

Part 5 (Chapter III begins...)

1. The illusion

We often think action and renunciation are external but Vāsiṣṭha tells us...

“What is done by the mind alone is action; and what is abandoned or renounced by the mind alone is renunciation.”

Action: This implies that we must be very careful with what we think as mental action is real action. There is a difference between what ‘we think’ and what ‘thought thinks’ and we must be very clear about this point continually. Let thought think and exhaust itself, we must know in every moment that it is thought that is thinking and we are aware of its movement or we are caught in its cycle. The seeds of experiences thus fall on the soil of the mind to sprout in time, and thus, add momentum to the cycles of life and death.

Renunciation: In the same token, outer renunciation means nothing if one is not completely free from the person, condition or object mentally or psychologically. But, we have to be careful here as often, *physical renunciation is essential and necessary till mental renunciation takes hold firmly*. Rare is the person who can at one stroke effect true renunciation in the mind of subtle and deep rooted attachments directly.

2. The cure

The mind runs after objects because it seeks fullness and feels that these objects will bring fullness. *Actually, the mind does not run after objects really but after the notion one has that about them and the hopes of what having them may bring*. If this notion was not there, the mind would not run after any object. This notion is created by the mind and so, it runs after itself only.

Inner fullness cannot come if it is not already there as the object will continue to be outside but fullness is experienced inside or within. It is a strange game the mind plays in assuming a seeming split within and somehow feeling that one part of this tear called the object will bring fullness—while staying full all through this jugglery. The object is in the mind and till the inner intelligence steadily holds this close at heart, the jugglery will continue.

The mind that has been relieved of its object becomes steady, then by deep meditation it attains the supreme state.

3. Spiritual discipline

Spiritual discipline is positive, not punitive. When the inner intelligence awakens, it shines a floodlight on what is best, while habit insists on the habitual. When one has seen the dangers in habitual ways, and, sincerely seeks what is best – the inner intelligence awakens and shows the way. *Spiritual discipline is that inner strength to stay the course of what is best, enduring the force of blind habit till it weakens and wisdom strengthens.* When the mind is properly and effectively disciplined, the world-illusion vanishes.

The best treatment for this dreadful disease known as saṁsāra or the perception of world-illusion is the abandonment the pursuit of pleasure and this is conquest of the mind and freedom from the illness of saṁsāra.

4. All these help

Everything helps but you have to do what needs to be done and keep doing what is best every moment, every day and without remission.

Awakening: Along with examined living, these help awaken the mind: ① the study of the scriptures is study of the self through scriptures, and, ② the company of the wise, is company with wisdom—both these help kindle one’s own flame of awakening.

Having awakened: Having awakened, it is necessary to stay awake, this prevents existing concepts from simply rising and falling to going into action. Strengthen the awakened mind by relentless use, for this, you must stay awake each moment. Staying awake means a mind that is watched without remission, then only will the habitual mind weaken by disuse. For this: ③ self-effort is necessary to embrace the good and let go of habit, and must be strengthened in all that you do, and, ④ at the same time there must be abandonment of the pursuit of pleasure which is itself tranquility of mind.

Gradually, a fullness is experienced as the mind merges into the mind, rising above the mind itself towards establishment in the supreme state.



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