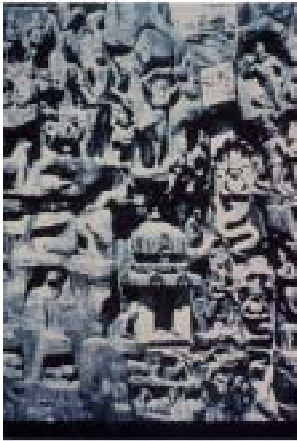


Eternal Way of Truth
Part Two
97 - 120

Cycle of Life
Exoteric and Esoteric Text



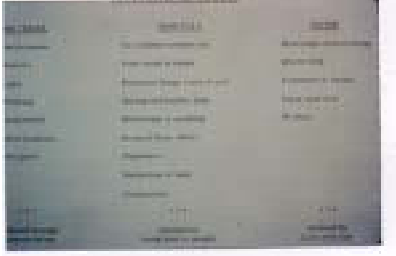
97 Here, Arjuna, the perfect disciple, standing on one foot as an austerity, holds the right foot up. This causes an upward flow of energy. Such austerity and upward flow results in attaining powers or siddhis.

Standing on one foot, as Arjuna does here, symbolizes the restraint of sexual expression. Note that this is part of the same frieze as the descent of the Ganges.



98 Lord Krishna is holding up an entire mountain with his power. Thus, with the little finger of his left hand Krishna protected all the inhabitants of the village of Vrindavana from the deluge of rain and the thunderbolt of the angry god, Indra.

Many siddhis occur with sexual restraint. How does the definition of Krishna, given earlier, apply to this painting?



99 There are three categories of powers: (1) material, attained by the discipline of concentration, (2) spiritual, attained by being kind to others and surrendering to God, and (3) divine powers, attained by union with God.

Which power goes with which technique of yoga? You will have to go back all the way to your Dharma Level course materials in order to answer. Present the answer to your course instructor.

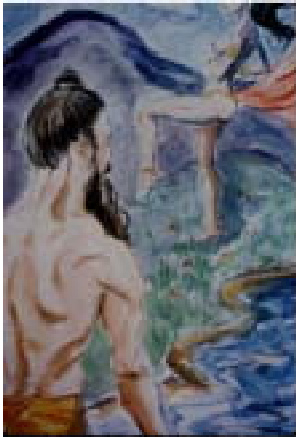


100 Vishvamitra performed such huge austerities that Indra, chief of the gods, feared that he would be toppled from his throne. Therefore, he spoke to Menaka requesting that she go to Vishvamitra's hermitage, Kaushika, and seduce him with her beauty, youth, sweetness, fondling, smiles, and flattery.

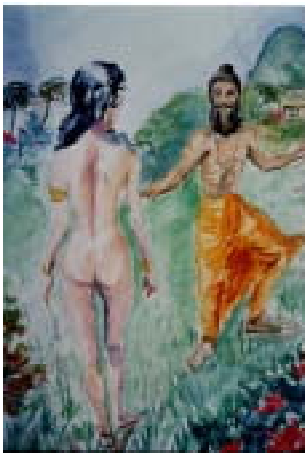
Read the story of Vishvamitra and Menaka in the Mahabharata, then explain or write what you have learned about these pictures (101), (102) and (103).



101 The buxom apsara or celestial nymph who is the ultimate temptation went to Vishvamitra and looked at him with timid eyes. Vishvamitra, leaving behind all his evil by austerities, was engaged in even more in his hermitage.

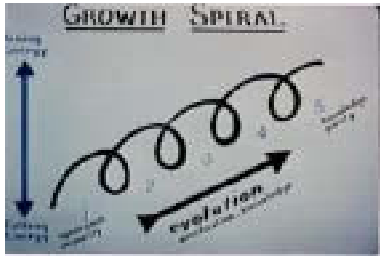


102 She greeted him and began to play in front of him. Off with the wind went her moon-like skirt and so that strictest of seers saw Menaka nude, nervously clutching at her skirt, indescribably young and beautiful.



103 Remarking on the virtue of her beauty, Vishvamitra fell victim to love and lusted to lie with this slim-waisted

Menaka. He asked her, and she was blamelessly willing.



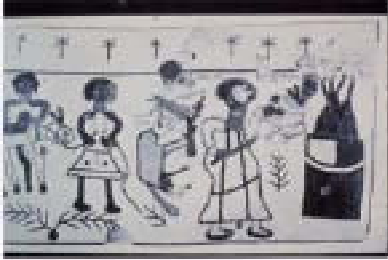
104 If each time we rise up, we only fall again, is there any use in trying? Yes. Each time there is a small step forward in purification or in knowledge. This is growth. By this process, we gradually progress. Still we are on the cycle of death, rebirth, life, death, rebirth. But eventually we gain enough purity and enough knowledge that our interest is only in Absolute Truth only in Divine Love, only in God Almighty.

Do the Five Steps of Study on this diagram.



105 This drawing is of the mosaic floor in the 6th century A.D. Bethlehem Synagogue near Galile. It tells the story of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son, Isaac. Amazingly in the very centre is the Roman sun god, Helios (or is it Surya?) driving his heavenly chariot surrounded by the zodiac. At the bottom is Abraham with Isaac.

Sacrifice brings detachment and purity and the chance to end the cycling of life.



106 At the left stand two young servants.

Then Abraham said to his servants, "Stay here with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder and worship and come again to you." The altar already blazing is at the right. Abraham is placing his bound-up son on the altar. Then the hand of God reaches out of a dark cloud and tells Abraham that his willingness to sacrifice all is enough. He can substitute the ram tied to the tree in the centre. This willingness on Abraham's part to give up his son in surrendering to God, is the symbolic key to liberation from the cycle of life. This willingness enables one to accept and benefit from God's grace which is constantly pouring on each of us.

When you sacrifice that which is most precious to you to God, God will snatch it back and transform it into paradise. God is not a cheat!



107 Jesus was a willing sacrifice. Being forced to sacrifice does not open the golden door to transformation and freedom from the cycle of life. Only a conscious and willing surrender to the Absolute enables the grace of God to be effective.

A forced or resisted sacrifice will bring success. A surrendered, willing sacrifice opens the golden door.



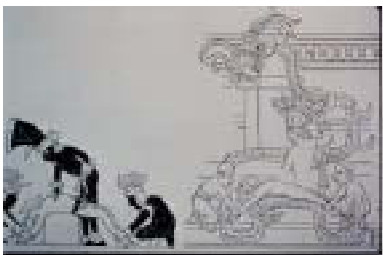
108 On the temple wall at Borobudur, Java, is a Bodhisatva giving food to the poor.

Giving food is a sacrifice, but the spirit in which it is given is the important factor.



109

A bodhisatva takes this vow, "Sentient beings are numberless. I vow to save them. The deluding passions are inexhaustible. I vow to destroy them. The gates of dharma are manifold. I vow to enter them. The Buddha way is supreme. I vow to complete it." The spirit of sacrifice leads to liberation.



110 Sometimes sacrifice has been forced. In these Mayan scenes from Chichen Itza, Yucatan, the victims are held.

The first Mayan sacrifices were done by saints, willingly, in order to gain merit, commune with the gods and spiritually guide the living. In time, the act became a ritual and then a forced event. In order for a sacrifice to produce constructive results, it must be done willingly and with devotion.



111 Here the Mayan Cinteotl, goddess of maize, is waiting for a sacrifice before she will produce an abundant crop.

The gods are neters or functional principles or capacities of God. The reasons gods require sacrifices are:

- a. To lift the guilt of the sacrificer, so he feels deserving.
- b. To place the sacrificer in tune or in harmony with a particular neter;
- c. To begin the flow or the function by creating a vacuum.



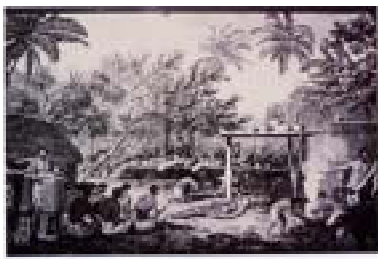
112 The principle of sacrifice has sometimes been perverted to selfish ends. This South Rhodesian rock painting has the female victim, sacrificed at the base of the tree, while the man with upraised hands conjures heaven for rain. The sky goddess complies, bending forward over a slanting field of nine parallel lines, beneath which rain descends. Such sacrifices produce material results, but when the sacrifice is forced on another or on oneself, it does not lead to liberation.

If any force is used in a sacrifice the deluge begins.



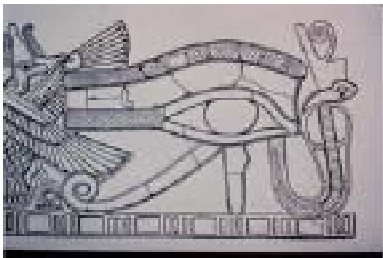
113 As late as 1818 A.D. forced human sacrifice was practiced in Polynesia.

The principle of sacrifice is holy; but, through degeneration by the ego, it can become perverted.



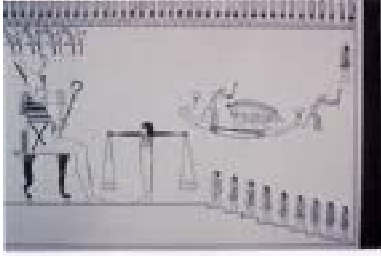
114 The human was trussed like a pig and then buried. Many human skulls are on the altar in the background.

The human sacrifice is the highest; however, in yoga the sacrifice is of oneself, the atman, and it is only sacrificed to the Divine by devotional surrender.



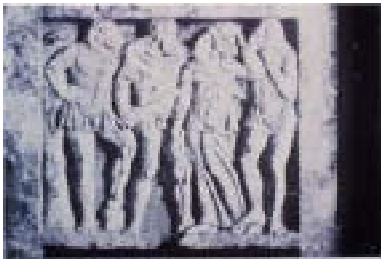
115 The Eye of Horus. Horus had sacrificed his eye in a battle with Seth who had killed his father, Osiris. By presenting the eye to the dead Osiris as an offering, Horus won eternal life for his father.

The Eye of Horus is the vision of the spirit. By sacrificing vision or viewpoint or attitude or beingness to the God of Life, (Osiris or Vishnu,) Horus, the spirit that can fly, was placed in harmony with immortality, an aspect of God, Amon, his father.



116 Seth was then transformed in a whirlwind of fire into a black pig.

Seth, the twin brother of Osiris, the desiccator of life, was changed into a pig or worldly behaviour.



117 Pigs have been connected with sacrifice the world over In this 4th century B.C panel, Odysseus is forcing Circe to restore his men to human form. She had turned them into pigs because of their worldly behaviour.

Circe is that function of God that makes undeserving men act like pigs; that is, discipline.



118 Another Greek pig sacrifice, along with a basket of sacra.

By sacrificing the indulgence aspect of the cycle of life to God, symbolized here by the pig, the golden door to immortality is opened.



119 On this 5th century B.C. Greek vase is Apollo holding the pig of purification above the head of Orestes to save him from the Furies who have arrived to avenge Orestes' murder of his mother. Even the worst of sinners can be saved by

Here the sun god of discipline, Apollo, willingly sacrifices his indulgences to save Orestes from his future karma in the form of the Furies, those aspects of God that act to balance the use of the will. In Sanskrit they are called maruts.



120 Having descended to Hades, Persephone returns to life because of her willing sacrifice to protect the grain crops.

Just as Jesus did after his crucifixion, Persephone descended to the underworld, willingly; that is, the descent of the cycle of life into death, done willingly leads to rebirth as an immortal.