

Part 21 (...Chapter VI continues) Seven States or Planes of Wisdom

Last time...

We discussed the fifth of the seven states or planes of wisdom: *asamśakti* or natural and total non-attachment or freedom. Towards this, we discussed: (1) total non-attachment or freedom and conviction in the nature of truth happen together, (2) the state of non-attachment or freedom is *asamśakti*, (3) perception of the world gives way to the feeling of being, and, (4) though engaged in ‘worldly activities’, one is established in an inner vision of non-duality.

Today...

Today, let’s briefly look into Vāsiṣṭha’s sixth and seventh states or planes of wisdom: *padārthābhavanī* or natural cessation of objectivity and *turiya* or liberated while living. There is not much to be said about these states as the gap between knower, known and knowing—melt and particularities also fade.

A similar thought has also been expressed in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣhad when the great sage Yājñavalkya says to Maitreyī: *“There are no means or instrument to illumine the Self, as the Self illumines all the modifications of the intellect and remains as their witness. By what means can you know this Self which shines by its own light?”*

But still, we have to say something as we cover these important teachings. So, let us try to discuss with the understanding that as one climbs the ladder of yoga—less is more.

VI. Padārthābhavanī or natural cessation of objectivity

Before coming to all this, it may have been felt that people, conditions and things when favorable—are the sources of joy. A closer examination by staying witness to the mind’s notions shows us that it is not so. Notions and our reactions rise and fall within consciousness or we could never be conscious of them.

Reactions and getting caught up in them is a habit and this habit can be let go when you sincerely wish to do so. Yoga is the system and means of disentanglement from habit and at the same time, abidance in witness-consciousness or the self. Just because we perceive someone or something does not mean the person or thing is external, separate or other.

When this truth lodges deep in the heart and mind, one rejoices in one's own self and the perception of duality and diversity ceases. The efforts made at the inspiration of others, bear fruition in direct spiritual experience. The man of wisdom is aware of objects only if he feels compelled to do so. This natural and spontaneous cessation of objectivity is called padārthābhavanī and it is the sixth state. Mental activity has been greatly decreased and even concepts such as unity and diversity do not arise. All bonds are severed and all doubts dispelled.

One reaching this state is called liberated in embodiment or a jīvanmukta. He lives a normal life but in an extraordinary way, like a house whose door swings open and closed naturally with the wind. He has attained something but truly nothing as what he has attained—is his own true nature.

VII. Turīya or liberated while living

There is no other support, by persistent practice—the vision of division ceases and one is fully established in one's own unconditioned being. Self-knowledge is spontaneous, natural and therefore unbroken—this state is known as liberated while living or turīya. Body-consciousness is completely overcome and in this state, the boundary of becoming is crossed and one abides in true being. When one reaches this stage, one goes beyond sorrow permanently.

Summary

Today, we discussed the sixth and seventh of the seven states or planes of wisdom: padārthābhavanī or natural cessation of objectivity, and, turīya or liberated while living. Let us briefly review all seven states or planes of wisdom.

1. Śubhecchā or a noble wish: When one clearly sees the danger in leading an unexamined life, one has given up any and all craving for pleasure as well, and one aspires for what is good and lasting—it is called a noble wish or śubhecchā.
2. Vicāraṇā or direct and steady observation of the mind: When the mind is directly observed without remission, it is also called the practice of inquiry or direct observation into the nature of the reality or vicāraṇā.
3. Tanumānasi or the thinned and weakened mind: When there arises a disinterestedness in the pleasure of the senses, it is true non-attachment based on intelligent discrimination—the mind is weakened and it becomes subtle and transparent or tanumānasi.
4. Satvāpatti or natural turning away from sense pleasure and dwelling in truth: When the first three are sincerely practiced, there arises in the seeker a natural turning away from sense-pleasures and a natural dwelling in truth. This result in purity or satva at heart is called satvāpatti.
5. Asamśakti or natural and total non-attachment or freedom: When the first four are sincerely practiced, there is total non-attachment or freedom and at the same time a conviction in the

nature of truth. There is great inner peace and joy independent of external objects and internal mental states. This state of non-attachment or freedom is asamśakti.

6. Padārthābhavanī or natural cessation of objectivity: When one rejoices in one's own self, the perception of duality and diversity ceases, and the efforts that one made at the inspiration of others, bear fruition in direct spiritual experience. The man of wisdom is aware of objects only if and when he feels compelled to do so. This natural and spontaneous cessation of objectivity is called padārthābhavanī.

7. Turīya Liberated while living: Coming to this stage, there is no other support, by persistent practice the vision of division ceases and one is fully established in one's own unconditioned being. Self-knowledge is spontaneous, natural and therefore unbroken, that state is known as liberated even while living here or turīya.

Next time

We are coming towards the end of this series on the important teachings of the Yoga Vāsiṣṭha. Next time we cover a very interesting story or analogy, 'The dreadful elephant in the forest of saṃsāra'. Following that, we will conclude with a light review of the core teachings of the Yoga Vāsiṣṭha.

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