

## Be Victorious Over Self-Deception

Because we are approaching the final days of this cycle of time, it's important not to waste a moment in any activities that are diversions from the realization of the Self and the surrender to the God-Self of all egoic concerns, of all belief in duality, of the ego complex in its entirety. It's important that the consciousness return to its pure original divine state without any karmic bondage remaining and that the soul be able to experience this final period in a state of freedom from fear, from suffering, from illusion, from attachment, from any other gross or subtle addiction to or enmeshment with the phenomenal plane that is now in the process of disappearing, dissolving, collapsing—returning to its original nature as light. All that we consider a material world is just frozen light; and, as those light waves (those quantum wave functions) de-collapse, then the consciousness itself will directly perceive the world once again literally turning to light—with the recognition that it was never anything but that and that light is never anything but the projection of your own consciousness.

It is this freedom from the ego that is the ultimate prize of life—the ultimate victory of spirit over matter and its illusory processes with which the soul may have been identified and thus captured as a character in the matrix, feeling as if it has lost its freedom and become subject to egoic attitudes that are not in the control of its will. Whether they are attitudes of greed, domination, or attachment; security needs; erotic possessiveness; mother complex; or any of the various ways in which the ego keeps the consciousness small, stunted, and focused obsessively on particular goals that have no relevance to the ultimate destiny of the soul's fulfillment . . . those simply create further karmic obstacles, and we want to be free of the pattern in which such obstacles repeat. Those obstacles come in the form of narratives. They come in the form of emotionally charged thoughts about the character—the phenomenal-appearing bodily being—as if that were what you are and all that you are. So the practice of yoga is the practice of becoming free—returning to our original freedom that we have never lost but that we have voluntarily forgotten about, becoming hooked by the enjoyment of our suffering and of the ego's illusory existence.

It may be useful to have a larger panorama of the recognition that our consciousness pre-existed this body that we are now using as a vehicle and that our consciousness will continue to be when this body has long ceased to exist. Even when we ourselves have long forgotten that we were ever the people we think we are now, our consciousness will continue. The eternal nature of consciousness, as it is revealed through the silencing of the mind, brings a kind of peace and a luminous power to transcend the phenomenal identification of a being experiencing the resistance of other beings in conflict, confusion, and incoherence. There is a power to bring the mind to, and keep the mind in, a state of repose in which the healing intelligence and love of the Absolute Self can fill the space of the environment, enabling all beings to share in the serenity and equanimity of consciousness that is again at home in the heart of the Universal Absolute Self.

We are on a journey of letting go, a journey in which we are undergoing a rite of passage of death and rebirth. But the willingness to die to the ego must be fully and wholeheartedly accepted so that the consciousness can transcend and know itself beyond its dualistic paradigm of reality. To know the whole of consciousness and its source, its luminous principle as the Self (not the character in the world) . . . this is the shift of locus of consciousness that is required to

enter a state of freedom in which those final challenges (those tests of our courage, our love, our purity of spirit, our generosity) will determine the ultimate destiny of the soul as this cycle completes its circuit. This is the time in which we should be fully focused on this one priority.

So I'm going to return a little bit to *Ashtavakra*, which we have been reading. But I'm going to skip to chapter 5. Ashtavakra said, "You are free from contact with anything whatsoever. Therefore, pure as you are, what do you want to renounce? Just destroy the body complex and in this way enter into the state of [ego] dissolution."

I want to go back and read the last shloka in chapter 4. It's a short chapter with only six statements; but the last one, I think, is the key to the whole *Ashtavakra* text. It's stated in a gendered form, but I'll read it as it is. "Rare is the man who knows the Self as one without a second, and as lord of the universe. He does what he considers worth doing and has no fear from any quarter." So there's a certainty, a power of self-knowledge, that gives a kind of poise and confidence and presence because it is based on an internally accurate faith in the action, whatever it might be, or the emission of energy (of thought, of love) that will produce the effect that will bring the optimal outcome to all beings. And it is done regardless of conventional rules or morality, but as a knowledge of that which is beyond duality.

Now, returning to chapter 5, shloka 2, "The universe rises from you like bubbles rising from the sea. Thus know the Self to be one and in this way enter into the state in which the ego dissolves." . . . "The universe, because it is unreal, being manifested like a rope that you perceive wrongly as a snake, does not exist in you who are pure of egoic thoughts, even though it is present to the senses. Therefore in this way of purity of vision enter into the state of dissolution."

Shloka 4: "Know that you are perfect and the same whether in misery or happiness, hope or despair, life or death. Therefore in this way, in which no change can touch you, enter into the dissolution of the ego."

That was chapter 5. Now let me do chapter 6 because it's also short. Ashtavakra said, "Boundless as space am I. The phenomenal world is just like a jar containing space [when it breaks, the space outside and inside are the same]. This is knowledge, this is *gyana*. So it [the world] has neither to be renounced nor accepted nor destroyed." It's simply an illusory bubble that will pop on its own.

"I am like the ocean and the universe is simply a wave. This is knowledge. It has neither to be renounced, nor accepted, nor destroyed [because it is unreal to begin with]."

"I am one who is mother-of-pearl but gives the illusion that the universe is silver [but it's not; it's really the unreal mother-of-pearl]. This is knowledge." This is the manifestation of the world as a fiction, but a fiction in the mind of God that makes it sacred.

And then shloka 4, "I am indeed in all beings and all beings are in me. This is knowledge. So nothing is to be renounced or accepted or destroyed."

This is the one key point of all yogic philosophy: God is the Self of everyone. There is no other being, no other Self, no other consciousness than the One. You have to be that because there is no alternative, there is no other. That Self is in every being, and every being is in the Self. The Self is all of this—all-encompassing, all-pervading, and at the same time the Zero Point that is unmanifest and transcendent and completely inconceivable. When the mind's attempt to grasp, to control, to understand, to conceptualize and figure out its structure and its dynamic and logic, etc. . . . when that is dropped away (all efforts to understand the Self as if it were an other or an object or something separate from what you are) . . . when all of that dualistic intentionality falls away, that is the moment of realization that God is the Self. It is this surrender of the particular story that manifests as your narrative of who you are—it is the willingness to drop all of that—that will reveal the essence of that which is literally the salvation of consciousness. There will be a moment when salvation is beyond urgent for every being, and it is important to know that it is your right to realize this here and now.

I think that's basically all that I wanted to communicate this evening. Can we put the bench up and see if there are any questions on any of this or on the retreat that we just held or on anything else that is relevant to your spiritual development? The abyss is open.

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Teaching continues:

How many felt tonight's teaching was helpful? Some egos will perceive the rigor of the practice of mental stillness as an impossibility, as a demand for perfection. It's not actually that at all. It is simply an opening of the heart to the love of that power that can bring beauty and goodness and reason and unity to a world in conflict. Without being free of internal conflict, we cannot offer that blessing or that service to the world. When we are able to silence the mind and keep the focus on God as that ultimate presence that is the very principle of consciousness itself (within us and everywhere), that power will be activated by our very will to give ourselves to it. And our willingness to resonate with the presence of God from our core, from our heart, from our very being that is not localized, becomes the grace that frees us from the ego.

So what the ego mind might have thought was impossible or even inconceivable simply becomes our unfolding nature in its true revelation of our being—nothing that was ever extraneous to our reason for coming into the world. This is what we are, we are children of God. We have the power to abide in God-Consciousness. It is our birthright. But we have to overcome the tendency to give in to a lower fictional nature and let ourselves be taken over by anger, fear, sorrow, greed, lust, attachment—any of those false attitudes that lower our consciousness. If we remain free of those tendencies, the power of God is given to continue growing and expanding the power of the energy field that emanates from one who is in that state of surrender.

May you all gain that power of consciousness that can never again be defeated by the ego's delusional tendencies. This is our responsibility, and it is the great reward of living a godly life.

May you all earn that most precious of all blessings.

Namaste.