



ASHTAVAKRA GITA

A dialogue between RESOURCEFULNESS & WISDOM

a translation of the ancient Sanskrit text

Ashwini Kumar Aggarwal



जय गुरुदेव

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13th May 2022, Beloved Gurudev's Birthday, Mohini Ekadashi
Parashurama Dvadashi, Pradosh Vrat, Shukla Paksha

On this day in 1967 Zakir Husain elected President, 1952 Jawaharlal
Nehru becomes Prime Minister, 1916 Native American Indian Day 1st
observance, 1884 Institute of Electrical & Electronics Engineers
setup, 1767 Mozart's first opera at age 11 premiers.

Vikram Samvat 2079 Rakshasa, Saka Era 1944 Shubhakrit

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जय गुरुदेव

Dedication

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

Wisdom & Resourcefulness giver

Specially dedicated to: My mother KAVITA

Who only last month in April 2022 enquired happily: So what are you writing now? I responded – ASHTAVAKRA. She beamed– O Ashtavakra Gita – May the Lord be with You.



Blessing

YOU ARE FREE RIGHT NOW

You are total. You are full. You have all that you need. Do not underestimate yourself. A Guru is there to show you what you are.

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar
Discourse on Ashtavakra Gita, Bangalore Ashram, Devi Hall
1991

Acknowledgements

Lord's Patiala visit on 3rd April 2022 during Chaitra Navratri infuses Brahman Consciousness in us all.

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Preface

During a trek to virgin nature, the mind stops chattering. Unbelievable things happen to the consciousness.

The body doesn't complain.
The heart feels nice and warm.
And the Lord walks in.

Prayer

शान्तिपाठः

ॐ सह नाववतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।

तेजस्वि नावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

om saha nāvavatu | saha nau bhunaktu | saha vīryaṃ karavāvahai

| tejasvi nāvadhītamastu mā vidviṣāvahai ॥

om śānti śānti śāntiḥ ॥

Peace Invocation

O Pure Loving Grace!

May we be taken care of along with our family and friends.

May we enjoy socializing and eating together.

May we support each other's vision and growth.

May our intellect be open to new ideas and changing trends.

May we spend more time in praise than abuse, may we talk

of each other's virtues rather than harp on vices.

Peace in our heart, in our body and in our environs.

Introduction

The Energy signifying WEALTH, SKILL and RESOURCEFULNESS manifested in the body of the King of Mithila, named Janaka, father of Sita of Ramayana fame.

Since Janaka had everything, his thoughts turned more and more towards Vairagya, the dispassion force essential for union with Brahman the Absolute.

In Indian tradition, it is said, the Lord seeks out his beloved devotee, and engineers an event that culminates in enlightenment.

King Janaka once in his Royal Palace, happened to doze off in the midst of a lengthy day to day facts reporting by his administration and secretaries.

In the midst of a short slumber, he dreamt that he was extremely hungry, stumbling along alone in an endless expanse. Unable to contain his ravenous hunger, he prayed desperately for a morsel of food, and per chance spied a piece of dried roti (that is customarily) put out for the birds. Immediately he picked it up, and was about to sit in a shady spot to munch it.

At that instant a huge bird swooped from the skies, grabbed the roti from his hands and was gone instantly. This shattered his nerve; he cried out bitterly.

That broke his reverie, and he found himself comfortably ensconced on his Royal Throne in his Grand Palace.

Back to his senses and fully alert, King Janaka enquired of his assembly:

WHAT IS TRUTH?

Was the slumber Truth, was the dream Truth, was the emotion of extreme hunger Truth, was the helplessness at the bird's snatch Truth?

Was the cry of desperation Truth?
Is this Royal Assembly the Truth?

Is Palace with well-oiled machinery Truth?
Are the Ministers and Secretaries Truth?

Is Hunger and Poverty Truth,
Is Comfort and Happiness Truth?

No one could satisfy his quest. Until ASHTAVAKRA the embodiment of Brahman, the energy signifying WISDOM walked in.

Cast of Characters

King Janaka represents Resourcefulness.

- He is young and fit i.e., a body that can go the extra mile and bring home the bounty, come what may.
- His mind is alert and flexible, he engineers solutions to unravel knotty situations, he is bright enough to circumvent danger, and come up with smart ideas to make living a success.
- He is large hearted, so fears do not stick, emotions do not become stormy, his ready acceptance and humility make lasting friends and networks.

Ashtavakra represents Wisdom.

- He is old, far older than the denizens of the entire village, with a wealth of experience of myriad situations and tricky persons, having been through all that nature could *season*, or that man could *excite*.
- Ashtavakra is solidified peace; he is sculpted in bliss.

What happens when Resourcefulness meets Wisdom?

This is the story...

of their timeless talk,
a languid conversation,
a meaningful dialogue

that establishes peace, faith, bliss and longevity.

Do not think that **Resourcefulness** and **Wisdom** are alien to you. The energy that runs through **Janaka** and **Ashtavakra** is awake and alive within you, it just needs some attention, some quality time, some purposeful silent reflection, some spiritual practices as ordained by your Guru.

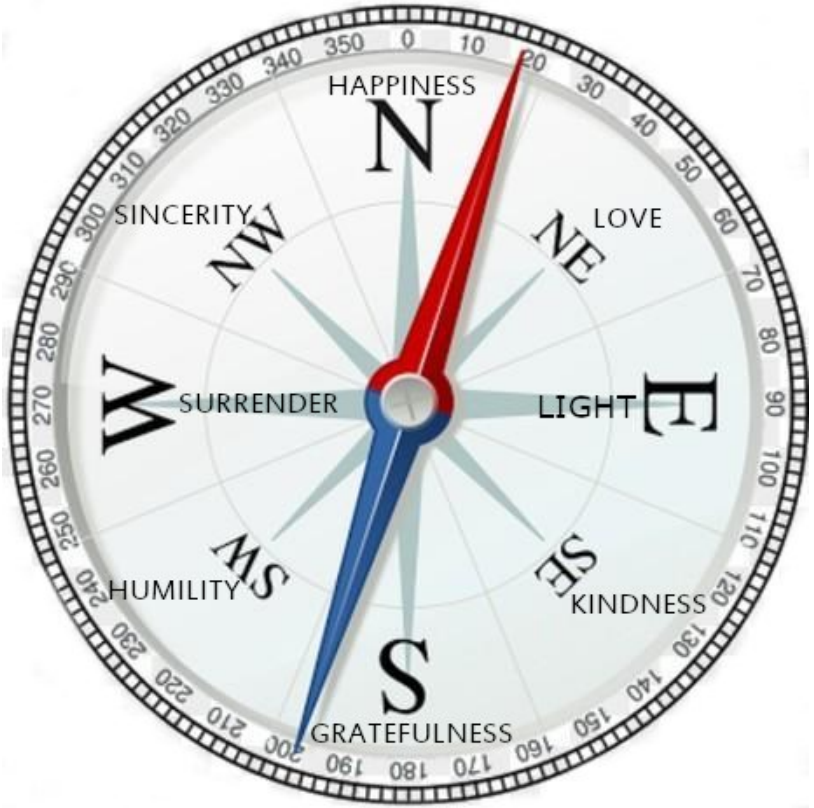
On a personal level, Janaka is the country's King. He is the father of Sita, the maiden representing planet earth, *Bhu-Devi*. Sita is not yet born at the time of the dialogue, later on she goes on to become the consort of Lord Rama, the rapture that we all seek, the Divine presence.

So the dialogue that occurs is instrumental in giving birth to Sita. She is the purity that attracts the Divine and unites it with planet earth.

Ashtavakra (ashta-vakra) is the eight vectored-forcefield. (*We notice the usage of the word "vakra" in the verses that praise Ganesha, viz. vakra-tund mahakaya = Lord that defies the linear forces of logic*). He represents command over the four cardinal directions (North East South West) and the four intermediate directions (NE SE SW NW). Eight is also symbolic of infinity (∞ vs 8).

Ashtavakra simply means the eight energies that need to be harnessed and attended to. The eight forces needed to bring total balance in life, in work, in play, in entertainment and the beyond.

Happiness^{1N} Love^{2NE} Light^{3E} Kindness^{4SE} Gratefulness^{5S}
Humility^{6SW} Surrender^{7W} Sincerity^{8NW}.



Refer verse 1.2 क्षमा अर्जव दया तोष सत्यम् ।

- क्षमा = Forgiveness = Humility^{6SW} + Surrender^{7W}
- अर्जव = Earnestness = Sincerity^{7NW}
- दया = Compassion = Kindness^{4SE}
- तोष = Contentment = Happiness^{1N}+Gratefulness^{5S}
- सत्यम् = Truth = Light^{3E} + Love^{2NE}

There are 298 verses arranged under 20 topics.

(following sections shall be updated soon...

Section 16 Divine is always Mine

Section 17 I express Divinity

Section 18 I sense Abundance

Section 19 I Meditate long regularly

Section 20 Glimpse of Freedom Nirvana)

Qualifications Prerequisites

This Gita is a masterly text, meant for a sincere and serious aspirant. Basic qualifications include a command over language, cleanliness, and neatness in attire.

- Speech that is not cruel nor harsh is the foremost qualification.
- Keeping the tongue free of grumbling and nagging in day-to-day life is very important

Other essential qualifications so that knowledge gets imbibed are:

- Respectfulness
- Readiness to serve with cheerfulness
- Maintain discipline for a year with frugal lifestyle
- Truthfulness and candor in communication
- Regularly walking the path ordained by one's Master

Section 1 The Basic Question

1.1 Resourcefulness sits at the feet of Wisdom. With a cheerful countenance he asks - my beloved master - how may i deepen my experience of life? How may i become free to explore more? Lastly how may i resolve within afterwards?

∞∞∞∞

1.2 Wisdom instantly replies - O humble son - if thee desire freedom, then shun the sensual distractions forthwith. Avoid the mundane, do not engage with people in arbitrary talk, restrict your pleasure yearnings.

If thee desire to expand your horizon, then practice the virtues forgiveness-earnestness-kindness-gratefulness-truthfulness.

1.3 Lessen your identification with and dependence on the external objects, whether hankering for big plots, large amounts of water for day-to-day activity, various electromechanical gadgets and machines, perfumes and cosmetics, undue storage that consumes unnecessary space.

What shall aid your freedom to move about and explore and experience; is knowing that there is a divine spark inside you, that divinity is part of your being.

∞∞∞∞

1.4 Once you can lessen your dependence on men and machinery, you shall immediately feel joyful, peaceful, and freed.

1.5 Time and again erase your labels of husband or boss, engineer or doctor, or other social and fame related attachments. These are simply draped over you like coat over skin that needs to be discarded during a shower or sleep. See that you are bigger than these labels, and feel the freedom instantly.



1.6 Work and Entertainment, salary and expenses, are a cyclical occurrence, so why give them undue importance? Know that you are capable of these, and in such knowledge find rest.

1.7 The one divine that cares for you is free isn't he?
Realize his closeness and instantly experience freedom.

∞∞∞∞

1.8 An inflated ego becomes brittle and self-injurious,
relax your hold on family and work, and experience the
joy.

1.9 Strengthen your faith and temper your virtues in the fire of self-enquiry. Let go of limited identity and superfluous skill, the letting go diminishes lack and craving, and makes one happy.

∞∞∞∞

1.10 As long as the mind hankers after family and work, the hold of ego becomes stubborn. Remember time and again to let go of work and family, allow your consciousness to expand beyond and joy filters in.

1.11 Reality is not physical, it is notional; remember to tell yourself time and again - All is Well, I am a King, I am free. Soon the thoughts you nourish become a physical reality - this is a universal truth.

∞∞∞∞

1.12 The Soul is a witness; it is connected to the Lord and is hence all-pervading and complete. The Soul is ever free, ever aware, ever effortless, unattached, non-oscillating and tranquil. However, by the cover of family and work it becomes clouded and doubtful and forgetful.

1.13 Diminish the hold of work and family to allow the Soul to Shine through. Meditate on the stillness within, Meditate on the inner silence, and realize you are firm and uncompromised.

∞∞∞∞

1.14 My dear son - disentangle again and again from society, people, possessions. With determination connect again and again with the Self, and allow happiness to spring.

1.15 Allow the faith to strengthen that the Soul doesn't need entanglements, nor does it need over work. The Soul is all awareness without blemish. So during Meditation do not rake up the thoughts of family and work, allow the Meditation to happen with an attitude of - i am nobody - i don't need to put effort - i do not need any wish to be fulfilled at this time.

∞∞∞∞

1.16 I pervade this whole creation, i permeate all matter, the one underlying purity connects us all, may my mind not entertain any base thoughts.

1.17 I remain untouched and unaffected by my circumstances and situations; my soul is the abode of calmness. My intellect is not narrow, my heart is fearless, may i aim for the highest.

∞∞∞∞

1.18 Accept and appreciate both the physical form and the chemical biochemistry, only then can family or work friction be prevented.

1.19 The big screen is always there, whether or not a movie is projected, it remains. So also, the supreme consciousness pervades a body inside, and irrespective of the presence of anybody it is all outside as well.

∞∞∞∞

1.20 Just as all atoms are filled with space, so does
Divinity fill all men

Janaka or Resourcefulness hears the teaching of
Wisdom intensely,

each word and sentence

making deep impressions in his brain, and
clearing away any residual doubt or cloud.

After a moment of deep silence, Janaka bursts forth.

Section 2 The Answer Realized

I AM PURE. I AM WHOLE.
O Lord! Gratefulness for this realization.

2.1 Aho! Niranjana. I am untouched and unalloyed. Nature and Man have not dented my intrinsic purity or peace one bit.

All this time i had just gone into a spin that was wholly imagined.

000

2.2 Just as my body attains importance due to my mind's presence, so does the Universe attain importance due to my body-mind complex.

Hence my universe is very personal and unique, none's universe is the same as mine.

Sanskrit Verses for Chanting

Ashtavakara Gita is written in Anushtup Chanda. Each verse consists of 32 syllables, each statement (half verse) consists of 16 syllables. While chanting, we pause at a quarter verse, i.e. at 8 syllables.

॥ अथ अष्टावक्र गीता ॥

1 प्रथमं प्रकरणम् । जनक उवाच ।

कथं ज्ञानम् अवाप्नोति कथं मुक्तिर्भविष्यति ।

वैराग्यं च कथं प्राप्तं एतद् ब्रूहि मम प्रभो ॥ 1.1 ॥ 1

अष्टावक्र उवाच ।

मुक्तिम् इच्छसि चेत् तात विषयान् विषवत् त्यज ।

क्षमार्जवदयातोषसत्यं पीयूषवद् भज ॥ 1.2 ॥ 2

न पृथ्वी न जलं नाग्निर् न वायुर् द्यौर न वा भवान् ।

एषां साक्षिणमात्मानं चिद् रूपं विद्धि मुक्तये ॥ 1.3 ॥ 3

यदि देहं पृथक् कृत्य चित्ति विश्राम्य तिष्ठसि ।

अधुनैव सुखी शान्तो बन्धमुक्तो भविष्यसि ॥ 1.4 ॥ 4

न त्वं विप्रादिको वर्णो नाश्रमी नाक्षगोचरः ।

असङ्गोऽसि निराकारो विश्वसाक्षी सुखी भव ॥ 1.5 ॥ 5

धर्माधर्मौ सुखं दुःखं मानसानि न ते विभो ।

न कर्तासि न भोक्तासि मुक्त एवासि सर्वदा ॥ 1.6 ॥ 6

एको द्रष्टासि सर्वस्य मुक्तप्रायोऽसि सर्वदा ।
अयमेव हि ते बन्धो द्रष्टारं पश्यसीतरम् ॥ 1.7 ॥ 7

अहं कर्तेत्यहंमानमहाकृष्णाहिदंशितः ।
नाहं कर्तेति विश्वासामृतं पीत्वा सुखी भव ॥ 1.8 ॥ 8

एको विशुद्धबोधोऽहम् इति निश्चयवह्निना ।
प्रज्वालयाज्ञानगहनं वीतशोकः सुखी भव ॥ 1.9 ॥ 9

यत्र विश्वमिदं भाति कल्पितं रज्जुसर्पवत् ।
आनन्दपरमानन्दः स बोधस्त्वं सुखं चर ॥ 1.10 ॥ 10

मुक्ताभिमानी मुक्तो हि बद्धो बद्धाभिमान्यपि ।
किंवदन्तीह सत्येयं या मतिः सा गतिर् भवेत् ॥ 1.11 ॥ 11

आत्मा साक्षी विभुः पूर्ण एको मुक्तश्चिदक्रियः ।
असङ्गो निःस्पृहः शान्तो भ्रमात् संसारवानिव ॥ 1.12 ॥ 12

कूटस्थं बोधमद्वैतमात्मानं परिभावय ।
आभासोऽहं भ्रमं मुक्त्वा भावं बाह्यमथान्तरम् ॥ 1.13 ॥ 13

देहाभिमानपाशेन चिरं बद्धोऽसि पुत्रक ।
बोधोऽहं ज्ञानखड्गेन तन्निष्कृत्य सुखी भव ॥ 1.14 ॥ 14

निःसङ्गो निष्क्रियोऽसि त्वं स्वप्रकाशो निरञ्जनः ।
अयमेव हि ते बन्धः समाधिमनुतिष्ठसि ॥ 1.15 ॥ 15

त्वया व्याप्तमिदं विश्वं त्वयि प्रोतं यथार्थतः ।
शुद्धबुद्धस्वरूपस्त्वं मा गमः क्षुद्रचित्तात्मा ॥ 1.16 ॥ 16

निरपेक्षो निर्विकारो निर्भरः शीतलाशयः ।
अगाधबुद्धिरक्षुब्धो भव चिन्मात्रवासनः ॥ 1.17 ॥ 17

साकारमनृतं विद्धि निराकारं तु निश्चलम् ।
एतत् तत्त्वोपदेशेन न पुनर्भवसम्भवः ॥ 1.18 ॥ 18

यथैवादर्शमध्यस्थे रूपेऽन्तः परितस्तु सः ।
तथैवाऽस्मिन् शरीरेऽन्तः परितः परमेश्वरः ॥ 1.19 ॥ 19

एकं सर्वगतं व्योम बहिरन्तर्यथा घटे ।
नित्यं निरन्तरं ब्रह्म सर्वभूतगणे तथा ॥ 1.20 ॥ 20

2 द्वितीयं प्रकरणम् । जनक उवाच ।
अहो निरञ्जनः शान्तो बोधोऽहं प्रकृतेः परः ।
एतावन्तमहं कालं मोहेनैव विडम्बितः ॥ 2.1 ॥ 21

यथा प्रकाशयाम्येको देहमेनं तथा जगत् ।
अतो मम जगत् सर्वमथवा न च किञ्चन ॥ 2.2 ॥ 22

सशरीरमहो विश्वं परित्यज्य मयाऽधुना ।
कुतश्चित् कौशलादेव परमात्मा विलोक्यते ॥ 2.3 ॥ 23