

# *Prologue to the Flower Adornment Sutra*

*continued from issue # 225*

PROLOGUE:

MOREOVER, ALTHOUGH THE WESTERN REGION'S DEVIANT VIEWS ARE OF NINETY-FIVE KINDS, THEY EITHER POSTULATE TWENTY-FIVE "TRUTHS" WITH PRODUCTION FROM "THE INDISTINCT," AND SO FORTH...

COMMENTARY:

MOREOVER, ALTHOUGH THE WESTERN REGION'S, India's, DEVIANT VIEWS ARE OF NINETY-FIVE KINDS, THEY can be subsumed under four major headings. All ninety-five outlooks fall under EITHER one or another of the four major divisions, with eleven principal schools. The first of the four categories is schools that follow the Samkhya (*Samkhya*) philosophy's approach. Such schools POSTULATE variations of that system's TWENTY-FIVE tattvas (*tattva*) or "TRUTHS," WITH PRODUCTION of the world and all that's in it evolving FROM "THE INDISTINCT," the *avyakta* (*avyakta*) --the "unmanifested" or "undistinguished," AND SO FORTH. Sometimes the *avyakta* is translated as "dark truth," but it's not referring to light and darkness, but rather to obscurity in the sense of indistinctness -- totally being muddled and not understanding anything at all. Instead of "indistinct truth" we could call it "muddled" or "murky" "truth." From that they say there derives *buddhi* (*buddhi*), "understanding" or "awareness." It sounds something like *Bodhi* (*Bodhi*), "Enlightenment," but that's not what they mean. It means coming to understand a little. It's like the Arhats being able to see within eighty thousand great kalpas but not being able to penetrate beyond that. Anything beyond eighty thousand great kalpas appears as chaos to them. From that *buddhi* in turn derives *ahamkara* (*ahamkara*) or "self-making." This is the concept of an ego, which is based on half understanding and half being muddled.

The founding patriarch of the school was *Kapila* (*Kapila*), whose name means "tawny" or "yellow-red haired," because his hair and beard were that color. He is often referred to as the "yellow-red haired immortal." It's claimed that that he was born out of empty space, which is what this whole principle of indistinctness and confusion is, so he took it for his doctrine. Does anyone believe that claim, that without an egg a chicken came forth? At any rate, he is said to have been born with four virtues which are: 1) the virtue of Dharma, 2) the virtue of knowledge, 3) the virtue of freedom from desire, and 4) the virtue of self-mastery. That is, he had a Dharma, a method he was going to use to teach people. Also, he knew things. Then, too, he had no desires and was very pure. He never became interested in men-women relations. The resulting freedom from desire gave him self-mastery and independence, his fourth virtue. He combined those four virtues and used a great mind of compassion, not miniscule compassion, to speak the Dharma and teach and transform living beings.

The line of transmission of his Dharma goes from his immediate successor, Asuri (*Asuri*). Upon receiving the Dharma transmission from the immortal Kapila, Asuri in turn transmitted it to Panchashikha (*Pancasikha*), who composed an immense treatise on its principles in six hundred thousand verses. He in turn transmitted the Dharma to Garga (*Garga*). Garga then transmitted the Dharma he had been given on to Uluka (*Uluka*). Uluka subsequently passed that Dharma on to Baddhali (*Baddhali*). Baddhali next transmitted the Dharma to Ishvarakrishna (*Ishvarakrishna*), who was very free and at ease and black. The point is that Ishvarakrishna obtained the authentic Dharma transmission, and so he was very arrogant, considering himself to be fantastic -- which he really was.

Being fantastic, Ishvarakrishna went to see the king. He realized that the enormous treatise on their school's system was too hard for people to accept, so he summed up its essentials to make it easier for people to understand. He very accurately expressed its principles in seventy verses, and first introduced them to the king of the country. The country was called "Golden Ears." To make that visit, Ishvarakrishna wrapped his body in iron and carried a bowl of fire on his head. That was to represent he had *gung fau* from ascetic practices and had virtue in the Way, and so didn't fear being burned or seared by the bowl of fire on his head. The king of Golden Ears country felt immediate affinity with him. Ishvarakrishna encouraged the king to summon all the monks in the land to debate with him, to see if they could hold their ground and had any understanding. The bell in the king's hall was rung so loudly, it may have been heard in the heavens. The monks that came were mostly illiterate, and they couldn't out-debate him with all his many Shastras behind him. The king also contributed to their defeat by proclaiming that Ishvarakrishna was right, and bestowing seventy pounds of gold on "Comfortable Black." Actually, he wasn't black. Probably that was just his name. But in any case, Ishvarakrishna was overjoyed and thought, "The king has given me seventy pounds of gold. I'll call my Shastra the 'Golden Seventy Treatise' (*Hiranyasaptati*)." The name commemorated the award of seventy pounds of gold from the king upon his victory in debate, which showed how truly fantastic he was .