

Mysteries of the Soul

Spiritual text 1 - Living from a sense of unity

Spiritual text: Ashtavakra's song 1:1-20

Janaka: 'O Master, tell me how to find detachment, wisdom, and freedom!'

Ashtavakra: 'O friend, if you wish to be free, shun the poison of the senses. Seek the nectar of truth, of love and forgiveness, simplicity and happiness. Earth, fire and water, the wind and the sky – you are none of these. If you wish to be free, know you are the Self, the witness of all these, the heart of awareness. Set your body aside. Sit in your own awareness. You will at once be happy, forever still, forever free. You have no caste. No duties bind you. Formless and free, beyond the reach of the senses, the witness of all things. So be happy!

Right or wrong, joy and sorrow, these are of the mind only. They are not yours. It is not really you who acts or enjoys. The heart of awareness, you are everywhere, forever free. Forever and truly free, the single witness of all things. But if you see yourself as separate, then you are bound. "I do this. I do that." The big black snake of selfishness has bitten you! "I do nothing." This is the nectar of faith, So drink and be happy! Know you are one, pure awareness.

With the fire of this conviction, burn down the forest of ignorance. Free yourself from sorrow, and be happy. Be happy! For you are joy, unbounded joy. You are awareness itself. Just as a coil of rope is mistaken for a snake, so you are mistaken for the world. If you think you are free, you are free. If you think you are bound, You are bound. For the saying is true: You are what you think.

The Self looks like the world. But this is just an illusion. The Self is everywhere. One. Still. The Heart of Awareness free. Perfect. The witness of all things, awareness without action, clinging or desire. Meditate on the Self. One without two, exalted awareness. Give up the illusion of the separate self. Give up the feeling, within or without, That you are this or that.

My friend, because you think you are the body, for a long time you have been bound. Know you are pure awareness. With this knowledge as your sword cut through your chains. And be happy!

For you are already free, without action or flaw, luminous and bright. You are bound only by the habit of meditation. Your nature is pure awareness. You are flowing in all things, and all things are flowing in you. But beware the narrowness of the mind! You are always the same, unfathomable awareness, limitless and free, serene and unperturbed.

Desire only your own awareness. The heart of awareness whatever takes form is false. Only the formless endures. When you understand the truth of this teaching, you will not be born again. For God is infinite, within the body and without, like a mirror, and the image in a mirror. As the air is everywhere, flowing around a pot and filling it, so God is everywhere, filling all things and flowing through them forever.'