

Message 433

Paris, 30.12.2021

Epilogue to Message 77 & 78 (Ashtavakra Gita) The Story of Ashtavakra and the writing of the Ashtavakra Gita

During the recent Sunday Satsangh it was noted that the interesting story of Ashtavakra, narrated whenever the Messages 77 & 78 are picked for a retreat, has not yet been recorded as Message. Guruji therefore wished the story now be recorded as Message 433 so that it is available to all Kriyabans now and in future.

Kahola, a Vedantic scholar and his wife Sujata lived their lives happily in the kingdom of Mithila.

When Sujata became pregnant with a child it became the practice of Kahola to recite from the vedas and vedanta to Sujata each night as she lay with their baby in her womb..

This was an ancient vedic tradition and ritual known as *garbhasanskar*- wherein the mother and the child are both exposed to some holy and protective vibrations *mantras* daily for safe delivery and intelligent progeny. It is interesting that this practice is still prevalent in certain parts of India and in a different form in Israel.

Sujata's baby listened from the womb and imbibed his father's words.

One day, when Kahola was reciting as usual, the baby interrupted and corrected his father 8 times. Kahola, like many scholars, was proud of his scholarship and took this as a grave insult and, in rage, shouted "What! You, my son, yet unborn, yet unlearned in the scriptures, dare correct ME?!!" "I curse you!!", he shouted, "May you be born with a twisted body having eight bends!!" Sujata, in great distress, pleaded with her husband and begged him to withdraw the curse, saying that the child was innocent and had unintentionally spoken and be kindly forgiven. But Kahola, who's ego was manifesting as Man, Scholar and father, was not mollified and refused to withdraw the curse.

In due course the child was born and as cursed by his father he had a twisted body with eight bends and hence was named Ashtavakra - meaning, "the eight bended one".

Ashtavakra, was not an ordinary child. Though deformed in body, his brain was blessed with great Intelligence from birth.

When the child was twelve years old a momentous event took place.

Janaka, the King of Mithila, was a man of great wisdom. One day, he had a restless night, tortured by a strange dream. He dreamt that he was a beggar and had to beg for food in order to live; and that everywhere he went, people refused to feed him. After a lot of hardship he was able to somehow get half a piece of roti (Indian bread) to satiate his hunger. As he sat down under a tree to eat the roti, a kite (big bird) suddenly swooped down and snatched that piece of roti too. Startled by this dream, he woke up very frightened, his heart beating fast, and his body sweating in terror.

Then he saw that he was in his own bed, surrounded by royal luxury and his queen was by his side, sleeping peacefully.

He sat up trembling, still unable to shake off terrible feeling he had just experienced. A strange and profound question then occurred to him: "Am I really the king Janaka of Mithila who has dreamt that he is a beggar or am I, in fact, a beggar seeing the dream of being a king?"

Later that day in court, he gathered his ministers around him, shared the dream that he had experienced the previous night and asked “Tell me, for I do not understand, is it that I am Janaka, the King of Mithila, and had dreamt I was a beggar, or am I a beggar who is now dreaming that he is Janaka- the king?”

The courtiers all said, “Of course, your Highness, you are the King and that was but only a bad dream” But when asked to prove it no one could convincingly prove that they (ministers) too were not part of the dream.

The King announced that anyone in his Kingdom who could tell him the truth about the mystery of what is the reality, would be welcomed and rewarded.

Many were the scholars and pundits who came to the court to try and explain the puzzle to the King, but no one could answer to the King’s satisfaction.

Then, one day, the palace guards came to the king and said “There is a boy of 12 in a small village who says he can answer your question”. But he cannot walk because of his in-born deformities. The king sent palanquin to bring him in.

When the palanquin was placed on the ground, a twisted young body crawled out and sat on the floor facing the King.

The courtiers saw this strange boy and then they all burst into loud laughter, pointing and ridiculing the figure that was in front of them. The boy was calm as the laughter rose louder and louder. When they stopped, the boy went into a roar of louder laughter. And everyone present, were startled.

When the boy stopped, the King asked “Young man, I can understand that your strange appearance made my courtiers laugh, but then why were YOU laughing?”

The boy replied “I am laughing because your advisers are just cobblers disguised as Brahmins!”

“What do you mean?”, the King asked. And the boy replied “A brahmin is one who is in the Energy of Understanding, whereas these people judge others, as they judged me, - by outward appearance, which cobblers do, when they judge the quality of a piece of leather for making a pair of shoes.”

Then the boy started laughing again and the King asked him why he was laughing now. “Because”, the boy said, “You are also a fool too, for you have judged that these cobblers are Brahmins !

The King was stunned by the fearlessness and the frank wisdom radiating from this boy’s Being.

The King then came down from his throne and sat on the floor in front of Astavakra. And with folded hands, said, “Oh Sage, please tell me some words of wisdom”.

Ashtavakra then started to share the profound wisdom of Life and Love, beyond the wicked activities of the myths and mischiefs called ‘mind-ego’.

This intense dialogue on the energy of Understanding between the **Satsishya- King Janaka** and the **SatGuru Process functioning in the body of sage Astavakra, is known as the Ashtavakra Gita.**

**Jai Ashtavakra
Jai Janaka**