

Quintessence of Tripura Rahasya

Salutations to Goddess Tripura,
the embodiment of unbounded
transcendental Consciousness,
who resides as the support for
the entire phenomenal
existence like a mirror
reflecting images.

Supreme purpose of life lies in putting permanent end to suffering and gaining of limitless satisfaction.

To a discriminating man, pain is apparent in all aspects of worldly life. No worldly things can truly serve towards attaining supreme purpose. Hence the right means lies beyond all worldly things.

Desire to possess worldly things is born out of delusion. Such delusion gives rise to compulsion to possess the object of desire. Such compulsion robs mental peace and equanimity and is misery itself.

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?

Such pleasure is like that of soothing unguents placed on a scalded limb, or of the embrace of one's beloved when one is lying pierced by an arrow in the breast; or of the sweet melodies of music heard by an advanced consumptive!

Root cause of all the suffering is Self-Ignorance - absence of knowledge of the wholeness of one's own Self.

Self-Ignorance is of the nature of 'I exist here at this time'. This 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.

Atma-Vichara is the only direct means for gaining Self-Knowledge. 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.

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 Atma-Vichara is the surest means of emancipation. Countless aids will not give emancipation if an earnest search for Self is not made.

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. 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.

The Supreme God is the embodiment of pure Consciousness. God is the All-Seer who generates, permeates, sustains and destroys the universe. His creation has been without any material aids. This leads to important conclusion that God has no body.

Therefore God is supreme, perfect, pure and self-contained.

Though God is the undivided whole, the universe manifests in all its variety in God, being reflected as it were, in a self-luminous mirror. The reflection cannot be apart from the mirror and similarly creation is not apart from God and therefore one with it.

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.

What is seen is absolutely
nothing but sight. 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.

Creation in its entirety and all
its details, is a picture on the
screen of Self like the dream

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

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.

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 Saktitattva. 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).

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 analyse the
underlying Consciousness
which, though abstract and
apart from material objects, yet
illuminates 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.

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.

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.

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?'

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.

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.

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.