

त्रिपुरारहस्यम्

TRIPURAAARAHASYAM

JNAANA KHANDAM  
[KNOWLEDGE SECTION]

BOOK FOUR

[ASHTAAVAKRA'S EMANCIPATION (2)]

Sanskrit text, Translation and Explanation

by

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***DEDICATED***  
***TO***  
***ALL THE SEEKERS OF TRUTH***

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Narayanalakshmi

Narayanalakshmi (Shubhalakshmi), an ascetic spent most of her life in the Himalayan terrain, engaged in the penance of knowledge. She is well-versed in all philosophies and is a scholar in Sanskrit language. Her mission life is to retrieve the lost knowledge of the ancient Rishis and offer it unblemished to all the seekers of the Truth. She is from Bangalore, Karnataka, India.

श्रुत्वैतद्भागवो रामः प्राप्य विस्मयमान्तरे भूयः पप्रच्छात्रिसूनुमवितृप्तः कथाश्रुतेः। भगवानद्भुतं ह्येतच्छ्रुतं वृत्तं पुरातनम्। भूयः पप्रच्छ राजानमष्टावक्रो महामुनिः यद्राजा प्रत्युवाचैनं तच्च मे वद सर्वशः। अहोद्भुतं समाख्यानं न क्वचिच्च मया श्रुतम्। विज्ञानवृत्तसर्वस्वं दयया वद मे गुरो। इत्येवमनुयुक्तोथ दत्तात्रेयो महामुनिः भार्गवाय समाचख्यौ कथां परमपावनीम्। शृणु भार्गव यत्प्रोक्तं जनकेन महात्मना। निर्गतायां तापस्यामष्टावक्रो मुनेः सुतः संवृतो बहुभिर्विप्रेः समेत्य नृपपुङ्गवं पप्रच्छ यत्तापस्या सङ्क्षिप्योक्तं महार्थकं तदुच्यमानन्तु मया सम्यक् शृणु समाहितः। राजन्विदेहाधिपते तापस्योक्तं तु यत्तया तदहं नाऽविदं सम्यक्संक्षेपोक्तत्वेतत्तुतः। कथं विद्यामवेद्यं तत्समाचक्ष्व दयानिधे। एवं जनक आपृष्टः प्राह तं विस्मयन्निव।

Bhaargava Rama was awed after hearing this, and again questioned Atri Suta, feeling not enough of the amazing story. 'Bhagavan! This incident of the past is indeed amazing. What did the great Sage Ashtaavakra ask the king, and what was the answer given by the king, tell me all that in detail.

Aha! I have never heard of this incident so far.

Hey Guru! Please relate to me the entire dialogue on knowledge that took place.'

Thus requested, MahaaMuni Dattaatreya narrated the extremely sacred incident to Bhaargava.

'Listen Bhaargava as to what was spoken by the noble king Janaka.

After Taapasee went off, Ashtaavakra the son of the great Muni, accompanied by many Brahmins approached the great king and asked for the detailed explanation of Taapasi's brief discourse, and Janaka explained everything in detail.

I will tell you what Janaka spoke at that time; listen with an attentive mind. Ashtaavakra said to the king, 'Raajan! Ruler of Videha! I did not properly understand what that Taapasee spoke, since it was very brief. How I will be able to know that unknowable state, tell me hey compassionate one.'

When questioned like this, Janaka spoke to him as if surprised by his question (since Ashtaavakra was renowned for his learning.)

जनक उवाच

Janaka spoke

मुनिपुत्र शृणु वचो मया यत्प्रोच्यतेऽधुना। नावेद्यं सर्वथा तद्धि वेद्यं चापि न सर्वथा। अवेद्यं चेत् सर्वथैव तद्गुरुः किं वदेद्वद। गुरुरावेदयेत्तत्त्वमत आदौ गुरुं श्रयेत्। एतद्वेदनमत्यन्तं सुलभं दुःशकं च हि। यः परावृत्तदृष्टिः स्यात्तस्य तत्सुलभं भवेत्। यः परावृष्टिरेवास्ते तस्य तच्चातिदुर्लभम्।

MuniPutra, listen to my words now with attention.

That supreme state of Chit is not unknowable, and is not easily known also.

If it was completely unknowable, then how can the Guru instruct about it?

A Guru alone can explain it; therefore, in the beginning one should take shelter in the Guru.

Knowing it is very easy, and also very difficult. For the one whose vision is turned inward, for him it is easy; and for the one whose vision is turned outward, it is very very difficult.

अनिरूप्यं केवलं तदवेद्यमपि सर्वथा कथञ्चिदन्यरूपेण निरूप्यं वेद्यमप्युत।

It cannot be defined, and is also unknowable (as another object); even then, it can be defined and be known through some other method (through reasoning).

HOW DO YOU KNOW OF AN OBJECT? CAN YOU KNOW YOURSELF ALSO AS AN OBJECT?

यद्यदृश्यं पश्यसीह तेन तद्वेद्यमुच्यते। यत्तेऽवभासते किञ्चित्तद्धिभावय सद्धिया। भानशक्तिर्भास्यहीना

सर्वभानसमाश्रया। सैव तत्तत्त्वमित्येव विजानीहि मुनेः सुत।

(Let us analyze as to how you know the existence of the objects of the world. How do you know of an object? The senses reveal the image, smell etc; and the mind makes the connection of those sense-inputs.)

When you perceive an object with your senses (like a pot or tree), and understand it (through the mind), then only, that particular object is said to be known by you.

Through a sharpened intellect analyze whatever is 'known' by you as an object.

(You are aware of the object through the senses, and the object gets known by you.)

The power of illuminating the objects is your awareness only.

You are aware of your existence as your natural state; and this self-awareness alone is aware of another object. This power of illumination (self-awareness) is not something that can be illuminated.

*(No one can prove your existence to you; you know it by yourself.)*

The object did not produce its own knowledge; but you as the Self, produced the object-knowledge.

*(The object is just an inert set of sense-information; it was not there already before you knew of it; but you as 'awareness pure' was aware of it, like the sun making the revelation of the object.*

*The object did not reveal you or your existence; you exist, and then it exists as revealed by your existence.)*

This power of illumination is the support of all the objects that get illuminated (revealed).

Hey MuniSuta! That power of illumination alone is the pure principle of Aatman.

*(You are the center of the world existence. 'You' are not the image with a name, but are just the pure state of 'existence awareness of yourself' which is not located in any time or place measure.)*

वेद्यमेव न वितिः स्यात्स्वतो यन्न प्रकाशते।

That which is 'known' cannot 'know', for it does not shine by itself.

*(The object does not know you; you know the object.*

*The object is not aware of itself; but you are aware of your existence.)*

वित्तिरन्या यया वेद्यं वेद्यते न स्वतः क्वचित्।

That which knows (Self), is different from what is known (object).

That which is known, does not get known by itself. *(It is not self-aware.*

DOES THE KNOWER BREAK INTO PIECES BY KNOWING MANY THINGS?

वेद्यं विभिन्नरूपं वै।वित्त्यैव वेद्यते खलु।

That which is known is of different varieties.

*(There are countless objects in the world as living and non-living.)*

'That which knows' 'knows' all these, and is the single changeless state (as the 'Existence awareness' that shines in you as the real you.)

*(What gets known is the change of sense-patterns that are caught in different measures of time and place.*

*The self, the real you, have not changed at any time, though you know of the change in everything, including the body you are identified with through delusion)*

तत्तत्रूपविभेदेन वित्तिर्ना भिद्यते क्वचित्।

Because of knowing so many objects, the Knowing state never divides itself.

भेदो हि वेद्यधर्मः स्यान्न वितिं संस्पृशेत्क्वचित् यत् आकारभेदो हि वेद्यपक्षे विभासते।पश्य वेद्यं पृथक्कृत्य

बुद्ध्या आकारविवर्जितम्।

Difference is found in that which gets known; it will never affect the 'Knowing one' (the changeless state of Reality, the Self.); because, the difference in shapes is always observed in the 'known'.

*(If you yourself were changing along with the changing objects, how can you know the change at all?*

*Change needs some stable observer as its support.*

*For example, your body that is part of the planet ground is moving along with the earth; you never know of this movement because your body is also moving continuously and is rotating as part of the earth-mud.*

*Unless you can remove yourself from the earth atmosphere and observe it as a non-moving thing, you cannot know of the earth-rotation. So also, unless you are changeless, you cannot know of 'change'.*

*Body is also a changing pattern only; so you are not the body, but a 'knower of the body'.)*

Observe through your purified intellect, the formless 'knowing' state that is separated from that which gets 'known' as many changing forms.

HOW THE ONE KNOWS MANY?

बिम्बानुकृतिरादर्शो यद्वत्तद्वदियं चितिः दृश्याकारधृतेर्नानारूपतां प्रतिपद्यते।

*(Chiti, your own self-awareness 'knows', absorbs the 'known', and exists as the limited Jeeva with some limited world-scenario enveloping it. 'The real You' are limited by the limited information of the 'known')*

Like the mirror accepts and shines as all the images of the objects, Chiti also accepts the varieties of shapes of whatever is known.

एवं वित्तिरियं वेद्या वेद्यव्यावृत्तरूपतः न तु स्वभावतो वेद्या सा वित्तिर्विश्वसंश्रयायत एतद्वेदितुः स्याद्रूपं तस्मान्न

वेद्यते।विमृशाष्टावक्र रूपं निजमेवंविधं स्फुटम्।

*(The entire scene around you is your own Self existing as all the objects and people. You are the Chit-mirror staying as the reflection of the world. 'You' are limited by identifying with the 'known'.*

*Remove the 'Known' and stay only as the 'Knowing'.)*

In this manner, this 'Knowing one' (Vitti) can be known as something different from all the objects that get known. By nature she cannot be known (as another object), but this Vitti supports the entire world of known. Analyze Ashtaavakra your own natural state clearly in this manner.

WHO ARE YOU?

न त्वं शरीरं प्राणो वा मनो वाप्यस्थिरत्वतः।

You are not the body, or Praana or mind since all these are unstable (and are changing and moving).

शरीरं धातुनिकरं तत्ते रूपं कथं भवेत्।

Body is just a combined structure made of elements (which is limited by space and time measures, and is changing continuously); how can that be your real self?

तच्चान्यविषयाभासे त्वहंधियमतिव्रजेत्।एवं प्राणो मनोऽपि स्यादहंबुद्धिव्यतिक्रमात्।

अहंबुद्धिं न व्यतीत्य तिष्ठत्येषा परा चितिः।तस्माच्चितिः सर्ववेत्त्री।

*(When you say 'I', your awareness of yourself is expressed in language.*

*The agitation-less Self, is the agitation called the 'I'.*

*When you are aware of any object, this 'I' agitation is not there; but later you produce the thought as 'I saw the object'. At the instance of knowing the object, it is the pure self that is aware of the object; there is no 'I' there. The functions of Praana and the mind also are removed of this 'I' agitation.*

*Later you identify with the mind and Praana and identify with them as the 'I' agitation.*

*You as the pure 'knowing' state also are removed of this 'I' agitation.*

*'I' thought rises later on as an addition to all these functions.*

*Chiti alone, the 'you' as the Self-awareness alone, are the 'Knower of all' including the 'I' agitation.)*

This self-awareness alone shines forth as the 'I'.

When any object is known, then the body is out of this 'I' sense.

Similarly Praana and mind also are out of this 'I' sense.

This Supreme state of Chiti does not stay out of this 'I' sense ever.

Therefore, Chiti is the 'Knower of all'

TURNING THE VISION INWARD

त्वमष्टावक्र तत्वतः पश्य प्रत्यावृत्तचक्षुः स्वात्मानं केवलां चितिम्।

Ashtaavakra! Turn back your eyes towards yourself and see your own self (shining as your existence awareness) as Chiti, the only essence left back bereft of the mind, Praana, body and the intellect.

आदेशकाल एव स्वं पश्यन्त्युत्तमबुद्धयः।

Those of excellent purified intellects (who are freed of all desires) realize this, even as this gets instructed.

*(Later Janaka explains how he was one such excellent intellect.)*

चक्षुर्नैतत्तद् गोलकं ते मनश्चक्षुरुदाहृतम्।येन पश्यसि स्वप्नेषु तच्चक्षुर्मुख्यमुच्यते।

The eyes mentioned here do not refer to the physical eyes, but to the mind-eye.

When you experience the dream, you see with the mind-eye only, and that alone is the true eye of yours.

तस्य प्रत्यावृत्तिरपि प्रोच्यते शृणु भूसुर।

Hey Brahmin, the Deva of the earth (Bhusura)! I will explain how to turn the mind-eye inward.

अप्रत्यावृत्तचक्षुर्वै नैव पश्यति किञ्चन।

If the mind-eye does not get pulled away from the outside and turned inward, then it sees nothing.

HOW DO YOU SEE A SINGLE OBJECT AMONG SO MANY OTHER OBJECTS?

दिदृक्षुश्चक्षुषा किञ्चित्तदन्येभ्यो ह्यशेषतः प्रत्यावृत्त्य दृढं तस्मिन्नेव संयोजयेद्यदि तदा तद्भासते स्पष्टं नान्यदा तु

कदाचन।अन्यदा तु पुरोवृत्ति न स्पष्टं भासते क्वचित्।अभातकल्पमेव स्यादप्रत्यावृत्तचक्षुषा।एवं श्रोत्रत्वगादीनां

भूदेवावेहि संस्थितम्।मनसाऽप्येवमेव स्यात्सुखदुःखावभासनम्।नाप्रत्यावृत्तमनसा किञ्चिद्वेदितुमर्हति।तस्मात्

तदेकपरता प्रत्यावृत्तिश्च चक्षुषः।प्रत्यावृत्तं मनः शुद्धं निजरूपावभासकम्।

One who wants to see any object even in the outside, should remove the mind from all other objects and focus only on that object he wants to see; then alone, the object shines forth for him clearly, not otherwise.

If not focused, the object in front also will not get seen. If the eyes are not focused and removed from all the other objects, then the object is not seen at all, and is absent only.

Understand hey BhuDeva, it is the same with the senses of ears and skin also.

Mind also experiences joy and sorrow in the same way. If the mind is not removed from other objects, nothing can be known or experienced.

Therefore, single-minded focus and removal from all other objects of the mind are necessary when knowing anything (and the pure self-state also can be known through only such a method only).

*(But, to know the Self, the mind has to be pure.)* A pure mind will only reveal the true self-state.

अत्र ते संप्रवक्ष्यामि शृणु तन्नियतान्तरः।

I will explain this to you, listen with an attentive mind.

TWO FUNCTIONS OF THE MIND EMPLOYED IN SEEING ANY OBJECT

अगोचरश्चेदात्मासौ मनसा गोचरोऽपि च। अत्र मुह्यन्ति बहवः श्रुत्यागमविवेचकाः। मनोगोचरता बाह्ये द्विप्रकारेण संस्थिता। आद्यान्येभ्यः परावृत्तिः परा तत्परता भवेत्। अन्येभ्यस्तु परावृत्तिमात्रेऽपि मनसः सति न किञ्चित्द्वासयेद्वस्तु तटस्थावसरेषु तत्। तस्मात्तत्परताप्यत्र व्यापारो मानसः परः। एवं व्यावृत्तभावानां व्यापारद्वयभासनम्।

This Aatman is beyond the grasp of the mind, but is revealed also to the mind; even great learned men feel confused by these contradictory statements.

Mind-vision in the outside world is of two kinds.

The first one is removal from other things, and the other one is the fixed focusing on that which has to be seen. Just by withdrawing the mind from other things alone does not reveal the object desired, since the mind is in an indifferent state at that time; but one has to fix the mind fully on the object he wants to know, to the exclusion of all other thoughts. Therefore, the single minded focusing of the mind is very much necessary. This is how the mind functions two ways when 'knowing' the objects that exist outside as separated from each other.

ONLY A SINGLE MIND-FUNCTION NEEDED IN KNOWING THE CHITI

अव्यावृता चित्तिर्यस्मात्तस्मान्नात्र तथा भवेत्। अन्येभ्यस्तु परावृत्तिमात्रेणैवावभासयेत्।

Chiti is not something outside as an object; therefore it does not need such dual functions.

Just the turning away from all other thoughts itself is enough to know the Chiti (Self).

*(I will explain, how it is so.)*

यथा पुरस्थितादर्शे किञ्चिद्दर्शनहेतवे अन्येभ्यस्तु परावृत्तिराभिमुख्यं च तस्य वै अपेक्षयते दर्पणस्य

प्रतिबिम्बदिदृक्षुणा। गगनं दर्पणे द्रष्टुं यदा समभिवाञ्चति तदाऽन्येभ्यः परावृत्तिमात्रेण हि कृतार्थता।

गगनं सर्वतो व्याप्तं दर्पणे सर्वदा स्थितम्। अव्यावृत्तं किन्तु चान्यैरभिच्छन्नं न भासते सर्वाश्रयं सर्वगतमपि तैश्छादितं यतः। अतस्तेभ्यः परावृत्तिमात्रेणैव विभासते।

When anyone is seeing the reflections in the mirror that is in front of him, and if he has to view one particular reflection, he has to ignore the rest of the reflections and focus only on that reflection he wants to see. *(This holds good for seeing some particular reflection; but how to see the space in the mirror which is holding the reflections?)* Suppose he wants to see the space in between the reflections, then he just has to ignore all the reflections; that is all; and the space inside the mirror becomes revealed immediately.

The space pervades everything, and is reflected inside the mirror also. It was not seen because the reflections of the other objects cover it, though it was never removed from sight. Though it was everywhere throughout the mirror, and was the support of other reflections by allowing them to get seen, it can be revealed to the sight, if and only the sight is removed from all the other reflections.

*(Chiti, your self-awareness, the Aatman is all that whatever you know as the world, without changing itself or dividing itself, like the mirror-space.)*

एवं चित्तिः सर्वगता सर्वाश्रयतया स्थिता सर्वकाले समापूर्णा मनसि व्योमवदिद्वज्। तस्मादन्यपरावृत्तिमात्रं मनस इष्यते।

Similarly, Chiti which is everywhere, which is the support of all, fills all at all times in the mind, like the space, hey Dvija (Twice born). Therefore, only the removal from other thoughts alone is necessary to have the vision of the Chiti (Aatman).

*(Brahmin is 'twice-born' 'Dvija' because he has two births; one is the bodily birth from parents, another is when he is taught Brahman knowledge and is born in knowledge. 'Brahmana' means who is into the study of Brahman; it is not decided by birth.)*

पश्य विप्र चितिः कुत्र कदा नास्त्यवभासिनी।यदा यत्र च सा नास्ति न यदा नापि यत्र च

Observe hey Vipra! Where and when Chiti is not shining?

‘When’ ‘where’ she is not there, then there is no ‘then’ and ‘there’ also.

*(Self, the Aatman knows all the objects as located in space and time. If the Aatman was not there, who is there to know the place and time measures of the objects also?)*

तस्माच्चिदात्मावभासे मनसोऽन्यपरावृत्तिः केवलापेक्षिता नैवाभिमुख्यं नूतनं क्वचित्।

That is why, when the Chit-Aatman has to be visualized, the mind has to be removed of other thoughts only; there is nothing new that is going to rise like an object outside.

A PURE MIND ALONE CAN KNOW CHITI

आभिमुख्याभावहेतोरेवासवेद्यत्वमिष्यते।अत एव शुद्धमनोवेद्यं तत्त्वमुच्यते।अन्येभ्यस्तु परावृत्तिरेव शुद्धिर्हि

मानसी।एतदेव परं तत्त्वज्ञाने साधनमुच्यते।

Chiti is not clearly seen, because of the other thoughts covering it up, and so, it is said to be unknowable.

That is why that state of Reality-essence is said to be known by a pure mind alone.

A mind is said to be pure, when it is removed from other objects. In attaining the knowledge of the Truth of existence (TattvaJnaanam), this alone is said to be the excellent Saadhanaa.

यावन्न हि मनः शुद्धं तावज्ज्ञानं कथं भवेत्।शुद्धे मनसि वै ज्ञानं कथं वा न भवेद्ध्रुवम्।

उपक्षीणं सर्वमत्र साधनं तस्य शोधने।

As long as the mind is not pure, how can the knowledge rise at all?

In a pure mind, how cannot the knowledge rise up for certain?

All the other Saadhanaas (methods of realization) end, when the mind is purified.

कर्म वोपासनं वापि वैराग्यादिकमेव वा मनसः शोधने एव विनियुक्तं न चान्यथा।

तस्माच्छुद्धेन मनसा भासते तत्परं वपुः।

Be it KarmaYoga (doing action sincerely without any expectation of reward), or worship of any deity, or the development of dispassion and discrimination, all these serve the purpose of purifying the mind only.

Therefore, that supreme self is revealed through a purified mind only.’