

### **March 20, 2024: Class 39. Summary 34**

With Guru Krupa, Isvara Krupa we are all part of the Vanaprastha Culture and immersing ourselves in the essence of Ashtaavakra Gita. Shri Vijayji reviewed verses 23, 24 and 25 of Chapter 2 and completed teaching verse 1 of Chapter 3 on March 20, 2024, and this was class 39.

While reviewing verses 23 to 25 of Chapter 2, Shri Vijayji explained the deeper meaning of the verses from both a Universe perspective and from the perspective of the world of experiences.

From the Universe standpoint, our scriptures declare that the entire universe rises, exists and dissolves in the Brahman just like the waves arise, dance and merge back into the ocean. The Self or Brahman is the substratum on which the entire Universe functions.

From the perspective of the world of experiences, these 3 verses explain the modifications that happen based on desh (place), kaal (time) and vasthu (things). The world of experiences functions in our mind and intellect which function as long as the ego is present. When the ego is negated, there is no substratum for these experiences, and they merge back into the Supreme Self because without the Supreme Self the inert mind and intellect cannot function.

This is the inner meaning of the word *mayya ananta- mahaambhodau* which indicates the superimpositions of the world of plurality on the Supreme Self (just as the waves are superimpositions on the ocean). All entities possess 5 qualities which relate to the Supreme Self and the world.

Drk Drishya Viveka: This concept of the qualities of each entity is explained in Drk Drishya Viveka.

*asthi bhAti priyam rUpam nAma cetyamsa-pancakam*

*Adyatrayam brahma-rUpam jagad-rUpam tato dvayam (20).*

*Every entity has five aspects - it is, it shines, it is dear, its name, and its form. The first three belong to Reality and the latter two to the world. [Verse 20]*

Shri Vijayji explained the 5 qualities in detail as follows:

1. Asthi – existence
2. Bhaathi – experience, knowledge, awareness
3. Priyam – bliss.

These 3 qualities in an entity belong to the Supreme Self.

4. Naama – name
5. Roopa – form

These 2 qualities in an entity belong to the world of experiences.

Thus, in Chapter 2, Raja Janaka explained in detail his experiences upon reaching the realm of Self Realization and explains in astonishment the experiences of the Marvellous Self.

### **Chapter 3:**

Chapter 3 is a dialogue between Rshi Ashtaavakra and Raja Janaka wherein Rshi Ashtaavakra tests the depth of Realization of Raja Janaka. Pujya Gurudev explains that the ridicule that Rshi Ashtaavakra engages in questioning Raja Janaka would affect a student's vanity if the student is truly Self Realized.

### **Verse 1:**

In verse 1, Rshi Ashtaavakra questions Raja Janaka on the reason for him continuing as the King of Videha. Rshi Ashtaavakra points out that engaging in the duties of a king will cause anyone to compromise on staying in the realm of the Self as it involves engaging in accumulation of wealth, involvement in the pomp and show of life, passions and excitements of the court, worries of conducting the state's administration and maintaining law and order and many more duties.

Shri Vijayji explained that this question of Rshi Ashtaavakra is an example of *Sthanu Kanana Nyaya* which means *to keep checking again and again*.

If we reflect deep on this question by Rshi Ashtaavakra, we can understand that this is a common question we all have. What will happen to a realised master? How will they be able to function in this world? Will their actions create vasanas? And so many other questions.

This chapter will provide us answers to all these questions.

Hari Aum.

## **March 27, 2024: Class 40. Summary 35**

With Guru Krupa, Isvara Krupa we are all part of the Vanaprastha Culture and immersing ourselves in the essence of Ashtaavakra Gita. Shri Vijayji reviewed verse 1 of Chapter 3 and completed verse 2 of Chapter 3 on March 27, 2024, and this was class 40.

Shri Vijayji has been guiding us in the experience of Self Realization through the dialogue between Rshi Ashtaavakra and Raja Janaka wherein both the mahatmas are Realized masters. Shri Vijayji explained that the problem of our ego is cause hunting. Cause hunting cannot take us to the end of our search. Until the cause hunting ends, liberation is not possible.

### **Recap of Chapter 1:**

In Chapter 1 of Ashtaavakra Gita, Raja Janaka started the dialogue with 3 questions to Rshi Ashtaavakra:

1. *How can knowledge be acquired?*
2. *How can Liberation come?*
3. *How can renunciation be achieved?'*

The essence of these questions can be broken down as:

- How are we to withdraw our consciousness from our equipments (BMI)?
- How are we to experience the infinitude of the Self?

The remainder of Chapter 1 is Rshi Ashtaavakra's answers to these questions explaining the realm of Self and Witness Principle.

### **Recap of Chapter 2:**

In Chapter 2, Raja Janaka is marveling at the state of Realization that he is reveling in with a sense of astonishment. This is due to the teachings of Rshi Ashtaavakra in Chapter 1 which has taken the student (Raja Janaka) to a subjective experience of Reality. In his sense of astonishment and Realization, Raja Janaka is making us understand that a sincere reflective mind can readily feel the extensive cosmos as oneself (or one's Self).

### **Chapter 3:**

A guru is one who makes sure that we are on the right path. In chapter 3, Rshi Ashtaavakra checks Raja Janaka if his knowledge of Self is theoretical or if he has really experienced the Self and he employs the following ways:

1. Sharp ridicule of the student
2. Wounding the student's vanity
3. Making the student understand his or her own vanity.

### **Recap of Verse 1:**

Our spiritual journey thus far has taught us that materialistic wealth is not the real wealth which one should seek after. We all would have had this question in chapter 2, when Raja Janaka was explaining the experiences of the Self, as to why Raja Janaka continued as a King if he was Self realized. As if reading our minds and to make sure that Raja Janaka is on the right path, Rshi Ashtaavakra is asking the same question. In the words of Rshi Ashtaavakra, *why would you (Raja Janaka), having Self Realised, would feel passionate about materialistic wealth and continue as a King?*

Bhagwan Sankaracharya explains this quest for wealth in Bhaja Govindham in verses 2 and 29:

**Bhaja Govindham Verse 2:**

*Mudha Jaheehi Dhanaagamatrishhnaam Kuru Sadbuddhim Manasi Vitrishhnaam  
Yallabhase Nijakarmopaattam Vittam Tena Vinodaya Chittam  
(Bhaja Govindam Bhaja Govindam.....)*

*Oh, foolish one! Give up the passion to possess wealth and understand reality. Be content with what you get by your honest actions. Seek Govinda, Seek Govinda!!*

**Bhaja Govindham Verse 29:**

*Arthamanartham bhavaya nityam nastitataH sukhalesaH satyam,  
putradapi dhana bhajaM bhitiH sarvatraisa vihita ritiH  
(Bhaja Govindam Bhaja Govindam.....)*

*'Wealth is calamitous' thus reflect constantly. The truth is that there is not even an iota of happiness to be got from it. To the rich, there is fear even from one's own son. This is the way with wealth everywhere.*

Shri Vijayji explained that if we give up Artha and Kaama even for a single minute, we will be liberated. The attachment to money and desire (materialistic wealth and ABCs) is due to our prarabdha. We are made to believe that happiness is a specific thing that can be achieved from the world of plurality (ABCs). In reality, happiness does not belong to ABCs, but ABCs project that as if there is happiness in them and our ego believes that. This is our illusion.

**Verse 2 (of Ashtaavakra Gita):**

In verse 2, Rshi Ashtaavakra continues his ridicule of Raja Janaka. He also uses the same word that Raja Janaka used in chapter 2 – *Aho* but in a different concept – as if with a tone of pity or sorrow.

Rshi Ashtaavakra indicates to Raja Janaka that just like mistaking a seashell to be silver, due to the illusion of the senses, he might be passionate about wealth and has not had the real Experience of Self.

Rshi Ashtaavakra will be continuing his questioning (and ridicule) of Raja Janaka for the entirety of this chapter with various examples.

As students of Ashtaavakra Gita we should understand that this question by Rshi Ashtaavakra is a question (or ridicule) to us. Are we ready to analyse and reflect on our passion for wealth and are we ready to redirect our spiritual journey inwards? Are we collecting data or are we really practicing what we learn?

Hari Aum.

## April 3, 2024: Class 41. Summary 36

With Guru Krupa, Isvara Krupa we are all part of the Vanaprastha Culture and immersing ourselves in the essence of Ashtaavakra Gita. Shri Vijayji reviewed verse 1 and 2 of Chapter 3 and completed verse 3, started verse 4 of Chapter 3 on April 3, 2024, and this was class 41.

Hari Aum

Shri Vijayji started the class by quoting verses from Srimad Bhagavatham (canto 4, chapter 25, verse 29) to explain the pravritti marga and nivritti marga. This verse explains both the marga.

Shri Vijayji explains that Pravritti marga relates to the tamasic and rajasic path of life where a jiva lives through the materialistic experiences of sense enjoyment. In Nivritti marga, the same jiva follows the sattva path and understands that the world cannot give happiness and hence turns to the path of spiritual realization for permanent happiness.

*dharmo hy atrārtha-kāmau ca  
prajānando 'mṛtaṁ yaśaḥ  
lokā viśokā virajā  
yān na kevalino viduḥ (4.25.39)*

*In this material world, a householder's life brings all kinds of happiness in religion, economic development, sense gratification and the begetting of children, sons and grandsons. After that, one may desire liberation as well as material reputation. The householder can appreciate the results of sacrifices, which enable him to gain promotion to superior planetary systems. All this material happiness is practically unknown to the transcendentalists. They cannot even imagine such happiness.*

As a Vanaprastha, we have to listen to our Guru, renounce everything and follow the nivritti marga.

### **Recap of the verses 1 and 2 of chapter 3 of Ashtavakra Gita:**

Responding to the revelation about the experience of realizing the Self, Rshi Ashtaavakra is questioning Raja Janaka if his experience of the Self is real. The teacher teases his student here to get the confirmation from Raja Janaka of his deepest Realization.

In verse 1, Rshi Ashtaavakra asks if Raja Janaka has understood what Self Realization is. He questions that if Raja Janaka has come to acquire Self knowledge, then how can he engage in the life of sense enjoyment in a palace.

In verse 2, the teacher questions the student's ignorance by comparing the illusion of a seashell to silver. Rshi Ashtaavakra questions if Raja Janaka is claiming to be realised due to his ignorance.

Shri Vijayji explained this question of Rshi Ashtaavakra by quoting Verses from Srimad Bhagavad Gita

Chapter 6, verse 8:

*jñāna-vijñāna-ṭṛiptātmā kūṭa-stho vijitendriyaḥ  
yukta ityuchyate yogī sama-loṣṭāśhma-kāñchanaḥ*

In Bhagwan's words: *The yogi who are satisfied by knowledge and discrimination, and have conquered their senses, remain undisturbed in all circumstances. They see everything—dirt, stones, and gold—as the same.*

Similarly in Verse 24 of chapter 14, Bhagwan says:

*sama-duḥkha-sukhaḥ sva-sthaḥ sama-loṣṭāśhma-kāñchanaḥ  
tulya-priyāpriyo dhīras tulya-nindātma-sanstutiḥ*

*mānāpamānayos tulyas tulyo mitrāri-pakṣhayoḥ  
sarvārambha-parityāgī guṇātītaḥ sa uchyate*

*Those who are alike in happiness and distress; who are established in the self; who look upon a clod, a stone, and a piece of gold as of equal value; who remain the same amidst pleasant and unpleasant events; who are intelligent; who accept both blame and praise with equanimity; who remain the same in honor and dishonor; who treat both friend and foe alike; and who have abandoned all enterprises – they are said to have risen above the three guṇas.*

A yogi should be happy within and hence Rshi Ashtaavakra questions Raja Janaka's predisposition to the passion of wealth and sense enjoyment.

### **Verse 3 of Chapter 3 (Ashtaavakra Gita):**

In verse 3 of chapter 3, Rshi Ashtaavakra questions Raja Janaka by quoting the example of waves and sea. The teacher says that if Raja Janaka has realised that the Universe is the substratum of everything just like the sea is the substratum of the waves, then why is he toiling himself in the acquisition of material wealth. He could simply seek the substratum of everything, which is the Self, and resort to a life of meditation and contemplation instead of getting committed to the world of plurality.

### **Verse 4 of Chapter 3 (Ashtaavakra Gita):**

In verse 4, Rshi Ashtaavakra is wondering that the realization of the Self being Supremely beautiful, how can a student of Raja Janaka's calibre entangle himself in the sensuous objects and become impure.

Shri Vijayji will open this verse more and explain Rshi Ashtaavakra's teasing of Raja Janaka in our next class.

Hari Aum.

## **April 10, 2024: Class 42. Summary 37**

With Guru Krupa and Isvara Krupa we are all part of the Vanaprastha Culture and immersing ourselves in the essence of Ashtavakra Gita. Shri Vijayji reviewed verse 2 and 3 of Chapter 3 and completed verse 4 and 5 of Chapter 3 on April 10, 2024, and this was class 42.

Hari Aum.

Following the statements of exclamation given by Raja Janaka in Chapter 2 of Ashtavakra Gita, Rshi Ashtavakra, in chapter 3, is questioning and testing if Raja Janaka is indeed Self Realized. Shri Vijayji insisted, in the last class while teaching us verse 5, that these verses (questioning and testing) are for us to contemplate if we are on the right path.

### **Review of Verses 1 to 3:**

In verses 1 to 3, we can understand from Rshi Ashtavakra's questions that he is pointing to the world outside. He is comparing the Universe and all the jivas in the world to the sea and the waves respectively (verse 3). With his question in verse 2, he reminds Raja Janaka (and us) that what we see in the world of plurality are not what they seem to be (just a seashell mistaken for silver).

These questions are an indication that we have to reflect on what we are doing and fine tune ourselves to turn to Bhagwan. Shri Vijayji indicated that Ashtavakra Gita does not teach us knowledge or sadhana. This text is a reminder to turn inwards from the outside world and contemplate within. Are we completely depending on Bhagwan or are we sailing in superficial waters only without the courage to go deep within?

In Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayanada's words, if we think about and be devoted to Bhagwan, He will make sure that we get what we lack and at the same time will preserve what we get. Are we ready to completely devote ourselves to Bhagwan giving up our EGO?

Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 9, verse 22:

*ananyāśh chintayanto mām ye janāḥ paryupāsate  
teṣhām nityābhiyuktānām yoga-kṣhemam vahāmyaham*

*There are those who always think of Me and engage in exclusive devotion to Me. To them, whose minds are always absorbed in Me, I provide what they lack and preserve what they already possess.*

### **Verse 4 (of Chapter 3 of Ashtavakra Gita):**

Starting in verse 4, Rshi Ashtavakra questions Raja Janaka's (and our) sense of 'I'ness and 'Mine'ness. From this verse, we can see that Rshi Ashtavakra has changed his questions from the outside world to our inner world starting from the body.

In verse 4, Rshi Ashtavakra questions Raja Janaka's involvement in sense objects relating to the gross body. He questions as to why Raja Janaka chose to involve in physical sensuality if he knows that they make him impure.

With this question, we can understand that this world of physical sensuality is a storehouse of impurities. Pujya Gurudev writes that they (physical sensualities) generate agitations in the mind and thus make it impure. Lust (desires at the body level) will make sure that we are forever attached to the body with the sense of body consciousness resulting in agitation of the mind resulting in impurities in the mind.

Lust (body identification) → Agitations of the mind → Impurities in the mind

**Verse 5 (of Chapter 3 of Ashtavakra Gita):**

In verse 5, Rshi questions Raja Janaka's EGO.

Pujya Gurudev splits this sense of EGO into 'I' ness and 'Mine'. He explains that the sense of individuality experienced within oneself is 'I'ness and the same ego experienced in terms of objects around is 'Mine'ness. This sense of 'I' ness and 'Mine' ness together constitute the individuality and are the products of the ignorance of the nature of the Self.

Shri Vijayji explained this sense of ego with stories, understanding which, we can understand that Ego is 'nobody' and does not have any existence unless we promote it (which we all happily do).

Are we ready to get rid of the Ego (sense of individuality which is "I"ness and "Mine"ness).

Hari Aum.

### **April 17, 2024: Class 43. Summary 38**

With Guru Krupa and Isvara Krupa we are all part of the Vanaprastha Culture and immersing ourselves in the essence of Ashtavakra Gita. Shri Vijayji reviewed verse 4 and 5 of Chapter 3 and completed verse 6 of Chapter 3 on April 17, 2024, and this was class 43.

Hari Aum.

In Chapter 2, Raja Janka was exclaiming about his experiences on realizing the Self/Brahman. Following the statements of Raja Janka, to test his student, Rshi Ashtaavakra is questioning Raja Janaka with a tone of ridicule on his involvement in worldly pleasures and pursuits.

As students of Vedanta, we have to understand that Rshi Ashtavakra is directing these questions towards us, and we need to test ourselves by trying to answer these questions.

#### **Review of verses 4 and 5:**

In verse 4, Rshi Ashtavakra is questioning Raja Janaka on his sense of inner purity. If Raja Janaka is realised, then, Rshi Ashtavakra is questioning his entanglement in sensuous desires. He reasons out that the sensuous desires will result in an impure mind and intellect and with an impure mind, bondage to the materialistic world becomes inevitable. Having realised that the Self is pure Consciousness and supremely beautiful, Rshi Ashtavakra asks Raja Janaka his justification on involving in sensuous desires which would eventually lead to an impure mind.

A person of Self realization will know that the Self is in all beings and all beings are in Self (which Bhagwan Krishna explains in Srimad Bhagavad Gita Chapter 9, verse 4). In verse 5, Rshi Ashtavakra ridicules Raja Janaka's sense of ownership as he continues in his worldly passions. If already Self realized in the knowledge of non-dual Self, Rshi Ashtavakra questions Raja Janaka's sense of ownership in worldly activities.

#### **Srimad Bhagavd Gita: Chapter 9, verse 4:**

*mayā tatam idam sarvaṁ jagad avyakta-mūrtinā  
mat-sthāni sarva-bhūtāni na chāhaṁ teṣhvavasthitāḥ*

*This entire cosmic manifestation is pervaded by Me in My unmanifest form. All living beings dwell in Me, but I do not dwell in them.*

#### **Verse 6 of Ashtavakra Gita:**

In verse 6, Rshi Ashtavakra Gita questions Raja Janaka's involvement in sensuous desires and, particularly, in satiating his physical desires. Rshi Ashtavakra is strongly questioning his involvement in activities to derive physical pleasure. In Rshi strong words of ridicule, physical pleasures are a strong indication of body consciousness. A person who claims to be in a different plane of spiritual experience in himself should be beyond all sense of body consciousness. Hence, Raja Janaka's involvement in physical pleasures has raised this question and a doubt in Rshi Ashtavakra's mind about his claim to be Self realized.

Shri Vijayji explained, quoting Taittiriya Upanishad, explained the process of sense perception leading to the sense of enjoyment. For the perception of any sense, 3 criteria have to be fulfilled:

1. An object must be closer to the sense organ (the experienced)
2. The process of knowledge must happen (the experiencing)
3. The experiencer should be present and has to be ready to perceive the object/experience.

If all 3 factors are adjusted, the perception or experience of an object will happen.

Taittiriya Upanishad explains this as Priyam, Modha and Pramodha to explain the sense perceptions.

A vritti (thought) is formed when exposed to an object(s). This is called the experience of Priyam.

The second step is the owning of the object - called the modha.

The third step is experiencing the object through the sense organs – called the Pramodha. This is the highest pleasure. Then there is no separation.

In the next verses, Rshi Ashtavakra will take us deeper into our indulgences in the world of materialistic experiences.

Hari Aum.

## April 24, 2024: Class 44. Summary 39

With Guru Krupa and Isvara Krupa we are all part of the Vanaprastha Culture and immersing ourselves in the essence of Ashtavakra Gita. Shri Vijayji reviewed verse 5 and 6 of Chapter 3 and completed verse 7 of Chapter 3 on April 24, 2024, and this was class 44.

Hari Aum

After the exclamation about Self Realization by Raja Janaka, Rshi Ashtavakra is testing him with sharp ridicule. As we go through this chapter, we can realize that this ridicule is not for Raja Janaka but for us to wake us from our deep sleep state of ignorance and indulgence.

We should question ourselves if our goal in this life is Self Realization? We are aware that the purpose of this birth is Self Realization but are we engaging in activities that will take us to this purpose.

### Review of verse 5 and 6 of Ashtavakra Gita:

In verse 5, Rshi Ashtavakra ridicules our sense of ownership. As long as the sense of ownership ('I' ness and 'MINE' ness) is present, we have to understand that we are under the sway of the EGO or MAYA. With EGO present, there is no chance of Self Realization.

In verse 6, Rshi Ashtavakra starts questioning Raja Janaka's sensuous indulgences. He is surprised that a student of Vedanta and someone like Raja Janaka is involving and indulging in sensuous pleasures when these are pairs of opposites (sensuous indulgence vs Self Realization).

Are we involving in sensuous pleasures or indulging? The answer to this question will be the key in our journey towards realizing the Supreme Self.

This thought and the need to subdue our BMI from involving in sensuous pleasures and deny any urgency toward lust is described by Bhagwan Himself in Srimad Bhagavad Gita. It is not that our Sastras are against sexual (or sensuous) activities but it is the indulgence that is denied.

### Srimad Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 3, verse 43:

एवं बुद्धेः परं बुद्ध्वा संस्तभ्यात्मानमात्मना |  
जहि शत्रुं महाबाहो कामरूपं दुरासदम् || 43||

*evaṃ buddheḥ paraṃ buddhvā sanstabhyātmānam ātmanā  
jahi śhatruṃ mahā-bāho kāma-rūpaṃ durāsadam*

*Thus knowing the soul to be superior to the material intellect, O mighty armed Arjun, subdue the lower self (senses, mind, and intellect) by the higher self (strength of the soul), and kill this formidable enemy called lust.*

### Srimad Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 3, verse 37:

श्रीभगवानुवाच |  
काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भवः ||  
महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् || 37||

*śhrī bhagavān uvācha  
kāma eṣha krodha eṣha rajo-guṇa-samudbhavaḥ  
mahāśhano mahā-pāpmā viddhyenam iha vairiṇam*

*The Supreme Lord said: It is lust alone, which is born of contact with the mode of passion, and later transformed into anger. Know this as the sinful, all-devouring enemy in the world.*

### **Verse 7 of Ashtavakra Gita:**

In verse 7, Rshi Ashtavakra continues to question OUR indulgences in sensuous pleasures and the world of materialistic experiences. These experiences include our pursuit of pleasure, position and possessions.

We need to understand that sensuous pleasures are enemies to Self Knowledge. Involving unnecessarily in sensual gratifications will never help us in our purpose of life.

Shri Vijayji advised us in the last class that we must treat every day as our last (antha kaalam). This thought should not instigate fear in us but rather help us to be sincere in our sadhana and should inspire us towards the Supreme Self.

Since our senses are programmed to go outside, it is their nature to pull our subtle body towards the sense objects. Through regular and intense sadhana, we can change the quality of our thoughts, quantity of our thoughts and direct the mind and intellect within. We have to be dispassionate and not attached to worldly experiences.

Shri Vijayji taught to focus on one critical word from each verse of Chapter 3 of Ashtavakra Gita.

In verse 1: **Dhirasya** – *poised in wisdom*. In the words of Pujya Gurudev, Knowledge of the inner Self is wisdom.

In verse 2: **Lobha** – *Greed*. Greed is the antonym to Viveka and a precursor to ignorance.

In verse 3: **Iva** – *like*. Understand that we are like waves (jiva) in a sea (Self) and that our purpose is to merge back in the Self instead of doing everything to go away from it.

In verse 4: **Maalinyam** – *Impurities*. Sensuous objects and experiences make us impure.

We have to understand that all the experiences of the world are inside us and not outside. If we realize this engaging in the right Sadhana, Self Realization in this life is not impossible.

Hari Aum.

## May 1, 2024: Class 45. Summary 40

With Guru Krupa and Isvara Krupa we are all part of the Vanaprastha Culture and immersing ourselves in the essence of Ashtavakra Gita. Shri Vijayji reviewed verse 6 and 7 of Chapter 3 and completed verse 8 of Chapter 3 on May 1, 2024, and this was class 45.

Hari Aum

In chapter 2 of Ashtavakra Gita, Raja Janaka used the word *ascharyam* to indicate his excitement to describe his state of Realization. In reply, Rshi Ashtavakra uses the same word 4 times in chapter 3 (verses 5 to 8) to tease Raja Janaka about his revelation on Self Realization.

Review of Verse 5 to 7:

In verse 5: Rshi Ashtavakra uses the word *ascharyam* to tease Raja Janaka's sense of ownership ('I'ness and 'mine'ness).

In verse 6 and 7: The same word is used to indicate Raja Janaka's passion to sexual and sensual pleasures.

By indicating the indulgence in sensual pleasures, Rshi Ashtavakra is indicating our attachment to the equipments – BMI.

Bhagwan Krishna stresses this attachment in many verses in chapter 8 of Srimad Bhagavad Gita.

### **Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 8, Verse 5 – Relinquish the body**

*anta-kāle cha mām eva smaran muktvā kalevaram  
yaḥ prayāti sa mad-bhāvaṁ yāti nāstyatra sanśhayaḥ*

*Those who relinquish the body while remembering Me at the moment of death will come to Me. There is certainly no doubt about this.*

### **Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 8, Verse 10 – Be steady**

*prayāṇa-kāle manasāchalena  
bhaktyā yukto yoga-balena chaiva  
bhruvor madhye prāṇam āveśhya samyak  
sa taṁ param puruṣham upaiti divyam*

*One who at the time of death, with unmoving mind attained by the practice of Yog, fixes the prāṇ (life-airs) between the eyebrows, and steadily remembers the Divine Lord with great devotion, certainly attains Him.*

### **Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 8, Verse 27 – Be a yogi to escape this bondage**

*naite sriti pārtha jānan yogī muhyati kaśhchana  
tasmāt sarveṣhu kāleṣhu yoga-yukto bhavārjuna*

Yogis who know the secret of these two paths, O Parth, are never bewildered. Therefore, at all times be situated in Yog (union with God).

**Ashtavakra Gita: Chapter 3, verse 8:**

In verse 8, Rshi Ashtavakra teases and accuses Raja Janaka about his fear of the dissolution of the gross body. Fear of dissolution indicates the attachment to the gross body and the resultant sensual pleasures that can be obtained with this body as the equipment. One who is attached to the body will fear losing it.

Shri Vijayji explained this attachment to the BMI with an example of an instance from Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi when a seeker asked about if he would be born after death. Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi replied that if we think we will die, then rebirth is inevitable. Because, thinking that we will die indicates that we still believe that we are the body. It is the body that dies while we, as the Atman, will never die. Jiva, which is no different from the Paramatma, has no beginning (birth) and hence does not have an end (death) also. We should firmly believe this if our goal is Self Realization.

All our sadhana should lead us to detachment of the gross and subtle bodies. Pujya Gurudev has indicated that if we think we are enjoying meditation, even that is an indication of our attachment as enjoyment is possible only with the BMI. Transcending BMI is the only way to Self Realization.

Hari Aum.

## May 8, 2024: Class 46. Summary 41

With Guru Krupa and Isvara Krupa we are all part of the Vanaprastha Culture and immersing ourselves in the essence of Ashtavakra Gita. Shri Vijayji reviewed verse 8 of Chapter 3 and completed verse 9 of Chapter 3 on May 8, 2024, and this was class 46.

Hari Aum

Shri Vijayji summarised the themes of the 3 chapters of Ashtavakra Gita that we have reflected upon so far.

Chapter 1 of Ashtavakra Gita is about the teaching of Rshi Ashtavakra to his disciple Raja Janaka.

Chapter 2 of Ashtavakra Gita is the description of the experience of Self Realization by Raja Janaka.

In chapter 3, Rshi Ashtavakra is testing his disciple if his experience was subjective or objective.

### Review of verse 8:

Rshi Ashtavakra is expressing his surprise as to how one who is vivid in his experience of Self Realization can indulge in sense pleasures. Rshi Ashtavakra is surprised that Raja Janaka is giving in to the sense pleasures of the body. This is because **Self Realization is the discrimination of the real from the unreal, eternal from ephemeral.** This discrimination along with the aspiration for Liberation should make one unattached to the equipments of BMI whereas here, Raja Janaka continues to involve in self pleasures.

This concept of not being attached to the body (and Mind and Intellect) is explained by Bhagwan himself in Chapter 2 of Bhagavad Gita (one verse each for understanding this at the body level and soul level).

Bhagavad Gita Chapter 2, verse 27:

*jātasya hi dhruvo mṛityur dhruvaṃ janma mṛitasya cha  
tasmād aparihārye 'rthe na tvarṃ śhochitum arhasi*

*Death is certain for one who has been born, and rebirth is inevitable for one who has died. Therefore, you should not lament over the inevitable.*

Since death and birth are inevitable for a jiva, Bhagwan advises that grieving is unnecessary.

Bhagavad Gita Chapter 2, verse 20:

*na jāyate mriyate vā kadāchin  
nāyaṃ bhūtvā bhavitā vā na bhūyaḥ  
ajo nityaḥ śhāśhvato 'yaṃ purāṇo  
na hanyate hanyamāne śharīre*

*The soul is neither born, nor does it ever die; nor having once existed, does it ever cease to be. The soul is without birth, eternal, immortal, and ageless. It is not destroyed when the body is destroyed.*

Jiva is anadhi and Anantha. It has neither birth nor death. Hence, fear of death and losing this body (and mind and intellect) is not needed.

### **Verse 9 of AG:**

A Self realized person is termed as a wise person and his characteristic is explained here. A wise person maintains his inner equipoise in both favourable and adverse situations. Pujya Gurudev explains that this inner equipoise is obtained by a continuous experience of the Higher plane of Consciousness. This continuous experience results in the wise person getting identified with the Self *alone (kevalam)*. Hence, a man of wisdom *acts and never reacts*.

Shri Vijayji explained that a person reacts because of various factors like attachments, expectations, likes and dislikes. These factors arise from the memory and if a person succumbs to the worldly experiences, he reacts rather than acting (responding).

Shri Vijayji explained that the abhyasa of vairagya is important. We should understand the goal in life (which is Self Realization). This will make sure that we are not affected by the materialistic world of experiences.

Hari Aum.

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## May 15, 2024: Class 47. Summary 42

With Guru Krupa and Isvara Krupa we are all part of the Vanaprastha Culture and immersing ourselves in the essence of Ashtavakra Gita. Shri Vijayji reviewed verse 9 of Chapter 3 and completed verse 10 of Chapter 3 on May 15, 2024, and this was class 47.

Hari Aum.

Pujya Gurudev summarises that the theme in Ashtavakra Gita is the glory of the Man of Perfection as to how he plays in the infinite world, amidst the crowds of miserable mortal entities.

In the previous class, Shri Vijayji summarised the three chapters that we have learnt so far:

Chapter 1 of Ashtavakra Gita is about the teaching of Rshi Ashtavakra to his disciple Raja Janaka.

Chapter 2 of Ashtavakra Gita is the description of the experience of Self Realization by Raja Janaka.

In chapter 3, Rshi Ashtavakra is testing his disciple if his experience was subjective or objective.

### Review of verse 9:

In verse 9, Rshi Ashtavakra says that even if a wise person (Self realised Man of Perfection) is feted or tormented/abused, he is still aware of the true nature. Nothing outside in the materialistic world bothers him and he is established in the Supreme Self. He is not pleased with favourable situations nor is he upset or angry in unfavourable situations. He knows that he is the unlimited Sat-Cit-Ananda paramatma.

This state of the Man of Perfection (Stitha prajna lakshana) is described by Bhagwan in Srimad Bhagavad Gita.

Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 2 verse 56:

*duḥkheṣhv-anudvigna-manāḥ sukheṣhu vigata-sprihaḥ  
vīta-rāga-bhaya-krodhaḥ sthita-dhīr munir uchyate*

*One whose mind remains undisturbed amidst misery, who does not crave for pleasure, and who is free from attachment, fear, and anger, is called a sage of steady wisdom.*

Shri Vijayji explained that we have to develop these 3 qualities – undisturbed amidst misery, not to crave for pleasure and free of attachment. When these 3 qualities are developed, there can be no fear and anger. This person is a sthitha prajna lakshana.

### Verse 10 of Ashtavakra Gita:

A Man of Perfection watches his own body as if it were another's. It means that his body and the world of existence are the same for him. He is not attached to his body and treats it as an equipment only to function in this world. Due to this attitude, he is not affected by anything that happens to the body.

By this statement, Rshi Ashtavakra indirectly indicates that Raja Janaka should be detached from his bodies (gross and subtle) and cannot indulge in sense pleasures.

Pujya Gurudev has explained this with the example of a dreamer and waker. A wise man Perfection observing his own body is like a person observing his own dream not as a dreamer but as a waker.

Shri Vijayji explained this with a story of a sadhu and his encounter with Sikander Badshah. When the sadhu said that he will see Sikander beheading him through Sikander's eyes, it clearly indicates that the sadhu was treating his body as an equipment only and did not give any more importance to it other than a tool.

We have to understand that the whole world is mitya and everything is only a dream / an imagination.

The initial steps in this journey are 3-fold:

1. Reduce the quantity of the thoughts.
2. Increase the quality of thoughts.
3. Change the direction of the thoughts from going out into the world to inward toward Bhagwan.

Hari Aum.

Please note that we do not have classes on Wednesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>. We will reconvene in September after the summer break.

Have a joyous and reflective summer.

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