

Knowledge of previous births of others can also be acquired in the same way. There is a story prevalent in this connection in the Śrūti. Bhagawān Jaigīṣavya after having acquired knowledge of ten cycles of creation and the sequence of births therein through perception of subliminal impressions, obtained discriminative discernment. Then Bhagawān Āvaṭya having assumed a corporeal form created at will, asked him, 'You have lived through ten cycles and because of enlightenment your intellect has not been clouded; you have experienced sorrows of hell and animal life, and have repeatedly enjoyed pleasures as a Deva (celestial) and as a human being. Of these what have you enjoyed best?' To this Bhagawān Jaigīṣavya replied, 'I have lived through ten cycles of creation and my mental essence has not been overpowered. I have experienced the troubles of hell as well as of animal life. I have been born again and again as a Deva and as a man. But I consider all that I have been through, as pain.' Then Āvaṭya said, 'Oh long-lived one, tell me whether you count your mastery over the constituent principles and the unsurpassable pleasure of contentment amongst sorrows.' Jaigīṣavya replied, 'Pleasure of contentment has been ranked as superior to other enjoyments but it is nothing but pain compared to the bliss of the state of isolation. This characteristic of contentment of mind is nothing but a composition of the three Guṇas, and everything connected with the Guṇas has been counted on the side of avoidables. The strand of desire is nothing but pain. When pain-producing desire is removed, contentment is said to become pleasant, unrestricted, and all-embracing.' (3)

(1) Perception of latent impressions, means memory or recollection of subliminal impressions. It is clear that if latent