

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?
vairāgyaṃ 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 चेत्तात
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 पीयूषवद् भज
and truth - cultivate as nectar.
satyaṃ pīyūṣavad bhaja 1.2

न पृथ्वी न जलं नाग्निः

You are not earth, not water, not fire,
na pṛthvī na jalam nāgniḥ

न वायुर्द्यौर्न वा भवान्

not air, nor space.
na vāyur dyaur na vā bhavān

एषां साक्षिणमात्मानं

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

चिद्रूपं विद्धि मुक्तये

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

यदि देहं पृथक् कृत्य

If you detach yourself from the body
yadi dehaṃ 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 वर्णो

You are not a brāhmaṇa, etc.
na tvaṃ 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

धर्माधर्मो सुखं दुःखं

Dharma and adharma, pleasure and pain,
dharmādharmau sukhaṃ duḥkhaṃ

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.
draṣṭāraṃ paśyasītaram 1.7

अहं कर्तेत्यहंमान
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-

ऽमृतं पीत्वा सुखं चर
drink the nectar and live happily.
'mṛtaṃ pītvā sukhaṃ 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-gaḥanaṃ

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 idaṃ bhāti

कल्पितं रज्जुसर्पवत्
is imagined like a snake in a rope,
kalpitaṃ rajju-sarpavat

आनन्दपरमानन्दः
there is supreme bliss.
ānanda-paramānandaḥ

स बोधस्त्वं सुखं भव
that awareness you are. Be happy.
sa bodhas tvaṃ sukhaṃ bhava 1.10

मुक्ताभिमानो 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:
kiṃ vadantīha satyeyam

या मतिः सा गतिर्भवेत्
"As is one's thought, so is one's destiny."
yā matiḥ sā gatiḥ bhavet 1.11

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 niḥsprhaḥ śānto

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

कूटस्थं बोधमद्वैतम्
On changeless, non-dual awareness,
kūṭasthaṃ bodham advaitam

आत्मानं परिभावय
on the Self, meditate,
ātmānaṃ paribhāvaya

आभासोऽहं भ्रमं मुक्त्वा
renouncing the delusion 'I am the appearance',
ābhāso'ham bhramaṃ muktvā

भावं बाह्यमथान्तरम्
and all notions of outer and inner.
bhāvaṃ bāhyam athāntaram 1.13

देहाभिमानपाशेन
By noose of body-identification,
dehābhimāna-pāśena

चिरं बद्धोऽसि पुत्रक
you have long been bound, dear one.
ciram baddho'si 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 anutiṣṭhasi 1.15

त्वया व्याप्तमिदं विश्वं
This universe is pervaded by you,
tvayā vyāptam idaṁ viśvaṁ

त्वयि प्रोतं यथार्थतः
and indeed woven out of you.
tvayi protaṁ 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

अगाधबुद्धिरक्षुब्धो
of unfathomable intellect, unperturbed -
agādha-buddhir akṣubdho

भव चिन्मात्रवासनः
abide as pure consciousness alone.
bhava cinmātra-vāsanah 1.17

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

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

एतत्तत्त्वोपदेशेन
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,
tathaivāsmiṇ śarīre'ntaḥ

परितः परमेश्वरः

dwells the Supreme everywhere.
paritaḥ parameśvaraḥ 1.19

एकं सर्वगतं व्योम

Like one all-pervading space,
ekaṁ 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,
nityaṁ nirantaraṁ brahma

सर्वभूतगणे तथा

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