

Thus Speaks Ashtavakra

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Thus Speaks Ashtavakra

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Introduction: The Uncompromising Truth of Ashtavakra

The *Ashtavakra Gita* is an ancient, relentless masterpiece of non-dual spiritual literature that cuts directly to the core of human existence. "**Thus Speaks Ashtavakra**" is an exploration of this profound, lightning-fast dialogue between the sage Ashtavakra and his disciple, King Janaka.

Unlike traditional spiritual texts that offer moral guidelines, practical life advice, or step-by-step meditations for self-improvement, Ashtavakra's message is radically one-pointed: you are already completely free. He boldly asserts that the physical universe, the personal ego, and even the very concepts of bondage and liberation are mere illusions—comparable to the mirage of a snake in a rope. Through this collection of teachings, the reader is invited to drop the exhausting burden of spiritual effort, step out of the illusion of being a "doer," and awaken instantly to their true, timeless nature as the Solitary Witness and pure Awareness.

Part 1: The Dawn of Awareness

Poem 1: Instruction on Self-Realization

*To walk the path of freedom, drop the senses' fragrant, sweet
deceit,*

Like ruby venom in golden honey, dragging the soul to defeat.

Turn inward where the silver bells of truth emit an eternal flame,

Embrace the scent of jasmine stillness, a kindness without a name.

You are not this fragile body of blue water, red fire, or rushing air,

*Nor the echoing space between them, nor thoughts that float
unaware.*

*You are pure Awareness, the silent Witness wrapped in a glowing
form,*

Untouched by the amber play of light and shadow, quiet and warm.

*Right and wrong are but jarring notes in the mind's loud, echoing
domain,*

*They are not your heavy burden, nor your joyous, brightly colored
chain.*

*Drop the illusion of the doer, the green serpent's hissing, deadly
bite,*

*One clear seeing — "I am That" — dissolves the indigo, starless
night.*

*Be happy in this knowing, let the loud drums of seeking finally
cease,*

*You were always free, smelling of lotus, in a white and perfect
peace.*

Poem 2: Joy of Self-Realization

*Now I rest spotless, beyond the ocean of Consciousness, vast and
blue,*

*Where once grey illusion duped me, now only golden Truth shines
true.*

*White waves rise and fall with a crash, yet never leave the emerald
sea,*

The universe appears in Me, yet I remain forever free.

As crimson threads weave the cloth without existence of their own,

*As the scent of sweet sugarcane fills the air, yet is never known
alone,*

*I am the essence hidden in all bright forms that come and go,
The silver in the shell, the dark snake imagined in the rope below.
Mirages shimmer like liquid glass on sands, but water they never
bring,
So too this world arises in Me, changing nothing in my eternal
spring.
Wonderful, wonderful is this boundless, radiant nature I Am,
Eternal, unchanging, the silent source of every colorful program.
No longer trapped, I shine like a sunburst as I already was,
A symphony of joy overflows, because I am the ultimate cause.*

Poem 3: Test of Realization

*Does craving for sweet perfume linger, does the screech of pain
remain?
Then realization is incomplete, still bound by a rust-colored chain.
The true sage walks through scarlet fire and blue ice with steady
grace,
Untouched by the noise of praise or blame, untouched by time or
space.
Desire for gold, for soft-scented beauty, for power's fleeting throne,
These hidden hooks pull you from the formless, quiet Alone.*

*Heaven and hell are but grey shadows on the mind's loud, echoing
wall,*

*The sage stands equanimous, watching the colorful autumn leaves
fall.*

Test yourself: is the harsh clatter of disturbance still here?

*Any preference for the scent of life or the stench of death held
dear?*

*Only when every clinging thread has burned in Wisdom's bright
yellow fire,*

Does the false self lie dead, and true freedom never tire.

Let the world throw its thunder, let it laugh or let it weep,

The realized one remains unmoved, in a violet silence deep.

Poem 4: Glorification of Self-Realization

I am the sovereign Lord of this universe, painted vast and wide,

I move as I please, unbound by rules or the ocean's crashing tide.

With a physical form or without, I neither come nor ever go,

*The world is but a scented dream that drifts in my eternal, silver
glow.*

I act, yet do not act; I taste sweet joy, yet it never touches Me,

Freedom flows like a roaring river, wild and utterly free.

Let the cosmos spin in neon chaos, let burning galaxies rise and fall,