Paramatma, does all karmas with only *moksha* as the aim, who is still like a rock during meditation**, who lives without food, and does not stay at any one place practices the *sanatana moksha dharma*. (Anushasana parva; Daandharma; adhyaya 141)
- Maheshwara said: (Shl 22) *Dev!* All *vanaprasthashramis* will be engaged in *tapas*. Some among them travel around freely. They do not live with wives. Some live with their wives. Those who are free and move about shave their head and wear saffron (ascetic) clothes. They do not live at any one place all the time. But those with their wives live in *ashrams* in the night. (Shl 23) Bathing thrice daily, performing *agnihotra* everyday, **achieving *samadhi* state in meditation**, acting only in virtuous ways and doing the karmas prescribed in *shaastras* are the duties of both types of *munis*. (Shl 24) Whatever dharmas I have described to you about *vanaprasthis* apply to *munis* also. If they practice it they will get full fruits of their *tapas*. (Anushasana parva; Daandharma; adhyaya 142)
- Siddha purusha to Kashyapa: (Shl 50, 51) A *jeeva* which has had *atma-sakshatkara* will know from experience that it is different from the body. Even though *jeeva* resides in the body, having given up all impressions related to the body **he will always be meditating upon Parabrahma Paramatma which is within him**. Thus the body rejected with the help of *buddhi* says smilingly to itself, 'That *jeeva* depends on me and yet finds liberation within me'. (Ashwamedhika parva; Anugita, adhyaya 19)
- Vaishampayana said: (Shl 70) Such a *sattwik* will know that Purushottama is the greatest among those who know Brahma and that *moksha* depends only on Narayana. Therefore he is considered a *sattwik*. (Shl 71) **A *sattwik* person will always meditate upon Purushottama Shrihari and obtain whatever he desires**. Undivided devotion (*ekanta bhakti*) always depends only on Narayana. (Shl 72) **Shrihari himself takes over the responsibility of *yaga-kshema*** (welfare & prosperity) of those few *yatis* who are dedicated to the accomplishment of *moksha* and have no desires (*tesham vicchinna trishnanam yogakshemavaho harih*). (Shl 73) That person caught in the vortex of birth & death, whom Madhusudana sees with loving kindness/grace, should be considered as *sattwik*. Such a person is assuredly qualified for *moksha*. (Shl 74) The dharma practiced by single minded devotees is equal to that of Sankhya or Yoga dharmas. **Because *moksha* is nothing but the form of Narayana, those *satvata dharmis* who always meditate upon him with single minded devotion will attain greatest state (*paraam gatim*).** (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 348)

Examples of practicing dhyana

- **Yudhishtira's description of Sri Krishna's state of meditation**

(GHV: Yudhishtira describes the state of meditation of Sri Krishna very beautifully and so to say 'technically'. Then he praises him with concepts of *adhyatma*. A beautiful *adhyaya* in which Sri Krishna's response (*bhakta-paradhina*) can touch the hearts of devotees and also give some *adhyatmic* knowledge)

Yudhishtira: "(Shl 1, 2) *Amita-parakrama! Jagadashraya! Purusharshabha!* Whom are you meditating upon? I am very surprised seeing you sitting in *dhyana-yoga*. Are the three *lokas* doing well? Through *dhyana-marga*, where have you gone beyond the the three states of *jagrat-swapna-sushupti* and beyond *sthoola-sookshama-karana shariras*? My mind is surprised looking at your wondrous state. (Shl 3) The *prana-vayu* which in your body does *shwasa-prashwasa* etc five actions is restrained. All your joyous *jnanedriyas* are merged in the mind. (Shl 4) Govinda! *Vak, manas* and *sattva* have all merged in your mind. The three *gunas* viz *sattva-rajastamas* and *indriyas* are merged in *kshetrajna* who is *antaratma* through the *buddhi*. (Shl 5) All the hairs on your body are standing erect. Your mind and *buddhi* are firm. Madhava! You are motionless like a wood or wall or a stone. (Shl 6, 7) Bhagawan! Devadeva! You are as still as a lamp in a place without wind.

If I deserve to ask you what this *mahayaga* is --if it is not a secret you cannot reveal to any — I surrender to you and beg you to cut asunder my doubt. (Shl 8) Purushottama! You are the creator. You are the destructor. You are the *kshara-purusha* who is embedded in the constantly varying *Prakriti*. You are also the *akshara-purusha* who is *nirvikara*. You have neither beginning nor end. You are the origin of all moving and unmoving objects."

Sri Krishna returns to his normal state with a smile and tells him (extracts), "(Shl 11) Yudhishtira! **Bhishma**, who is like a fire which is about to end completely, who is sleeping on the bed of arrows, who is a lion in the form of man, **is meditating upon me. Therefore my mind is completely merged with his mind.** ..(Shl 15) Having aggregated all *indriyas* and merged it in the mind, having controlled the mind through the intelligence, **Bhishma has totally surrendered to me by *dhyana-yoga*. Therefore my mind has also completely merged in him.** (Shl 22) Oh king! Learn from him the four *vidyas* viz *dharma-artha-kaama-moksha*, the *yajna* etc karmas related to *hota-udgata-brahma-adhwaryu*, four *ashrama-dharmas* viz *Brahmacharya-grihastha-vanaprastha-sanyasa* and all the *raja-dharma*. (Shl 23) Once sun called Bhishma 'sets', all the great knowledge will also vanish with him. That is why I am encouraging you to go to him and question him on topics of *dharma-artha* etc." (Shanti; Rajadharmanushasana; adhyaya 46)

- **Sri Krishna's morning routine**

Sri Krishna woke up one and half hours before the night ended. Then adopting *dhyana-marga* he visualised all the dharmas and meditated upon *sanatana-brahma*....Then **Sri Krishna came out of his *dhyana-yoga*, got up and had bath**, with folded palms recited the sacred Gayathri *mantra* secretly, went to *agnyaagara* (special place for fire) and worshipped *agni* with *ajyahuti*. After coming out of that place, he donated 1000 cows to 1000 brahmanas who had studied all four Vedas and received their *swasti-vachana*. Then he touched many auspicious things like *poorna-kumbha* and saw his reflection in a clean mirror. (Shanti; Rajadharmanushasana; adhyaya 53)

- Yudhishtira handed over the kingdom to Dhritarashtra, Gandhari and Vidura and was happy with a clear mind. Then he went to Sri Krishna and thanked him for regaining the kingdom. **But Sri Krishna was sitting in meditation and did not respond.** (Shanti; Rajadharmanushasana; adhyaya 45)

- **Hanuman's description of Krita yuga**

In Krita Yuga the qualities and actions (*guna-kriya*) of the four *varnas* will be natural. Everyone will automatically be engaged in acts of their *varna*. But the resolve, actions and practices will all culminate in *brahma-jnana* only. They act only to attain *brahma-sakshatkara*. They will not have any other resolves or desires. **For all four *varnas* meditation (*dhyana*) was the main *karma*.** Paramatma who shines like a lamp in all hearts will be the *adhishatna-murty* for all *varnas*. (Vana parva, Tirthayatra; Adhyaya 149)

- Arjuna, in order to fulfil his vow, slept remembering the *mahamantra* Vyasa had taught him in the forest. Sri Krishna appeared in his dreams.... Partha! If you know Paashupatastra you will certainly kill Jayadratha tomorrow. In case you have forgotten it, right now pray Shankara in your mind. **Dhanajaya! Become silent & meditate on Shankara.** You will regain that *astra* with his grace. (Drona; Pratigya; adhyaya 80)

- Grieving Arjuna did not know what to do next. Wherever he was sitting, he silently prayed to his *upasana daiva* Parashiva, dug up some mud and formed an idol in the shape of *Linga*. He offered a garland of flowers found in the forest & sat down for intense meditation. (Vana; Kairatha; adhyaya 39)
- But Drona having relinquished weapons merged his mind in *parama-jnana-swaroopa*. He adopted yoga and attained Mahavishnu, the *jyoti-swaroopa*. (Shl 51-52) Drona sat firmly with his chin slightly raised and chest pushed forward a little. **He had closed his eyes and established *dharana-murthy* in his heart. Reciting the OM mantra (*Om ityekaksharam brahma*) he went to Brahmaloka of *sacchidananda-swaroopa, parama-purusha, devesha, prabhu, jyoti-swaroopa etc.*** When he was thus going, we felt there may be two suns in the sky. Then Drona's brilliant *jyothi* merged with sun and became one. *Maharaja!* In this manner that great *jyothi* disappeared in a minute. (Drona; Dronavadha; adhyaya 191)
- Vipula thinks to himself: I must somehow guard and protect *gurupatni* from Indra. If I do this job it will be a great wonder. The only means I have is to enter her body by *yogabala*. Just as the drop of water on lotus leaf does not stick to it, I will have no interest in her after entering her and will be completely neutral and will sit with concentration and pure mind. By doing so I will be free of *rajoguna* and will not be an offender. Just as traveller stays for some time in an empty house on his way, I will live in her body for some time. **In this manner I will live in her with pure mind and meditating upon the *atma* with full concentration.** He then made a great effort to enter her body. (Anushasana; Daandharma; adhyaya 40)
- He said, "(Shl 16) My son was very *dharmic*. Now I am unable to see him. The only son I had is lost in the forest. (Shl 17) Even though I am unable to see him, my desire to see him is very intense. That hope has filled by entire body. If I do not see him, I may even die."
....**After meditating for a while**, Tanu *muni* said to him: Veeradyumna! This son of yours unfortunately due to his foolishness had humiliated a worshipworthy *maharshi*. That *rishi* went to your son and asked for golden *kalash* and *narumadi* (coarse clothes). Your son not only humiliated him, he did not fulfil his request. That *rishi* became very sad and disappointed." (Shanti parva; Rajadharmanushasana; adhyaya 125)
- Maharshi Yajnavalkya to king Janaka: .. Being highly pleased with what Surya bhagawan had told me, I came home and remembered goddess Saraswathi. As soon as I did that, auspicious Saraswathi decorated with *swaras & vyanjanas* appeared before me pronouncing the OMkara. **Then I offered *arghya* to both her & Suryadeva and sat meditating upon them.** Then with great joy I created (wrote) comprehensive Shathapatha Brahmana including all the secrets, summary and appendices. Then I taught the same to one hundred good disciples. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharm; adhyaya 318)
- Tuladhara to Jajali: Once in the past, *yatis & rishis* went to Nahusha and told him the following: (Shl 49) 'Nahusha! You have killed mother like cow & Prajapati like ox. By doing so you have committed a sin that you should not have. We are all very grieved by the wicked act you have done.' Having said thus the *rishis* divided the sin of Nahusha into a hundred & one diseases and threw it on all animals. They not only blamed Nahusha for having committed foeticide but also said that they would not offer *havis* in his *yajnas*. **Later, when they were sitting down in meditation, they realised that Nahusha had not done the sinful deed willingly but it had happened due to ignorance.** They became calm. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharm; adhyaya 262)
- Vritra said: (Shl 57) Oh generous Sanat Kumara! If this is the matter, then I have no regret for the state I am in. I have understood whatever you have said quite well and have thought over the truth of all these. I have become sinless and blemishless after hearing you. (Shl 58) *Maharshi!* This wheel is turning all the time in this manner powered by *mahatejaswi, ananth* and *sarva-vyapi* Mahavishnu. The place from where this entire universe is created is the place of eternal Mahavishnu. He alone is *mahatma & Purushottama*. The entire *jagat* is established in him alone.
Bhishma said: Yudhishtira! **Vritrasura breathed his last after saying this. He had his mind firmly focussed in Paramatma at that time and was meditating upon him and attained *param-dhama*.** (Shanti parva; Mokshadharm; adhyaya 280)

- Yajnavalkya: King Janaka! After he asked these questions I said to him. **“You have asked very good series of questions. All the questions you have asked are meaningful. Please rest here for a *muhurtha*. By then I will think up the right answers for them and tell you.”** King Janaka! He agreed and sat their quietly. **Then I meditated upon goddess Saraswathi in my mind. Just as butter emerges soon after curd is churned, answers to his questions formed in my mind.** At that time I started churning in my mind Upanishads and its appendix part *adhyatma shastra*. That *anvikshiki vidya* (from three view points of *trayi, vaarta & danda-neeti*) is the fourth *vidya* and helps in *moksha*. I have preached you that *vidya* established by Purusha the 25th. I told the same thing to *gandharva* Vishwvasu also. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 318)

- Bhishma: As soon as the minster left, 500 beautiful women rushed to Shuka. All of them were wearing attractive dresses. They had very attractive hips. All were young. They had very pleasing appearance. They were wearing delicate red sarees. They were wearing shining gold ornaments. They were all skilled in amorous conversation. They were experts in singing & dancing. They would talk to others with a pleasing smile. They matched *apsaras* in their beauty. They were skilled in showing their hospitality so as to excite sexually. They could understand the intents in other's mind. They knew all the arts. Such 500 prostitutes gathered around Shuka. They all showed their respects in traditional ways by offering *arghya & padya*. They satisfied him by serving a meal which was difficult to find in those times. After he had eaten, they took him around that garden and showed him all the attractions. They were taking care of him by their sweet chattering and many exciting games etc. **But Shuka who was *arani-sambhava*, of pure soul, having no doubts, being dedicated to his duty, having *indriyas* under his control, having conquered anger was neither feeling joyous nor getting angry seeing all this.** After the women completed playing the games and having fun, they prepared a luxurious bed of exquisite carpets studded with gems.

But Shuka washed his hands & feet, completed his *sandhyopasana* and sat thinking about *moksha*. **Shuka was absorbed in meditation in the first quarter of the night and slept suitably in the second & third quarter. He got up in *brahma muhurta* (90 minutes before Sun rise), completed his morning rituals, and even though surrounded by beautiful women sat absorbed in meditation.** In this manner Shuka spent the remaining part of day and night in the king's palace. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 325)

- After all the disciples went away, **Vyasa who was left only with his son to assist him sat down alone in deep meditation.** At that time the great *tapasvi* Narada came to his *ashrama*. **Seeing Vyasa in deep meditation he waited for some time and after Vyasa came out of that state,** said to him: (Shl 12) Oh Vyasa the grandson of Vasishta! I do not hear the *Veda-ghosha* (Loud recitation of Vedas) in your *ashrama*. Why are you sitting silently all alone as if meditating but actually thinking of something? (Shl 13, 14) This mountain does not shine like before without *veda-ghosha*. These mountains now appear like Moon covered with dust and in the grip of *Rahu*. Even though the residence of *devarshis*, without *veda ghosh* it looks like the house of hunters. (Shl 15) Not just the mountain, even the *rishis, devatas, gandharvas* etc are not appearing as bright as before in the absence of *Veda ghosh*.

Yudhishtira! Hearing Narada say this, Krishnadvaipayana said: Worshipworthy *maharshi!* Expert in knowledge of Vedas! I agree with what you have said. You are all-knowing, all-seeing and curious to know everything. You already know whatever is occurring in all three *lokas*. *Viprarshi!* Order. What shall I do for you? Tell me what my duty is at this time. **My mind is not that joyous/clear since I am without my disciples (Even Vyasa was subject to certain emotional states!).** (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 328)

- Bhagawan to Narada: (Shl 36) Even though *vayu*, one of the *pancha bhutas* is main reason for the activity of the body, unless *jeeva* enters the body, *vayu* does not activate it. That *jeeva* who is the lord of the body is called *Shesha* or *Sankarshana*. (Shl 37) **That same *sankarshana* by his acts of meditation & worship gets the position called *sanatkumara*.** That into which all beings merge and are destroyed, the *manas*, is called by the name *Pradyumna*. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 339)
- Vaishampayana said: ...Once Rudra came to Brahma (his father) who was in *tapas* on Vyjayanta mountain....He said to him: *Brahmadeva!* You have created several *purushas* so far. You will create many more. That *virat-purusha* is also one among the *purushas* you have created. What is

his speciality that you are meditating upon him? Who is that one *purushottama* whom you are meditating upon? Tell me about this doubt of mine.

Brahma said: *Vatsa!* What you said about the many *purushas* I have created is fair enough. But I do not have to meditate upon the *purushas* I have created. I will tell you about the one & only *Purusha* who is the base of everything and is the origin of many *purushas*. I will tell you about that eternal *maha-purusha* who is *vishwaroopa*, is great and is *nirguna*, whom people enter by losing *trigunas* by constant *sadhana*. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 350)

- Brahmana: In that same Nagapura lives a huge serpent which is full of *dharmic* mind. The name of that huge *naga* is Mahapadma. But he is well known in that town by the name Padma. He has taken to three types of paths of karma, worship & *jnana* through speech, karma and mind. He has pleased all living beings by his virtuous conduct. He brings back the wicked to the path of virtuousness by using methods of *sama*, *daan*, *bheda* & *danda*. **By merely closing his eyes and meditating he comes to know the difficulty being faced by the virtuous and protects/saves them by remedying the problems.** (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; adhyaya 355)

About Pranas; Pranayama

Gita's mention

Others again who are devoted to controlling the breath, having restrained the Prana and Apana pour as sacrifice Prana into Apana and Apana into Prana. (Gita 4:29)

Power of pranayama

- **Tandi Muni's Shiva stuthi**
(Shl 40 - 44) Those who know that by knowing him there will be no rebirth or death, those who understand that upon knowing that ultimate to be known (*parama-vedya*) & after knowing him there will be nothing more to be known, the scholars who think that after gaining that *Parabrahma vastu* there is no gain greater than that, those scholars who wish to attain that subtle and great state of that *avaya*, *akshaya*, those *sankhya shastra* experts who are always engaged in understanding very subtle knowledge and who know the 24 *tattvas*, *sattva*, *rajas* & *tamo gunas* and who become liberated from the bondages of *samsara* by understanding that *Purusha* with subtle *atma*, that who is established by Upanishads and whom those scholars of Vedas meditate upon with *mantras* of *Veda*, **the experts and practitioners of pranayama who enter that daily through their minds**, such persons will sit in the chariot of *OMkar* and enter Maheshwara. It is this Mahadeva who is also considered by scholars as Aditya, the gateway to *devayana marga*. (Anushasana; Daandharma; adhyaya 16)
- Brahma said: (Shl 4) **A sadhak who restrains his prana again and again through ten to twelve pranayama will also attain the atma who is the 25th tattva beyond the 24 tattvas.** (Ashwamedhika parva; Anugita; adhyaya 48)

Types of pranas

- Brahma to his wife (Brahmana gita): (Shl 14) Creation expands only through the *Parabrahma-tattva*. And It resides in that expanded creation. The five *vayus* of *prana*, *apana*, *samana*, *vyana* and *udana* are born from it. They also undergo dissolution in it. (Shl 15, 16) The *prana-vayu* which is in the heart and *apana vayu* in the anus move between the *samana vayu* in the navel and *vyana vayu* which is present throughout the body. If the *apana vayu* merges with *prana*, then *samana* & *vyana* also merge with it. Between *apana* & *prana vayu*, *udana* pervades everything. It is for this reason that *prana* & *apana* do not desert a sleeping person. (Shl 17) Thus as it is the support for living beings it is called *udana*. (It especially activates *pranas*. Makes them do their duties. Hence it is called *udana*. *Utkarshena anayati cheshtayati pranam iti udana*). **The merger of prana etc in udana has been said to be tapas by Brahmavadins.** (Shl 18) The *samana vayu* is in the central abdomen region and at the centre of the five *vayus* which have the nature of merging into each other. The *vaishvanar-agni* which is at its centre shines in seven forms. (Ashwamedhika parva; Anugita; adhyaya 20)

- Brahmana said: (Shl 4, 5) *Vayu* strengthened by *prana* becomes *apana*. Strengthened by *apana* it becomes *vyana*. Strengthened by *vyana* it becomes *udana*. Strengthened by *udana* it becomes *samana*.

...Then they again approach Brahma who said: (Shl 22) Oh *vayus*! All of you are great or none of you are. Your dharma makes you dependent on each other. Each of you is great in your own places. All of you have dharma of mutual dependence. The dharma in one is present in the other too. Your functions happen due to mutual dependence. (Shl 23) The same *vayu* will be both steady and unsteady. Just as my single *atma* grows in various ways, in the same way single *vayu* for specific reasons becomes five (in order to manage different functions). (Shl 24) Oh *vayus*! All of you should co-exist with friendship and mutual support. May you all have auspiciousness! You may all go now. (Ashwamedhika parva; Anugita; adhyaya 23)

- Bhrigu to Bharadwaja: (Shl 24, 25) Living beings move around due to *prana-vayu*. They do physical efforts due to *vyana*. *Apaana-vayu* moves from top to bottom in downward flow. *Samana-vayu* stays in heart. With *udaan-vayu* human beings pulls in air (breathes). Due to the different parts like *kanta* (throat), *taalu* (palate) sounds and alphabets are produced. **In this manner these five *vayus* make the body active.** (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; Adhyaya 184)
- Bhrigu replied to Bharadwaja: (Shl 2) I will tell you about the movement of *vayu* in detail. I will tell you how mighty *vayu* makes the body of animals active. (Shl 3) **Atma takes refuge in/dwells in *sahasrara* and protects the entire body.** *Prana* by being in head and in *agni* makes the body active. (Shl 4) **Atma together with *prana* is *jeeva*.** He himself is *atma* & *sanatana purusha* for *pancha-bhutas*. That *jeevatma* itself is *manas*, *buddhi*, *ahankara*, *pancha-bhutas* and *vishaya-roopa* (*shabda*, *sparsha*, *roopa*, *rasa*, *gandha*). (Shl 5) In this manner by *prana* which is with *jeevatma* all the parts within the body, *indriyas* etc external parts are all activated. Then *prana* transforms to *samana-vayu* and using its movement becomes the guide/mover of the body.

(Shl 6) *Apana-vayu* occupies *jataragni* (belly fire), area below the navel and anus and pushes out urine and faeces and keeps moving from above to below. (Shl 7) **That single *vayu* which is active in all three viz effort, karma & strength is called *Udana* by those who know *adhyatma-tattva*** (*Apana vayu* moves downwards; *udana vayu* moves upwards). (Shl 8) That *vayu* which is in the body and in joints/junctions (*sandhi*) is called *vyana*. (Shl 9) *Agni* will be pervasive in all the *sapta-dhatus* like *rasa* etc. (these are: *rasa* (*anna-rasa*), *raktha* (blood), *mamsa* (flesh), *medas* (fat), *bone*, *majja* (marrow) & *retas* (seminal fluid)). It is prompted/instigated by *samana-vayu*. The *samana-vayu* thus activated by *agni*, moves/activates the *rasas*, *dhatus* and *tridoshas* (*kapha*, *vata*, *pitta*) and will pervade the entire body. (Shl 10) The *jataragni* which is in the middle of *apana* & *prana vayu* & dwells in *prana-apana vayu* digests the food eaten by animals. (Shl 11) **There is a big path for *prana* to move like a flood from face to anus. (highway!). Its end point is called *guda*** (anus). **Along that main path of *prana-vayu* many other smaller branches of flow of *prana* exist (like canals) and have spread across the body and are known as *nadi*. (It reminds essentially of the spinal cord and the nerves which go out from it).** (Shl 12) Just as the *prana-vayu* has connection with all parts of the body through these channels, the *jataragni* which is associated with the *prana-vayu* also has connections to all parts of the body. Understand that the heat that one experiences in the body is related to this *jataragni* only (**heat, food & fire are all manifestations of energy!**). It is *jataragni* that digests the food eaten by all animals. (Shl 13) The *prana-vayu* which flows with the speed of *agni* gets obstructed/impeded at the anus. Again the *prana-vayu* moves upwards and lifts the *agni*. (*Prana-vayu* and *jataragni* work in complementary manner in the body). (Shl 14) **The area below the navel (*nabhi*) is the place where food is digested. This is called '*pakvashaya*'. The area above the navel is the place where food is stored. This is called '*amashaya*'. All *pranas* related to the body exist at the centre of *nabhi*.** (Shl 15) The *nadis* which start from the heart and go upwards, downwards and sideways are prompted by *dasha-prana-vayus* (these are: *prana*, *apana*, *samana*, *udana*, *vyana*; five *upa-vayus* called *naga*, *koorma*, *krukara*, *devadutta* and *dhananjaya*) and carry the *anna-rasa* throughout the body (**reminds of the blood vessels**). (Shl 16) The main path (highway) of *vayu* from face to anus (*nadi-marga*) is the path used by yogis. It is through this path that yogis who have gained victory over grief and are able to maintain equanimity place the *atma* in *sahasrara* through *sushumna nadi*. (Shl 17) In this manner the *jataragni* which dwells inside the body and is together with all the *vayus* keeps blazing like the fire itself. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharmā; Adhyaya 185)

Other references to controlling *prana* (yoga)

- (Shl 1) Vaishampayana said: Janamejaya! Shantanu's son Bhishma remained silent for a while. (Shl 2) Then he started to establish *pranavayu* combined with *manas* in different *dharanas*. (*Dharana*: This is one of the eight types of yoga. This involves fixing the mind firmly in Paramatma. The places the mind is fixed: Navel, *chakra*, heart, tip of tongue, head etc parts of body or fixing it in auspicious objects outside). Thus having been restrained by *yogic kriya* his *pranas* started to move upwards. (Shl 3, 4) **At that time an amazing thing occurred even as all the great people were watching it. From whatever parts of body Bhishma pulled his *pranas*, the arrows fell away from that part.** (Shl 5) As they were watching, in a short while all arrows fell off his body. Seeing this Shri Krishna and others were amazed. (Shl 6) ***Prana* which was stopped at all exits by Bhishma, pierced through *Brahma-randhra* and went away to *Swarga*.** (Shl 7) At that time there was a shower of flowers and auspicious sounds made by *devatas* (*deva- Dundubhi*). *Siddhas* & *brahmarshis* shouted with joy, '*Sadhu! Sadhu!*' (Shl 8) Janamejaya! Bhishma's *prana* left from *brahma-randhra* and shining brightly like a meteor entered the sky and vanished in an instant. In this manner, *mahatma* Bhishma ended his life. (Anushasana parva; Daandharma; adhyaya 167)
- At that time Vidura was merely looking deeply at Yudhishtira without even blinking. Vidura joined his sight with Yudhishtira's. The great Vidura merged his body parts with that of Yudhishtira, his *prana* with Yudhishtira's and his *indriyas* with that of Yudhishtira. At that time Vidura was radiant with *tejas*. **With the help of *yoga-bala*** (power of yoga) **Vidura entered Yudhishtira's body.** (Ashramavasika parva; *Ashramavasa*; adhyaya 26)
- Sanatsujata: (Shl 13) *Prana* swallows *apana*. *Chandra* swallows *prana*. *Surya* swallows *Chandra*. Paramatma swallows *Surya*. Yogis realise that eternal Paramatma in their hearts (Since *Chandra* is the presiding deity of mind, here *Chandra* should be thought as mind. Similarly *Surya* symbolises *buddhi*. At the time of *Samadhi* *apana* *vayu* is pulled into *prana* *vayu*. Merging the *prana* in Paramatma is called *nirvikalpa samadhi*. These relate to *Ashtanga yoga sadhana*) (Udyoga; Sanatsujata; *Adhyaya* 46)

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