

How Yoga becomes inevitable for society

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Abstracts:

We know that 'Yoga' is the most ancient and essential Philosophical system among other systems of Indian Philosophy. We find the praise of yoga in various scriptures. If we search and analysis the yoga profoundly, we must see various importance's of it for human being. It has been shown in this paper that how we can attain the peak position in our own place. The yogic method does not limited in the theory only but it also is practical in our life. We can attain our chief aim (emancipation) in this present life through the sincere practice of yoga. We have tried to show here that how we remain happy (mentally, bodily and transcendently) in our life through the sincere practice of yogic methods.

Introduction:

The natural desire of every human being is to fulfill aim. If he becomes succeed to fulfill his aim, he feels pleasure. In a single word, it may be stated that everybody wants pleasure. But, there is no pleasure without pain in this world. Hence, we find a proverb that pleasure pursues sorrow. The Yoga Philosophy leads us to the way of eternal cessation of all kinds of suffering like other spiritual systems of Indian Philosophy.

The term 'yoga' is used in a variety of senses. We find different kinds of definitions of yoga according to many philosophers and scriptures. Generally, the term 'yoga' means 'union'. The term 'union' indicates the connection of any two individuals. In this regard, we find some definitions such as according to the *Upaniṣads*, yoga is the union between individual self and absolute self, according to the '*Haṭayoga Pradīpikā*', yoga is the union between *prāṇa* and *apāna* (*vāyu*) etc. Again, according to the founder of Yoga Philosophy, Patañjali, yoga is the suppression of mental modifications (*Yogaścittavṛttinirodhaḥ*).¹The book '*Yogasūtra*' is most important and authentic book of yoga which was written by great Indian sage Patañjali. It contains one hundred and ninety five verses and divided into four parts viz. *samādhipāda*, *sādhanpāda*, *vibhūtipāda* and *kaivalyapāda*.

There we find four kinds of yoga viz. *rājayoga*, *jñānayoga*, *karmayoga* and *bhaktiyoga*. Among those, *rājayoga* is the supreme for attainment of our main aim (*mokṣa*). It is very true that we all suffer pain from birth to death. So, our aim is to become free from various pains on this life and should be free from birth-death circle eternally. For fulfilling this aim we have to take the help of both- *rājayoga* and *haṭayoga*. *Haṭayoga* is the activity of body where *rājayoga* is the activity of mind. Hence, 'Svātmārāma yogī says that both *haṭayoga* and *rājayoga* are complementary with each other'.²If each and everybody follows the way of yoga, we shall get a happy and ideal divine society.

II

We know that our body suffers from various diseases as well as mind also becomes distracted. For curing diseases we go to a doctor and take some medicines. But, the question is- is there any medicine which can cure all kinds of diseases completely or for whole life? In reply, we can say here that there is no medicine which can cure any ailment completely without any side-effect. For the cause of side-effect of medicine we suffer another ailment after curing one. In this connection, some statesmen of some doctors are given below: Dr. Hastings says, "After twenty-five years of practice I feel like the

disciple of Shakespeare, who said-‘Throw physic to the dogs’”.

Dr. Blakewell, M.D., M.R.C.S. (formerly vaccinator-general and Medical officer of Health, author of ‘Pathology and Treatment of small pox) says, “I have very little faith in vaccination, even as modifying the disease and none at all, as a protective in epidemics”.³ Here, a question may be arisen that- is there any way by which we may be

cured from ailments completely and without any side-effect? We can reply that of course, there is way. The way is the sincere practice of yoga (*āsana*, *prāṇāyāma* etc.) by which we may be cured completely without any side-effect. As for example, we mentioned some ailments and their remedies through the practice of *āsana* and *prāṇāyāmas* in the following:

Name of <i>āsanas</i>	beneficences
1. <i>Pavanamuktāsana</i> , <i>Suptabazrāsana</i> , <i>Mayurāsana</i>	Grow digestive power, Remove acidity, gas etc.
2. <i>Śīrśāsāna</i> , <i>Matsyāsana</i>	Grow memory, remove Hysteria, Pyorrhoea etc.
3. <i>Jānuśīrāsana</i> , <i>Gomukhāsana</i> , <i>Uṣṭrāsana</i>	Keep backbone flexible, remove rheumatic pain, make vigorous or <i>brahmacāri</i> etc. ⁴
Name of <i>prāṇāyāmas</i>	ailments and remedies
<i>Kapālabhāti</i>	Cure any type of cough disease. ⁵
<i>Suryabheda</i>	Cure rheumatic pain, grow brain power and destroy worm. ⁶
3. <i>Ujjāyī</i>	Grow digestive power
4. <i>Śītalī</i>	Remove fever, madness after snakebite, bile diseases etc. ⁷

Śruti says in praise of yoga (*āsana*, *prāṇāyāma* etc.) as follows:

“*Pṛthvaptejohanilakhe samuththite pañcātmake yogagune pravṛtte,*

Na tasya rogo na jarā na mṛtyuḥ prāptasya yogāgnimayaṁ śarīraṁ”.⁸

Again, Svātmārāma yogi, the author of the book ‘*Haṭayoga Pradīpikā*’ says in his book: “*Prāṇāyāmena yuktena sarvarogakṣayo bhavet,*

Ayuktābhyāsayogena sarvarogasamudbhavaḥ”. Verse no. 16.

The great Indian sage swami Abhedānanda says, “The yogis of India claim that through the breathing exercises all kinds of diseases can be cured and there is a science behind it”.⁹ He also says, “All the diseases like

tuberculosis and those others of the lungs will be driven away from the civilized community by a single generation of correct breathing (*prāṇāyāma*)”.¹⁰

Till now, we knew that we may be cured from diseases through the practice of *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma* etc. But, we are the complexity of body and mind. If our mind suffers various disturbances, we never could reach the peak position in any place like study, teaching, learning etc. We become free from all kinds of mental disturbances through the regular practice of yoga (*āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhyāna* etc.). It has been stated in the ‘*Yogacūḍāmaṇi Upaniṣad*’ that a yogi overcomes diseases by *āsana*, sin by *prāṇāyāma* and mental disorder by

pratyāhāra. Hence, the commentator of yoga, Vyāsa says in his commentary: “*Prāṇāyāmānabhyāsyatohasya.....na paraṁ prāṇāyāmāt tato viśuddhirmalānam diptiśca jñānasya iti*”.¹¹

III

There we find four kinds of yoga viz. *rājayoga*, *jñānayoga*, *bhaktiyoga* and *karmayoga*. Among those four, we shall discuss here regarding *rājayoga*. *Rājayoga* consists of eight limbs viz. *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna* and *samādhi*. We saw in previous discussion that how we may become free from physical diseases and mental disorders. Now, we shall try to see that how the other limbs of yoga become inevitable for us.

The first two (*yama* and *niyama*) lead us to the way of morality and this is the primary stage. Both are divided into five parts viz. non-violence, (*ahiṁsā*), truth (*satya*), non-covetousness (*asteya*), chastity (*brahmacarya*) and non-acceptance (*aparigraha*) where *niyama* contains five such as cleanliness (*śauca*), contentment (*santoṣa*), austerity (*tapah*), study of scripture (*svādhyāya*) and complete surrender to God (*Īśvara praṇidhāna*).

The first limb of *yama* (*ahimsa*) restricts us from any type of violence. Violence produces from anger, jealousy etc. Anger is the most vital foe to us by which a man may be converted to animal. At that time he/she is involved with any type of horrible work. But, if anybody remains in non-violence in his or her life, he or she never does any horrible work. We find it in the ‘*Yogasūtra*’, which is in the following:

“*Ahiṁsāpratiṣṭyāṁ tatsannidhou vairatyagaḥ*”.¹² For instance, we may mention that it has been noted in the ‘*Bhāgavatapurāṇa*’ that both- tiger and cow would drink water in a same pond and played together near the temple of *Bhagavāna Vaśiṣṭa*. Everyday we see so many violent incidents in our society, which are too horrible. We know that unjust or illegal action

produces bad fruit and everyone is bound to suffer his fruit of action. Thinking it we should restrain from doing all types of harmful work. Hence, we can say here that only non-violence will be able to free our society from terrorism, murder, inter-revolution etc. Now we shall try to see that how we may be benefitted through next two steps of *yama*. Truth or *satya* is very essential for everybody’s life. We should know it that without establishment of truth nobody can achieve highest truth (self). Hence, Gandhiji says, “Truth is God”. Nowadays, we see that maximum number of politician do not hold truth in their life. As a result, all the people are cheating, fraud by them, which is not expected. The other limb *asteya* has also important for the society. We see that maximum number of officer are included with bribe scandal, some head teachers are stealing mid-day meal rice, fire-wood etc. They are doing this type of work due to leading by too greed. If they hold non-covetousness in their life, they must be restrained from that type of unjust work. We find in the ‘*Yogasūtra*’ that if anybody establishes in non-covetousness, he gains all kinds of gems according to his will.¹³ We find an instance where the disciple of Mīnanātha, Gorakṣanātha had been gained when he has left his urine.¹⁴ Because, he was established in non-covetousness.

‘*Brahmacarya*’ is one of the most important limbs of yoga. Generally, the term ‘*brahmacarya*’ means abstention from sex. We shall be able to control our sex-organ, if we can control our five external organs at first. Only *brahmacarya* can a person vigorous by which he must be succeed in every step of his life. A student becomes better student, a businessman becomes better businessman and a serviceman can play his role best through the establishment of *brahmacarya*. Hence, Patañjali says, “*Brahmacarya pratiṣṭyāṁ vīryalābhaḥ*”.¹⁵ There is a statement in the ‘*Bhagavatapurana*’ where it has been mentioned that there was a demon ‘*Vṛttāsura*’ was killed by the king of deity Indra’s weapon ‘*bazra*’ which was made from the bone of

great sage Dadhici. Dadhici was established in *brahmacarya*.

The first step of *niyama* is *śauca* (cleanliness). Cleanliness is of two types viz. inner and outer. Through the pure thinking our mind becomes pure. It is called inner cleanliness. When we try to keep our body clean through soil, water, ash etc. always then it is called outer or external cleanliness (*vāhyaśauca*). If anybody remains in cleanliness always he never will wish to touch other's body and fully restrain from accompany with other. In this context, we may mention a quotation from the 'Yogasūtra' - "śaucāt svāñgajugupsā parairasaṁsargaḥ".¹⁶ Hence, in the perspective of above mentioned statements that cleanliness can restrain somebody from doing some unjust work like molestation, rape etc.

Santoṣa or contentment is another important part of yoga. We know that there are so many means for attaining pleasure through any kind of external earthly thing which are non-eternal. We know it that no non-eternal thing can provide eternal pleasure. So, we should not acquire those more of necessary. "We can attain too much pleasure only through the establishment of contentment".¹⁷ Till now, we have tried to see that how the first two steps lead us to the moral way. We can say here that those above mentioned two steps make us scrupulous. Only conscience or pure mind can stop a person from any horrible or illegal work.

The third limb of yoga is posture (*āsana*). We have discussed before that how we become benefitted by it. The fourth limb *prāṇāyāma* also helps us to keep our body and mind fit and calm. Similarly, the other limbs like *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇā* and *dhyāna* lead us to the way of spirituality. Those are also helps us for attaining *samādhi*. *Samādhi* is that limb of yoga by which we attain our main aim *mokṣa*.

IV

We know that due to the effect of three ingredients (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) our

nature and desire become different to each and every person. If our aim is to live diseaseless life, that is not adequate for us; because, we are rational animal. A banyan tree lives five hundred years but except it the tree has no function. A hog becomes always happy with food, drinks etc. Our aim is to attain in the form of inertia (*sāttika*). It will be possible only if we practise yoga sincerely regular for a long-time. Hence, we saw that yoga helps us to keep our body fit and mind calm, make us scrupulous, attain the main aim emancipation.

According to the law of *karma*, we are bound to suffer fruits of action, which is the cause of birth-death circle. It is a continuous process. If we do not become free from this circle, we have to suffer various miseries for many births. Hence, all the systems of Indian Philosophy have admitted liberation as chief aim of every human being. Among all the systems of Indian Philosophy we become free from all kinds of suffering (*mokṣa*) in this present life. Other systems admit that *prāraṅdha karma* does not destroy without suffering and for that cause we may not become free in this present life. But, following the way of yoga we may attain liberation in this present life through making the *kāyabyuha* (a yogi can make two or three similar bodies from his main body and mind). For instance, we may mention two names (Uddālaka and Vītahavya), who had attained *mokṣa* in their present life through *kāyabyuha* in ancient era.

V

In the perspective of above mentioned statements we can say here that yoga is not valuable for therapeutic values but it also valuable for its human value. Though we are living in the highly developed science and technological era, yet there is no scientific invention which can provide us eternal freedom from disease, sorrow, old-age, death and fruits of action. Only yoga can relief us from all kinds of miseries. Even, for enjoying worldly thing, our body and mind has to be healthy, diseaseless and calm always; because,

our body is a boat by which we have to across the life ocean and reach the sea bank (*mokṣa*).

Hence, nowadays we find that yoga has international acceptance for its integral part of our educational system as well as health care

systems. If all the people of society practice yoga, they will be physically healthy, mentally calm and spiritually evolved and hence more productive and happy.

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