

जनक उवाच ॥  
King Janaka said  
janaka uvāca

कथं ज्ञानमवाप्नोति  
How is knowledge attained?  
katham jñānam avāpnoti

कथं मुक्तिर्भविष्यति  
How does liberation come about?  
katham muktir bhaviṣyati

वैराग्यं च कथं प्राप्तम्  
How does dispassion arise?  
vairāgyam ca katham prāptam

एतद् ब्रूहि मम प्रभो  
Tell me this, O Lord.  
etad brūhi mama prabho 1.1

अष्टावक्र उवाच ॥  
Rishi Ashtavakra said,  
aṣṭāvakra uvāca

मुक्तिमिच्छसि चेतात्  
If you desire liberation, dear one,  
muktim icchasi cet tāta

विषयान् विषवत्यज  
abandon sense-objects as poison.  
viṣayān viṣavat tyaja

क्षमार्जवदयातोष  
Forgiveness, sincerity, compassion, contentment,  
kṣamārjava-dayā-toṣa-

सत्यं पीयुषवद् भज  
and truth - cultivate as nectar.  
satyam pīyuṣavad bhaja 1.2

न पृथ्वी न जलं नाग्निः

You are not earth, not water, not fire,  
na pṛthvī na jalāṁ nāgnih

न वायुर्द्यौर्न वा भवान्

not air, nor space.

na vāyur dyaur na vā bhavān

एषां साक्षिणमात्मानं

Know yourself as the witness of all these,  
eṣāṁ sākṣiṇam ātmānam

चिद्रूपं विद्धि मुक्तये

as pure consciousness, to get liberated.  
cid-rūpaṁ viddhi muktaye 1.3

यदि देहं पृथक् कृत्य

If you detach yourself from the body  
yadi deham pṛthak kṛtya

चिति विश्राम्य तिष्ठसि

and rest in awareness, abiding in yourself,  
citi viśrāmya tiṣṭhasi

अधुनैव सुखी शान्तो

immediately, happy, peaceful,  
adhunaiva sukhī śānto

बन्धमुक्तो भविष्यसि

and free from bondage you will become.  
bandha-mukto bhaviṣyasi 1.4

न त्वं विप्रादिको वर्ण

You are not a brāhmaṇa, etc.  
na tvam̄ viprādiko varṇo

नाश्रमी नाक्षगोचरः

You are not an āśrama nor are you a sense object.  
nāśramī nākṣa-gocaraḥ

असङ्गोऽसि निराकारो

You are unattached and formless,  
asaṅgo'si nirākāro

विश्वसाक्षी सुखी भव

the witness of all. So be happy.  
viśva-sākṣī sukhī bhava 1.5

धर्माधर्मौ सुखं दुःखं

Dharma and adharma, pleasure and pain,  
dharmādharmau sukham̄ duḥkham̄

मानसानि न ते विभो

are mental states. They don't belong to you, O King.  
mānasāni na te vibho

न कर्तासि न भोक्तासि

You are neither doer nor enjoyer.  
na kartāsi na bhoktāsi

मुक्त एवासि सर्वदा

You are ever free.  
mukta evāsi sarvadā 1.6

एको द्रष्टासि सर्वस्य

You alone are the seer of all.

eko draṣṭāsi sarvasya

मुक्तप्रायोऽसि सर्वदा

You are fully free.

mukta-prāyo'si sarvadā

अयमेव हि ते बन्धो

This alone is your bondage:

ayam eva hi te bandho

द्रष्टारं पश्यसीतरम्

seeing yourself as an individual seer.

draṣṭāram paśyasi taram 1.7

अहं कर्त्तव्यहंमान

The ego-snake of 'I am the doer',

aham kartety aham-māna

महाकृष्णाहिदंशितः

has bitten you deeply.

mahā-kṛṣṇāhi-damśitaḥ

नाहं कर्तेति विश्वासा

By knowing, 'I am not the doer',

nāham karteti viśvāsā-

मृतं पीत्वा सुखं चर

drink the nectar and live happily.

'mṛtam pītvā sukhām cara 1.8

एको विशुद्धबोधोऽहम्

"I am pure, solitary awareness."

eko viśuddha-bodho'ham

इति निश्चयवह्निना

With this fire of certainty,

iti niścaya-vahninā

प्रज्वाल्याज्ञानगहनं

burn the dense forest of ignorance.

prajvālyājñāna-gahanaṁ

वीतशोकः सुखी भव

Be free from sorrow and happy.

vīta-śokaḥ sukhī bhava 1.9

यत्र विश्वमिदं भाति

Because this universe that appears,

yatra viśvam idam bhāti

कल्पितं रज्जुसर्पवत्

is imagined like a snake in a rope,

kalpitam rajju-sarpavat

आनन्दपरमानन्दः

there is supreme bliss.

ānanda-paramānandaḥ

स बोधस्त्वं सुखं भव

that awareness you are. Be happy.

sa bodhas tvam sukhām bhava 1.10

मुक्ताभिमानी मुक्तो हि

He who thinks himself free is free indeed,  
muktābhimānī mukto hi

बद्धो बद्धाभिमान्यपि

he who thinks himself bound is bound.  
baddho baddhābhimāny api

किंवदन्तीह सत्येयं

This popular saying is true here:  
kim vadantiha satyeyam

या मतिः सा गतिर्भवेत्

"As is one's thought, so is one's destiny."  
yā matiḥ sā gatir bhavet 1.11

कूटस्थं बोधमद्वैतम्

On changeless, non-dual awareness,  
kūṭastham bodham advaitam

आत्मानं परिभावय

on the Self, meditate,  
ātmānam paribhāvaya

आभासोऽहं भ्रमं मुक्त्वा

renouncing the delusion 'I am the appearance',  
ābhāso'ham bhramam muktvā

भावं बाह्यमथान्तरम्

and all notions of outer and inner.  
bhāvam bāhyam athāntaram 1.13

आत्मा साक्षी विभुः पूर्ण

The Self is the witness, all-pervading, complete,  
ātmā sākṣī vibhuḥ pūrṇa

एको मुक्तश्चिदक्रियः

one, free, and actionless consciousness,  
eko muktaś cid akriyaḥ

असङ्गो निःस्पृहः शान्तो

unattached, desireless, and peaceful,  
asaṅgo niḥspr̥haḥ śānto

भ्रमात्संसारवानिव

appearing to be in samsāra only through delusion.  
bhramāt saṃsāravān iva 1.12

देहाभिमानपाशेन

By noose of body-identification,  
dehābhimāna-pāśena

चिरं बद्धोऽसि पुत्रक

you have long been bound, dear one.  
ciram baddho'asi putraka

बोधोऽहं ज्ञानखड्गेन

Cut it with the sword of knowledge, 'I am awareness',  
bodho'ham jñāna-khaḍgena

तन्निकृत्य सुखी भव

and then be happy.  
tan-nikṛtya sukhī bhava 1.14

निःसङ्गो निष्क्रियोऽसि त्वं  
You are unattached and actionless,  
niḥsaṅgo niṣkriyo'si tvam

स्वप्रकाशो निरञ्जनः  
self-luminous and stainless.  
svaprakāśo nirañjanaḥ

अयमेव हि ते बन्धः  
This alone is your bondage -  
ayam eva hi te bandhaḥ

समाधिमनुतिष्ठसि  
that you practice samādhi.  
samādhim anuṭiṣṭhasi 1.15

त्वया व्यासमिदं विश्वं  
This universe is pervaded by you,  
tvayā vyāptam idam viśvam

त्वयि प्रोतं यथार्थतः  
and indeed woven out of you.  
tvayi protam yathārthataḥ

शुद्धबुद्धस्वरूपस्त्वं  
Your nature is pure intelligence.  
śuddha-buddha-svarūpas tvam

मा गमः क्षुद्रचित्तताम्  
Do not sink into small-mindedness.  
mā gamaḥ kṣudra-cittatām 1.16

निरपेक्षो निर्विकारो  
Independent, changeless,  
nirapekṣo nirvikāro

निर्भरः शीतलाशयः  
self-supported, serene in heart,  
nirbharaḥ śītalāśayaḥ

अगाधबुद्धिरक्षुद्धो  
of unfathomable intellect, unperturbed -  
agādha-buddhir akṣubdho

भव चिन्मात्रवासनः  
abide as pure consciousness alone.  
bhava cintmātra-vāsanaḥ 1.17

साकारमनृतं विद्धि  
Know the formed to be unreal,  
sākāram anṛtam viddhi

निराकारं तु निश्चलम्  
the formless to be changeless.  
nirākāram tu niścalam

एतत्त्वोपदेशेन  
By this instruction on truth,  
etat tattvopadeśena

न पुनर्भवसम्भवः  
there is no rebirth.  
na punar-bhava-sambhavaḥ 1.18

यथैवादर्शमध्यस्थे

As in a mirror placed nearby,  
yathaivādarśam adhyastha

रूपेऽन्तः परितस्तु सः

forms appear both within and without,  
rūpe'ntaḥ paritas tu saḥ

तथैवाऽस्मिन् शरीरेऽन्तः

so too, within this body,  
tathaivāśmin śarīre'ntaḥ

परितः परमेश्वरः

dwells the Supreme everywhere.  
paritaḥ parameśvaraḥ 1.19

एकं सर्वगतं व्योम

Like one all-pervading space,  
ekam̄ sarva-gataṁ vyoma

बहिरन्तर्यथा घटे

is both inside and outside a pot,  
bahir antar yathā ghaṭe

नित्यं निरन्तरं ब्रह्म

so too, Brahman is eternal and partless,  
nityam̄ nirantaram̄ brahma

सर्वभूतगणे तथा

is both inside and outside of all beings.  
sarva-bhūta-gane tathā 1.20