

Essence
of
Trípura Rahasya

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Salutations

I bow down before the Goddess Tripura, who is in essence absolute, unbounded joy. Being infinite, pure consciousness itself, she herself a mirror of pure consciousness reflects this wonderful, kaleidoscopic world in it.

Supreme purpose

Real reward in life is
destruction of unhappiness
and the gaining of joy and
happiness.

That cannot be happiness
which is tinged with misery.

To a discriminating man, pain is apparent in all aspects of life.

Whatever has the impress of misery on it cannot be good. Such are wealth, children, wife, kingdom, treasury, army, fame, learning, intellect, body, beauty and prosperity. For they are all transient and already in the

jaws of death, otherwise called time. Can that be good which is only the seed ready to sprout as pain and grow into misery? The right means lies beyond these. However, the desire to possess them is born of delusion.

Objectless transcendental
Consciousness is one without
a second and is filled with

Bliss, because it is totally free from the least trace of unhappiness.

The sum total of all happiness of all the living beings has taken shape as the Supreme One because She is obviously desired by all; and She is no other than the Self, which consists of pure Bliss, because the Self

is the most beloved of every being.

For the sake of the Self people discipline their bodies and subdue their desires; all sensual pleasures are mere sparks of Bliss inherent in the Self.

For sensual pleasures are similar to a sense of relief felt

on unburdening oneself of a crushing load, or to the peace of sleep. Pure Consciousness is indeed Bliss because it is the only one sought for.

People do not recognize the Bliss inhering as their Self, because of their ignorance. They always associate pleasure with incidents.

Nature of bondage

The feeling of a need to work in order to gain happiness is the misery of miseries.

How can there be pleasure or removal of pain so long as it continues?

Should there still be a few pleasurable moments for person having kartutva, they are similar to those enjoyed by one who, while writhing with an abdominal pain, inhales the sweet odor of flowers.

Desire is the seed of the tree of misery and never fails in its fruits.

Respite gained by the fulfilment of one desire before another takes its place, is not happiness, because the seeds of pain are still latent.

The reason for the infatuation is the oft-repeated mental picture. So whoever finds pleasure in anything, the beauty therein is only mental imagery.

Whatever has the impress of misery on it cannot be good. However, the desire to possess them is born of delusion.

Even though afflicted by misery, he does not cease further indulgence in those causes antecedent to it (namely, wealth, etc.); just as a jackass pursues a she-

ass even if kicked a hundred times by her, so also is it with the man and the world.

Confounding dispassion (vairagya) with misery, and the pleasures of the world with happiness (sukha), a man suffers in the cycle of births and deaths, while powerful ignorance prevails.

The causal ignorance is said to be of the nature of absence of knowledge of the wholeness of one's own Self.

That kind of knowledge of the Self which exists as the non-wholeness (of the Self) can alone be the causal ignorance of the nature of 'I exist here at this time'. That is the embryonic seed from which

shoots forth the sprout of the body as the individualized self (growing up into the gigantic tree of the cycle of births and deaths). The cycle of births and deaths does not end unless ignorance is put to an end. This can happen only with a perfect knowledge of the Self, not otherwise.

Personal effort necessary

Man is quickly benefited if he turns away from dry, ruinous logic and engages in purposeful discussion.

Appropriate effort must follow right discussion; for a man profits according to the zeal accompanying his efforts.

Guided by proper deliberation,
accompanied by zeal and
engaged in individual efforts,
one must make one's own
unfailing way to
emancipation.

There are said to be many
ways to that end. Choose
that one among them which
is the surest. Choice is made
by right discussion and

according to the experience of the wise. Then begin the practice immediately.

The current notion that one cannot escape one's destiny is applicable only to weak-minded and senseless wastrels. Destiny seizes and holds only senseless people.

Yogis who practice control of breath conquer fate. Even fate cannot impose its fruits on yogis.

Conforming to and following nature, destiny forms part of nature. Nature again is only the contrivance for enforcing God's will. His purpose is always sure and cannot be prevented. Its edge can,

however, be blunted by devotion to Him and if it is not so blunted, the predisposing cause must therefore be considered a most powerful factor in a man's life.

Therefore, eschew high vanity and take refuge in God. He will spontaneously take you to the Highest State.

This is the first rung in the ladder to the pedestal of Bliss. Nothing else is worthwhile.

God, the Lord of the Universe, must also be able to protect and elevate His own creatures. Surrender therefore unreservedly unto Him.

God, the Lord of the Universe,
the Dweller in our hearts,
knows everything and soon
bestows appropriate fruits. In
the case of other kinds of
devotees, God has to await
the course of destiny — that
being His own ordainment;
whereas for the selfless
devotee, God, the Lord and
the sole refuge, is all in all
and takes care of him
without reference to the

devotee's pre-destiny or His own ordained laws. He compensates the devotee quickly, and that is because He is supreme and self-contained without depending on anything else. Pre-destiny or divine will is powerless before Him. Everyone knows how He set aside pre-destiny and divine laws in the case of His famous devotee, Markandeya.

Grace means the dawn of Atma-Vichara

The world has been in the coils of ignorance from time immemorial; how can there be discernment so long as ignorance lasts?

Discernment is, however, gained by proper methods,

the most effective of which is also the best of all, and that is the supreme grace of the Goddess who inheres as the Heart Lotus in every one. Who has ever accomplished any good purpose without Her grace?

Investigation is the Sun for chasing away the dense darkness of indolence. It is

generated by the worship of God with devotion. When the Supreme Devi is well pleased with the worship of the devotee, She turns into vichara in him and shines as the blazing Sun in the expanse of his Heart. Therefore that Tripura, the Supreme Force, the Being of all beings, the blessed, the highest, the one consciousness of Siva, who

abides as the Self of self,
should be worshipped
sincerely, exactly as taught
by the Guru. The forerunner
of such worship is devotion
and praiseworthy
earnestness.

The Master Wizard is
Mahesvara. He being the
creator of the universe, all
are deluded by Him. He with

whom God is graciously pleased is endowed with Mahavidya, the supreme knowledge by means of which his crossing of the Ocean of Maya is certain. Other methods are also put forward as serving this supreme end, but they are bound to fail in their purpose if the Lord's grace be not forthcoming. Therefore worship the Primal Cause of

the universe as the starting point; be devoted to Him; He will soon enable you to succeed in your attempts to destroy the illusion.

Therefore, be wise, and worship the one pure, unblemished Transcendence. If unable to comprehend this pure state, one should worship God in the concrete

form which is most agreeable to Him; in this way, too, one is sure to reach the goal, though gradually. Though one attempted it in millions of births, one would not advance except in one of these two ways.

The beneficent work of the self-inhering divine grace is finished when the inward

turning of one's mind
increases in strength day by
day.

When the Supreme Mother's
grace descends then one
becomes totally indifferent to
pleasure and one's mind
entirely gets absorbed in the
practical investigation of the
Truth. Such a state is
impossible for anyone

without the grace of God,
because the mind engaged in
the practical search for truth
is the surest means of
emancipation. Countless aids
will not give emancipation if
an earnest search for Truth is
not made.

Bhakti Yoga excels all else

Of all the requisites for wisdom, Divine Grace is the most important. He who has entirely surrendered himself to the Goddess of his own Self is sure to gain wisdom readily. Rama! This is the best of all the methods.

This method does not require other aids to reinforce its efficiency, as other methods

do for accomplishing the end. There is a reason for it. Pure Intelligence illumining all has cast a veil of ignorance of Her own over all. Her true nature is evident only after removing this veil by discrimination. This is hard for those whose minds are directed outward; but it is easy, sure and quick, for devotees engrossed in the Goddess of the Self to the exclusion of all else.

An intense devotee, though endowed with only a little discipline of other kinds (e.g., dispassion), can readily understand the truth though only theoretically, and expound it to others. Such exposition helps him to imbue those ideas and so he absorbs the truth. This ultimately leads him to identify all individuals with Siva and he is no longer affected by pleasure or pain. All-round identification with Siva makes him the best of

Jnanis and a Jivanmukta (emancipated here and now). Therefore bhakti yoga (the way of devotion) is the best of all and excels all else.

Creator

The universe must have a Creator, and He must be an intelligent principle, but He cannot be of any known type because of the vastness of the creation. His power is

past understanding and is dealt with in the scriptures, whose authority is incontrovertible.

Scriptures speak of the unique Creator, the Lord who was before creation, being self-contained. He created the universe by His own power.

Just as the dreamer is not to be confounded with the dream so is the Lord not to be confounded with the creation.

Just as a man survives his dream, so does the Lord survive the dissolution of His creation.

Just as you remain ever as pure consciousness apart from the body, etc., so is the Lord, unbounded Consciousness apart from the universe, etc.

The Supreme God is thus the embodiment of pure Consciousness.

This whole universe consisting of the mobile and the immobile, arises from, abides in, and resolves into Him. This is the final and well-known conclusion of the scriptures.

The Being mentioned in scriptures is eternally existing even before the birth of the universe. His creation

has been without any material aids. Therefore God is supreme, perfect, pure and self-contained.

God is the All-Seer who generates, permeates, sustains and destroys the universe. He is Siva, He is Vishnu, He is Brahma, the Sun, the Moon, etc. He is the One whom the different sects

call their own; He is not Siva,
nor Vishnu, nor Brahma, nor
any other exclusively.

Instruments are necessary
for human agents because
their capacities are limited
and they are not self-
contained. Whereas the
Creator of the universe is
perfect in Himself and
creates the whole universe

without any external aid. This leads to the important conclusion that God has no body.

Still, if devotees worship and contemplate Him with a body according to their own inclinations, He shows them grace, assuming such a body. For He is unique and fulfils the desires of His devotees.

Nevertheless, the conclusion must be reached that He is pure Consciousness (Chit) and His consciousness is absolute and transcendental.

Such is the consciousness-intelligence in purity, Absolute Being, the One Queen, Parameswari (Transcendental Goddess), overwhelming the three

states and hence called Tripura. Though She is the undivided whole, the universe manifests in all its variety in Her, being reflected as it were, in a self-luminous mirror. The reflection cannot be apart from the mirror and is therefore one with it.

Such being the case, there cannot be difference in degrees (e.g., Siva, or Vishnu being superior to each other). Bodies are mere conceptions in the lower order of beings and they are not to the point in the case of God.

Creation

That which abides as the Self
is Pure Intelligence,
Transcendental Being,
comprised of the aggregate
of all the egos in perfection.
She is Self-contained, and
fills the role of Maya by
virtue of Her own prowess.
Being one without a second,
She makes even the

impossible happen and thus displays the universe as a series of images in a mirror. I shall now tell you how.

She who is transcendence, awareness perfection and total summation of all egos, of Her own Will divides Herself into two. Imperfection is concomitant with such scission; there is

bound to be an insentient phase which represents the aforesaid exterior or unmanifested void. The sentient phase is Sadasiva Tattva.

[Note: This is called Ishwara in the Upanisads.]

Now Sadasiva, also not being perfect, sees the unmanifest

void (i.e., the sentient phase becomes aware of the insentient phase) but yet knows it to be of Himself — feeling 'I am this also'.

[Note: The sentient phase is called Ishwara; and the insentient phase is called Maya or Avidya, in the Upanisads.]

Later Sadasiva identifies the insentient phase with His body at the time of starting creation. Then he goes by the name Ishwara. Now this contaminated Higher Ego, namely Ishwara, divides Himself into the three aspects — Rudra, Vishnu and Brahma who in their turn manifest the cosmos consisting of many worlds. Brahmas are innumerable, all

of whom are engaged in creating worlds; Vishnus are equally taken up in protecting the worlds; and the Rudras in destroying them. This is the way of creation. But all of them are only images in the grand mirror of Abstract Consciousness.

These are only manifest, but are not concrete, since they have never been created.

The Supreme Being is always the sum total of all the egos. Just as you fill the body and identify yourself with different senses and organs without deviating from the Ego, so does the transcendental Pure

Intelligence similarly identify itself with all, beginning with Sadasiva and ending with the minutest protoplasm, and yet remains single.

Again, just as you cannot taste anything without the aid of the tongue, nor apprehend other things without the aid of other senses or organs, so also the

supreme Being (Sadasiva) acts and knows through the agency of Brahma, etc., and even of worms. Just as your conscious Self remains pure and unqualified, although it forms the basis of all the activities of limbs, organs and senses, so also the Supreme Intelligence is unaffected though holding all the Egos within Herself. She is not aware of any

distinctions in the vastness of the cosmos, nor does She make difference among the Egos.

In this manner, the Cosmos shines in Her like images in a mirror. The shining of the Cosmos is due to Her reflection. In the same way, the individuals in the world, namely you, I, and other

seers are all flashes of Her consciousness.

Since all are only phases of Supreme Intelligence, that alone will shine in purity which is bereft of taints or impediments in the shape of objects. Just as the shining mirror is clear when images no longer appear in it, and the same mirror remains

untainted even when the images are reflected in it, so also Pure Intelligence subsists pure and untainted whether the world is seen or not.

The relation of the cosmos to Pure Intelligence, i.e., abstract Self, is like that of a pot to earth, or of an

ornament to gold, or of
sculpture to the granite rock.

Just as the images appear in
a mirror and partake of its
nature, so also the cosmos is
of and in the Self, and real
inasmuch as it is the Self.

[Note: The world is not real
as an object and apart from
the Self.]

The Self is ever-shining, un-particularized, unblemished, ordinary existence — self-aware and self-sufficient. Self is always self-resplendent and one without a second and it displays diversities of phenomena as a mirror its reflections. Therefore rule out creation as a mere thought or series of thoughts and realise the non-dual,

residual, pure intelligence as the Self.

Though unperturbed, unblemished, thick, dense and single, the absolute consciousness being self-sufficient manifests within itself what looks 'exterior', just like a mirror reflecting space as external to itself. This is the first step in

creation; it is called ignorance or darkness. Starting as an infinitesimal fraction of the whole, it manifests as though external to its origin, and is a property of the ego-sense. The alienation is on account of the latent tendencies to be manifested later. Because of its non-identity with the original consciousness, it is now simple, insentient

energy. That consciousness which illumines the 'exterior' is called Sivatatva, whereas the individual feeling as 'I' is Saktitatva. When the awareness of the 'exterior', combined with the 'I', encompasses the entire imagined space as 'I', it is called Sada-Siva-tattva. When, later, discarding the abstraction of the Self and the exterior, clear

identification with the insentient space takes place, it is called Ishwara-tattva. The investigation of the last two steps is pure vidya (knowledge). All these five tattvas are pure because they relate to an as-yet-undifferentiated condition, like potentialities in a seed.

Nature of world

What is seen is absolutely nothing but sight. All that is seen has an origin and there must therefore be an antecedent cause for it. What is origin except that the thing newly appears?

The world is changing every moment and its appearance

is new every moment and so
it is born every moment.

The fact of the existence of
things is only illumination of
them, and nothing more.

The object is sunk in
illumination like the image of
a city in a mirror.

Just as the city is not apart
from the mirror, so also the

universe is not apart from consciousness.

The detail and tangibility of things are no arguments against their being nothing but images.

Creation in its entirety and all its details, a picture on the screen of Self like the dream world on the individual consciousness.

The creation is not an object apart; it is a picture drawn on the canvas of supreme consciousness, for there cannot possibly be anything beyond Perfection.

The universe has thus originated only as an image on the surface of the mirror of the Absolute. This

conclusion is in harmony with all facts.

Just as castles in the air are mental figments of men so also is this creation a mental figment of Siva. Siva is absolute Awareness, without any form. Sri Tripura is Sakti and Witness of the whole.

Since the universe is only a projection from and in the

mirror of consciousness, its unreal nature can become clear only on investigation, and not otherwise.

The whole universe is thus in the illumination which shines self-sufficient, by itself, everywhere, and at all times. Such illumination is Her Transcendental Majesty Tripura, the Supreme.

The universe is, always and
all-through, a phenomenon in
the Self.

Self-Realization

Truth can never change its nature, whereas untruth is always changing. See how changeable the nature of the world is!

Distinguish between the changeless truth and the changeable untruth and scrutinize the world comprised of these two factors, changeable phenomena and changeless

subjective consciousness, like the unchanging light of the mirror and the changing images in it.

The world cannot stand investigation because of its changing unreal nature.

What is not self-luminous can only fall within the orbit of Consciousness and cannot be Consciousness itself.

Consciousness is that by which objects are known; it cannot be what it is if it becomes the object of knowledge.

What is intelligible must always be different from Consciousness itself, or else it could not be made known by it.

Consciousness in the abstract cannot admit of parts, which is the characteristic of

objects. Therefore objects take on shapes.

Carefully analyze the underlying Consciousness which, though abstract and apart from material objects, yet illumines them all the same. Know it to be the truth.

The world consists of knowledge and the objects known. Of these the objects are non-self and perceived by senses; knowledge is self-

evident; there is no world in the absence of knowledge. Knowledge is the direct proof of the existence of objects which are therefore dependent on knowledge. Knowledge is dependent on the knower for its existence. The knower does not require any tests for knowing his own existence. The knower therefore is the only reality behind knowledge and objects. That which is self-evident without the necessity

to be proved, is alone real;
not so other things.

Consciousness is the
supporter of all and is
immanent in all and always
remains perfect like space.

Shape, taste, smell, touch,
sound, sorrow, pleasure, the
act of gaining, or the object
gained — none of these finds
place in that Transcendence
which is the support of all
there is, and which is the

being in all, but is bereft of everything (does not contain anything). That is the Supreme Lord, the Creator, the Supporter and the Destroyer of the universe and the Eternal Being.

As long as you are contaminated with notions of me or mine (e.g., my home, my body, my mind, my intellect), the Self will not be found, for it lies beyond cognition and cannot be realized as 'my Self '. Retire

into solitude, analyze and see what those things are which are cognized as mine; discard them all and transcending them, look for the Real Self. What remains over, transcending it all, beyond conception, appropriation, or relinquishment — know That to be the Self. That knowledge is final emancipation.

Realize with a still mind your own true nature which is the

one pure, undivided Consciousness underlying the restless mind which is composed of the whole universe in all its diversity. If one is fixed in that fundamental basis of the universe (i.e., the Self), one becomes the All-doer.

Realize with a still mind

- the state between sleep and wakefulness

- the interval between the recognition of one object after another
- the gap between two perceptions.

This is the real Self, inhering in which one is no longer deluded. Unaware of this Truth, people have become inheritors of sorrow.

Carefully watch absolute
Consciousness after
eliminating all else from it.

Just as a mirror takes on the hues of images, so also the abstract Consciousness assumes the different shapes of objects, by virtue of its holding them within itself.

Abstract Consciousness can thus be made manifest by eliminating from it all that can be known. It cannot be known as such and such, for it is the supporter of one and all. This, being the Self of the seeker, is not cognizable as an object.

You are only pure abstract Consciousness. Realize it this instant, for procrastination is not worthy of a good disciple. He should realize the Self at the moment of instruction. Your eyes are not meant by the aforesaid word sight. The mental eye is meant, for it is the eye of the eye, as is clear in dreams.

The other perceptions require the two conditions, namely:

- Elimination of other objects

- Concentration on the one

But Self-realization differs from them in that it requires only one condition: elimination of all perceptions.

Consciousness is the supporter of all and is immanent in all and always remains perfect like space, pervading the mind also. Diversion of attention from other items is all that is necessary for Self-realization.

Realization of Self requires absolute purity only and no concentration of mind. For this reason, the Self is said to be unknowable (meaning not objectively knowable). Therefore it was also said that the sole necessity for Self-realization is purity of mind. The only impurity of the mind is thought. To make it thought-free is to keep it pure.

It must now be clear to you why purity of mind is insisted

upon for Realization of Self. How can the Self be realized in its absence? Or, how is it possible for the Self not to be found gleaming in the pure mind? All the injunctions in the scriptures are directed towards this end alone. For instance, unselfish action, devotion and dispassion have no other purpose in view. Because transcendental consciousness, viz., the Self, is manifest only in the stain-free mind.

Mind is nothing but sectional knowledge as this and that. Eliminate such, and then pure knowledge will alone remain. This is the Self.

The mind will shine as the Self if the mind be denuded of those thoughts now crowding it, and then all sense of duality will cease to exist.

Moksha is defined as the steady glow of the Self in

perfection. The non-modification of Abstract Intelligence into the objective phenomena is said to be the state of perfection.

Moksha (liberation) is not to be sought in heavens, on earth or in the nether regions. It is synonymous with Self-realization.

Moksha is not anything to be got afresh, for it is already there only to be realized.

Such realization arises with the elimination of ignorance.

There is absolutely no bondage beyond the foolish certainty that you are bound and the difference of entity created by mind.

Until these two blemishes are washed away by the holy waters of investigation into the Self, neither I, nor Brahma the Creator, nor Vishnu, nor Siva, nor even

Sri Tripura, the Goddess of Wisdom, can help that person to be emancipated. Therefore, Rama, surmount these two hurdles and remain eternally happy.

To imagine that the Self is shackled by mental projections is to imagine that the fire reflected in a mirror can burn it.

Realisation of the Self subdues the restless mind

which is the dynamic aspect of consciousness. On this being subdued, there gleams out the peace-filled, perfect, intelligent bliss which is synonymous with emancipation. Be assured of this.

Do not think that an interlude of blankness or veil of nescience will supervene after the cessation of thoughts. For, there is no such factor as a blankness or

veil of nescience. It is simply a figment of the imagination.

If in a daydream a man imagines himself taken, harassed and beaten by an enemy he will suffer from the effects until and unless he dismisses the daydream. Will he continue to be bound by the enemy after the dream is dismissed with the enemy and his blows? So it is with the veil of nescience.

O Rama! Even from the very beginning there has really been no bondage or tie to the cycle of births and deaths. Only do not be deluded by identifying yourself with insentient matter but enquire, 'What is this bondage?'

The strongest fetter is the certainty that one is bound. It is as false as the fearful hallucinations of a frightened child.

Even the best of men cannot find release by any amount of efforts unless their sense of bondage is destroyed.

What is this bondage? How can the pure uncontaminated Absolute Self be shackled by what look like images in the mirror of the Self?

To imagine that the Self is shackled by mental projections is to imagine that

the fire reflected in a mirror
can burn it.

True experience of the Self is
the unawareness of even 'I
am'. Can the world persist
after such unawareness?

Perfection cannot depend on
activity or the reverse, on
effort or no effort. As long as
these knots are not cut
asunder so long will bliss not
be found.

These knots are millions in number and are created by the bond of delusion which is no other than ignorance of Self.

These knots give rise to mistaken ideas, the chief of which is the identification of the body with the Self, which in its turn gives rise to the perennial stream of happiness and misery in the shape of the cycle of births and deaths.

The second knot is the differentiation of the world from the Self whose being-consciousness is the mirror in which the phenomena are simply reflected.

Similarly with the other knots including the differentiation of beings among themselves and from the universal Self.

They have originated from time immemorial and recur with unbroken ignorance. The

man is not finally redeemed until he has extricated himself from these numberless knots of ignorance.

Is any place found where the effulgence is not, of the fire blazing at the dissolution of the universe? All will resolve into that fire and no residue will be left. Similarly also the fire of realization will burn away all your sense of duty so that there will be nothing left for you to do.

Be strong, root out your thoughts and cut off the deep-rooted knots from your heart, namely, 'I will see', 'I am not this', 'This is non-Self ', and such like. Find wherever you turn the one, undivided, eternal blissful Self; also watch the whole universe reflected, as in a mirror in the Self, as it arises and subsides in It. Stop contemplating 'I see the Self everywhere and in everything (within and without)'. Reach the residual

Reality within and abide as the Self, with your own natural state.

The cycle of births and deaths is from time immemorial caused by ignorance, which displays itself as pleasure and pain, and yet is only a dream and unreal. Being so, the wise say that it can be ended by knowledge. By what kind of knowledge? Wisdom born of realization (viz., 'I am That'). Ignorance cannot be expelled

by means of knowledge devoid of thoughts, for such knowledge is not opposed to anything whatsoever (including ignorance).

The causal ignorance is said to be of the nature of absence of knowledge of the wholeness of one's own Self. The Self that is Consciousness should only be whole on account of the exclusion of limitation. For, it is that which brings about

time and the rest which are the causes of limitation.

That kind of knowledge of the Self which exists as the non-wholeness (of the Self) can alone be the causal ignorance of the nature of 'I exist here at this time'. That is the embryonic seed from which shoots forth the sprout of the body as the individualized self (growing up into the gigantic tree of the cycle of births and deaths). The cycle of births and deaths does not

end unless ignorance is put to an end. This can happen only with a perfect knowledge of the Self, not otherwise.

Such wisdom which can destroy ignorance is clearly of two sorts:

- Indirect
- Direct

Knowledge is first acquired from a Master and through him from the scriptures. Such

indirect knowledge cannot fulfil the object in view. Because theoretical knowledge alone does not bear fruit; practical knowledge is necessary which comes through Samadhi alone. Knowledge born of nirvikalpa Samadhi generates wisdom by the eradication of ignorance and objective knowledge.

Similarly, experience of casual Samadhi in the absence of theoretical

knowledge does not serve the purpose either.

Just as a man, ignorant of the qualities of an emerald, cannot recognize it by the mere sight of it in the treasury, nor can another recognize it if he has not seen it before, although he is full of theoretical knowledge on the subject, in the same way theory must be supplemented with practice in order that a man might become an expert.

Ignorance cannot be eradicated by mere theory or by the casual Samadhi of an ignorant man.

Want of attention is a serious obstacle. Inattentive people are simply fools who cannot understand the ever-recurring Samadhis in their lives. They are like a man, ignorant of the treasure under the floor of his house, who begs for his daily food.

God inherent as the Self is pleased by meritorious actions which are continued through several births, after which the desire for liberation dawns and not otherwise, even though millions of births may be experienced. Only those transcend Maya with whose devotion the Goddess of the Self is pleased; such can discern well and happily. Being by the grace of God endowed with proper discernment and right-earnestness, they get

established in transcendental Oneness and become absorbed.

I shall now tell you the scheme of liberation. One learns true devotion to God after a meritorious life continued in several births, and then worships Him for a long time with intense devotion. Dispassion for the pleasures of life arises in a devotee who gradually begins to long for knowledge of the truth and becomes absorbed

in the search for it. He then finds his gracious Master and learns from him all about the transcendental state. He has now gained theoretical knowledge.

[Note: This is Shravana]

After this he is impelled to revolve the whole matter in his mind until he is satisfied from his own practical knowledge with the harmony of the scriptural injunctions and the teachings of his Master. He is able to

ascertain the highest truth
with clearness and certitude.

[Note: This is Manana]

The ascertained knowledge of
the Oneness of the Self must
afterwards be brought into
practice, even forcibly if
necessary, until the
experience of the truth
occurs to him.

[Note: This is Nidhidhyasana]

After experiencing the Inner
Self, he will be able to

identify the Self with the Supreme and thus destroy the root of ignorance. There is no doubt of it.

The inner Self is realized in advanced contemplation and that state of realization is called nirvikalpa Samadhi. Memory of that realization enables one to identify the Inner Self with the Universal Self (as 'I am That'). That is the Oneness of the Self, the same as the identification of the transcendence of the one

with that same one in all the diversities of the world apparent to each individual. This destroys the root of ignorance, instantly and completely.

When the mind does not create pictures due to thoughts, it is in the unmodified state, which is its primal and pure condition. When the pictures on a wall are erased, the original wall remains. No other work is necessary to restore its

original condition. Similarly, the mind remains pure when thoughts are eliminated. Therefore the unqualified state is restored if the present disturbance is ended. There is indeed nothing more to be done for the most holy condition to be maintained. Nevertheless, even pandits are deluded in this matter, owing to the bane of Maya.

The acutely intelligent can accomplish the purpose in a trice.

Aspirants may be divided into three groups:

(1) Best

(2) Middle

(3) Lowest

Of these, the best class realize at the very moment of hearing the truth. Their ascertainment of truth and contemplation thereon are simultaneous with their learning. Realization of truth requires no effort on their part.

Wisdom is achieved in the course of many births by the lowest aspirants.

As for the middle class, wisdom is gained in the same birth, but slowly and gradually according to the aforesaid scheme of:

1. Learning the truth

2. Conviction of the same

3. Meditation — qualified Samadhi and unqualified Samadhi.

4. Finally sahaja Samadhi (to be unattached even while engaged in the activities of the world).

This last state is very rarely found.

Unless a man lives the ordinary life and checks every incident as the

projection of the Self, not swerving from the Self in any circumstances, he cannot be said to be free from the handicap of ignorance.

Abstract Intelligence is the background on which the phenomena are displayed, and it must certainly manifest itself in all its purity, in their absence, although its appearance may look new at first. It remains unrecognized because it is not distinguished from the

phenomena displayed by it. On their being eliminated it becomes apparent. This in short is the method of Self-realization.

Thus pure Consciousness, free from objective knowledge, has been proved to exist; it can be felt on many occasions in ordinary life. However, it goes undetected because people are in the meshes of Maya and not conversant with it. Alertness alone will reveal it.

Recognize the fact that the world is simply an image on the mirror of consciousness and cultivate the contemplation of 'I am', abide as pure being and thus give up this delusion of the reality of the world.

Consider the Self as pure intelligence bereft of objective knowledge. 'What is known is not different from that intelligence, it is like a series of images reflected in a mirror. Absolute consciousness is the

universe; it is 'I', it is all, sentient and insentient, mobile and immobile. Everything else is illuminated by it whereas it is alone and Self-luminous. Therefore let those sensible people who are desirous of chit (pure intelligence) turn away from illusory knowledge and contemplate their own Self — the absolute consciousness — which illumines all the rest, and which is their being too.'

Meditate, O Man, on the Self, the Absolute Consciousness devoid of objects! There is naught else to know besides pure Consciousness; it is like a self-luminous mirror reflecting objects within. That same consciousness is the subject and also the objects, and that is all — the mobile and the immobile; all else shine in its reflected light; it shines of itself. Therefore, O Man, throw off delusion! Think of that consciousness which is alone, illuminating

all and pervading all. Be of clear vision.

This wisdom in perfection is the realization of all as the Self.

Consciousness appears as objects by its own virtue, as a mirror appears as the images on it. This is the whole essence of the sastras.

There is no bondage, no liberation, no aspirant, no process of attainment.

The transcendental Conscious Principle alone subsists in the three states of being. She remains as the one uniform, absolute being.

She is ignorance; She is wisdom; She is bondage; She is liberation and She is the process therefore.

This is all that need be known, understood and realized. There is nothing more.

She goes by the name of Emancipation when clearly and directly realized by investigation as the one undivided Self of all; otherwise, She goes by the name of Bondage. She is the one Consciousness threading the three states of being, but untainted and unbroken by

them. She is the sound, word and the significance of Hrim.

Questions and answers

Spirit: What is more extensive than space and more subtle than the subtlest? What is its nature? Where does it abide? Tell me, Prince.

Prince: Listen, Spirit!

Abstract Intelligence is wider than space and subtler than the subtlest. Its nature is to glow and it abides as the Self.

Spirit: How can it be wider than space, being single? Or how is it subtler than the subtlest? What is that glow? And what is that Self? Tell me, Prince.

Prince: Listen, Spirit! Being the material cause of all, intelligence is extensive though single; being impalpable, it is subtle. Glowing obviously implies consciousness and that is the Self.

Spirit: Where and how is Chit (Abstract Intelligence) to

be realised and what is the effect?

Prince: The intellectual sheath must be probed for its realisation. One-pointed search for it reveals its existence. Rebirth is overcome by such realisation.

Spirit: What is that sheath and what is concentration of mind? Again, what is birth?

Prince: The intellectual sheath is the veil drawn over Pure Intelligence; it is inert by itself. One-pointedness is abiding as the Self. Birth is the false identification of the Self with the body.

Spirit: Why is that Abstract Intelligence which is ever shining not realised? What is the means by which it can be realised? Why did birth take place at all?

Prince: Ignorance is the cause of non-realisation. Self realises the Self; there is no external aid possible. Birth

originated through the sense of doer-ship.

Spirit: What is that ignorance of which you speak? What is again the Self? Whose is the sense of doer-ship?

Prince: Ignorance is the sense of separateness from consciousness and false

identification with the non-self. As for the Self, the question must be referred to the self in you. The ego or the 'I-thought' is the root of action.

Spirit: By what means is ignorance to be destroyed? How is the means acquired? What leads to such means?

Prince: Investigation cuts at the root of ignorance. Dispassion develops investigation. Disgust for the pleasures of life generates dispassion towards them.

Spirit: What are investigation, dispassion and disgust for pleasures?

Prince: Investigation is analysis conducted within oneself, discriminating the non-self from the Self, stimulated by a stern, strong and sincere desire to realise the Self. Dispassion is non-attachment to surroundings. This results if the misery consequent on attachment is kept in mind.

Spirit: What is the root cause of the whole series of these requirements?

Prince: Divine Grace is the root cause of all that is good. Devotion to God alone can bring down His grace. This devotion is produced and developed by association with the wise. That is the prime cause of all.

Spirit: Who is that God?
What is devotion to Him?
Who are the wise?

Prince: God is the master of
the cosmos. Devotion is
unwavering love for Him. The
wise are those who abide in
Supreme Peace and melt
with love for all.

Spirit: Who is always in the grip of fear? Who of misery? Who of poverty?

Prince: Fear holds a man possessed of enormous wealth; misery, of a large family; and poverty, of insatiable desires.

Spirit: Who is fearless? Who is free from misery? Who is never needy?

Prince: The man with no attachments is free from fear; the one with controlled mind is free from misery; the Self-realised man is never needy.

Spirit: Who is he that passes men's understanding and is visible though without a body? What is the action of the inactive?

Prince: The man emancipated here and now passes men's understanding; he is seen though he does not identify himself with the body; his actions are those of the inactive.

Spirit: What is real? What is unreal? What is inappropriate? Answer these

questions and redeem your brother.

Prince: The subject (i.e., the Self) is real; the object (i.e., the non-self) is unreal; worldly transactions are inappropriate.

Characteristics of Jnanís

The characteristics of a Jnani are hard to understand, because they are inscrutable and inexpressible. For instance, a pandit cannot be adequately described except by his appearance, gait and dress, because his feelings, depth of knowledge, etc., are

known to himself alone;
while the flavour of a
particular dish cannot be
exactly conveyed by words to
one who has not tasted it. A
pandit can be understood
only by another pandit by his
method of expression. A bird
alone can follow the track of
another bird.

There are of course some traits which are obvious, and others which are subtle and inscrutable. Those which are obvious are their speech, language, postures of meditation, signs of worship, dispassion, etc., which can, however, be imitated by non-Sages.

What are accomplishments to others to the accompaniment of dispassion, meditation, prayer, etc., remain natural to the Sage whose mind is pure and unsophisticated.

He whom honour and insult, loss or gain, cannot affect, is a Sage of the best class.

The best among Sages can, without hesitation, give complete answers on matters relating to Realisation and the sublimest truths.

He seems to be spontaneously animated when discussing matters pertaining to jnana (realisation) and is never tired of their exposition.

His nature is to remain without efforts. Contentment and purity abide in him. Even the most critical situations do not disturb his peace of mind.

These are qualities which must be tried for oneself and verified; they are of no value as tests applied to others, for they may be genuine or spurious.

An aspirant must first apply the tests to himself and always prove his own worth; he can then judge others.

How can the repeated testing of oneself fail to improve one? Let one not spend one's time judging others; but let one judge oneself. Thus one becomes perfect.

What have here been called the traits of a Jnani are meant for one's own use and not for testing others, because they admit of many modifications according to circumstances.

For instance, a Jnani who has realised the Self with the least effort may continue in his old ways although his

mind is unassailable. He looks like a man of the world for all practical purposes. How then can he be judged by others?

Nevertheless, one Jnani will know another at sight, just as an expert can appraise precious stones at a glance.

The Jnanis of the lowest order behave like ignorant

men in their care for their bodies. They have not attained sahaja samadhi. They are in the State of Perfection only when they are calm or composed. They have as much of the body-sense and enjoy pleasure and pain with as much zest as any animal, when they are not engaged in the investigation of the Self.

Though they are not always inquiring into the Self, yet there are periods of the perfect state owing to their previous practice and experience. All the same, they are emancipated because the animal-sense is only an aberration during interludes of imperfection and does not leave any mark on them. Their aberration is similar to the ashy skeleton

of a piece of burnt cloth which, though retaining the old shape, is useless. Again, the intervals of Realisation have an abiding effect on their lives, so that the world does not continue to enthrall them as heretofore. A dye applied to the border of a cloth 'creeps' and shades the body of the cloth also.

The middle class of Jnanis are never deluded by their bodies. Delusion is the false identification of 'I' with the body; this never arises with the more advanced Jnanis, namely the middle class among them. Identification of the Self with the body is attachment to the body. The middle class of Jnanis are never attached to the body. Their minds are mostly dead

because of their long practice and continued austerities. They are not engaged in work because they are entirely self-possessed. Just as a man moves or speaks in sleep without being aware of his actions, so also this class of yogi does enough work for his minimum requirements without being aware of it. Having transcended the world, he behaves like a

drunken man. But he is aware of his actions. His body continues on account of his vasanas (predispositions) and destiny.

Jnanis of the highest class do not identify the Self with the body but remain completely detached from their bodies. Their work is like that of a charioteer driving the chariot,

who never identifies himself with the chariot. Similarly the Jnani is not the body nor the actor; he is pure intelligence.

Though entirely detached within from action, to the spectator he seems to be active. He performs his part like an actor in a drama, and plays with the world as a parent does with a child.

Of the two higher orders of Jnanis, the one remains steadfast through his sustained practice and control of mind, whereas the other is so on account of the force of his discrimination and investigation. The difference lies in the merits of their intellect.

Karma for Jnanis

Wisdom is eternal and natural. How can it be contradicted by work? Should work make wisdom ineffective, how can wisdom be useful any more than a dream? No eternal good is possible in that case.

All this work is dependent on Self-awareness (i.e., wisdom). Being so, can work destroy wisdom and yet remain in its absence?

Wisdom is that consciousness in which this world with all its phenomena and activities is known to be as an image or series of images; the duality essential for work is also a

phenomenon in that non-dual awareness.

There is no doubt that a man realizes the Self only after purging himself of all thoughts, and that he is then released from bondage, once for all.

The sky appears blue to all alike whether they know that

space is colorless or not. Even the one who knows speaks of the 'blue sky' but is not himself confused. The ignorant man is confused whereas the man who knows is not. The latter's seeming confusion is harmless, like a snake that is dead. His work is like images in a mirror. There lies the difference between a Sage and an ignorant man. The former

has accurate knowledge and unerring judgment, whereas the latter has a blurred conception and his judgment is warped. Knowledge of Truth never forsakes a Sage although he is immersed in work. All his activities are like reflections in a mirror for, being Self-realized, ignorance can no longer touch him.

Wrong knowledge, due to sheer ignorance, can be corrected by true knowledge; but wrong knowledge, due to a fault, cannot be so easily corrected. So long as there is diplopia the eyesight will be blurred and many images of a single object will be seen. Similarly, so long as there is prarabdha (residual past karma) unaccounted for, the manifestation of the world

will continue for the Jnani, though only as a phenomenon. This will also vanish as soon as the prarabdha has played itself out and then pure, unblemished Intelligence alone will remain. Therefore I tell you, there is no blemish attached to a Jnani, though he appears active and engaged in worldly duties.

The three kinds of karma:

(1) mature (prarabdha)

(2) pending (agami) and

(3) in store (sanchita)

are common to all — not excluding the Jnani. The first of these alone remains for the Jnani and the other two are burnt away.

Karma matures by the agency of time; such is divine law. When mature, it is bound to yield its fruits.

The karma of the one who is active after Self-realization, is rendered ineffective by his wisdom.

Karma already mature and now yielding results is called

prarabdha: it is like an arrow already shot from a bow which must run its course until its momentum is lost.

[Note: Prarabdha must bear fruits and cannot be checked by realization of the Self. But there is no enjoyment of its fruits by the realised Sage.]

Environments are only a result of prarabdha: though they seem the same for all, Jnanis react to them differently according to their own stages of realization.

Pleasure and pain are apparent to the least among the Sages, but do not leave any mark on them as they do on the ignorant; pleasure and

pain operate on the middle class of Sages in the same way; however, they react only indistinctly to their surroundings, as a man in sleep does to a gentle breeze or to an insect creeping over him; pleasure and pain are again apparent to the highest among the Sages, who, however, look upon them as unreal, like a hare growing horns.

The ignorant anticipate pleasure and pain before the enjoyment, recapitulate them after enjoyment, and reflect on them, so that they leave a strong impression on their minds.

Jnanis of the lowest order also enjoy pleasure and pain like the ignorant, but their remembrance of such

experiences is frequently broken up by intervals of realization. Thus worldly experiences do not leave an impression on their minds.

Jnanis of the middle class, accustomed to control their minds by long-continued austerities, keep their minds in check even while experiencing pleasure and

pain, and thus their response to the world is as indistinct as that of a man in sleep, to a gentle breeze playing on him or an ant creeping over his body.

Jnanis of the highest order are left untouched, for they always remain as the burnt skeleton of a cloth (retaining its old shape but useless)

after their realization. Just as an actor is not really affected by the passions which he displays on the stage, so also this Jnani, always aware of his perfection, is not affected by the seeming pleasures and pains which he regards as a mere illusion, like the horns of a hare.

The ignorant are not aware of the pure Self; they see it as always blemished and hence they believe in the reality of objective knowledge. They are therefore affected by the pleasures and pains of life.

As for the lowest order of Jnanis, these realize the Self off and on, and spells of

ignorance overtake them whenever they are overcome by their predispositions. Then they look upon the body as the self and the world as real. They are often able to override the old tendencies, and thus there is an ongoing struggle between wisdom and ignorance — each of them prevailing alternately.

The Jnani ranges himself on the side of wisdom and fights against ignorance until falsity is thoroughly blown out, and truth prevails. Therefore jnana is indivisible.

Forgetfulness of the Self never overtakes a middle class Jnani and wrong knowledge never possesses him. However, of his own

accord, he brings out some predispositions from his own depths in order to maintain his body according to prarabdha. This is the conduct of an accomplished Jnani.

As for the aspirant, there is no forgetfulness of the Self so long as he is engaged in practising samadhi. But the

accomplished Jnani is always non-forgetful of the Self and picks out his own predispositions according to his own choice.

The highest Jnani makes no difference between samadhi and worldly transactions. He never finds anything apart from the Self and so there is no lapse for him.

The middle order Jnani is fond of samadhi and voluntarily abides in it. There is accordingly a lapse, however slight, when he is engaged in worldly affairs, or even in the maintenance of his body.

On the other hand, the Jnani of the highest order involuntarily and naturally

abides in samadhi, and any lapse is impossible for him under any circumstances.

The Jnani of the middle order or of the highest order has no tinge of karma left in him, because he is in perfection and does not perceive anything apart from the Self.

How can there be anything of karma left when the wild fire of jnana is raging, consuming all in its way? Such karma is only a trick believed to be true by the onlooker.

I shall explain this point further. The state of the Jnani is said to be identical with that of Siva. There is not the least difference between

them. Therefore karma
cannot besmear a Jnani.