

IMPORTANCE OF YAMA NIYAMA IN YOG SADHANA

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Abstract

Yoga is the ancient Spiritual practice method in India. Yoga is described in many great Indian Scriptures for getting liberation (Moksha). Yog Sadhana is the process through a Yogi practices different methods of Yoga at different stage. The purpose of yoga is to get (Moksha). Yogi Patanjali describe the 8 Steps of yoga for achieving the highest goal of yoga Moksha (Liberation). Samadhi and Moksha is the purpose of Yoga and Yog Sadhana. Yama is the first step and Niyama is the second step. Yama and Niyama both are very important part in the eight steps of Yoga. This paper is to show and describe the importance of Yama and Niyama in Yog Sadhana and life. Most of the people and yoga students know about the Yama and Niyama. However, many people and students of Yoga focus more on Asana (yoga posture), Pranayama (Breathing methods) etc. This paper is an attempt to make people and students of yoga to understand the importance and benefits of Yama and Niyama. So that they can follow Yama and Niyama in their Yoga practice and life. If a Sadhak wants to achieve the highest goal of yoga then Yama and Niyama is very important for his Yog Sadhana.

Keywords: Yoga, Meditation, Yama, Niyama

INTRODUCTION

Yama is the first and Niyama is the second step of Yoga describe by Yogi Patanjali in his Patanjali Yog sutra also known as Yogdarshan. The purpose of yoga and life is to experience the highest level of Yoga that is Samadhi and Moksha (Liberations) from all kind of pain and sorrow. To achieve the highest level of Yoga and life, one need to practice Yama and Niyama very carefully in his daily life and yoga practice. If not then one can not achieve the highest level of yoga samadhi , Moksha. Many scriptures and Yogi in India has given lots of importance of Yama Niyama in their Yog sadhana and life.

IMPORTANCE OF YAMA NIYAMA IN YOGSADHANA

Yoga is described in many Indian scriptures by many different great sages. Yogi Patanjali described Yoga and purpose of Yoga in his scripture very systematically and it is known as Patanjali Yog Sutra or Yogdarshan. Patanjali Yoga sutra have 4 Pad (Chapters).

There are total 195 Yoga Sutra (Verse) in Patanjali Yog Sutra.

1, Samadhi Pad : 51, 2, Sadhan Pad : 55, 3, Vibhuti Pad: 55, 4, Kaivalya Pad : 34

There are 8 parts of Yoga practice is described in Patanjali Yog Sutra. These 8 parts or 8 steps are actually connected with each steps. It is similar as stairs to go to the roof of a house.

These 8 steps of Yoga is also Popularly known as Ashtangyoga.

Yogashchittavrittinirodhah 2-1

Yoga is restraining the mind-stuff (Chitta) from taking various forms (Vrttis). The above Yoga sutra (verse) is describe in the 1st chapter of 2nd sutra from Patanjali Yog sutra. Why do we need to practice Yoga is very well described in this 2nd sutra of 1st chapter. It means Yoga is about having completely control and mastery over the mind to stop the activities of mind. We all know that mind is always full of different different thoughts. If the mind is disturbed restless then one can not enter in the deeper and higher level of Yoga which is known as Dhyana (Meditation) and Samadhi (Super Conscious).It is very hard to find such Yogi at present who can have completely control over the mind. Most of the people and sadhak forget what is Yoga and what is the purpose of Yoga. Yogi Patanjali and all other great Yogi of India and great scriptures have given lots of importance of Yama and Niyama in their teaching and scriptures. Because Yama and Niyama helps to prepare the body and mind to make it more pure and calm. Suppose if a person does bad work. He steal some important things from others. So can he be relaxed? Mostly he will be in fear and restless that if someone know he steal something then he may get punishment and bad name in society too. So there will be lots of fear in his mind and he will be very restless. That's why Yogi Patanjali and other Yogi and Scriptures have given lots of importance of Yama and Niyama in there scriptures and teaching. However, people often ignore the very important and basic things in Yoga and life. Yogi Patanjali describe the 8 steps of Yoga and Yama and Niyama at the most beginning. Yama and Niyama is great foundation of Yoga which make body and mind more healthy, pure, calm and powerful. However, sadhak and people often give importance of Asana, Pranayama and Meditation but do not give so

much importance of Yama and Niyama. So it become harder for everyone to experience higher level of Yoga which is Meditation and Samadhi. Some important Yog sutra from Patanjali Yog sutra says very clearly about the importance of Yama and Niyama in Yoga.

Yama Niyama Asana Pranayama Pratyahara Dharna Dhyan Samadhayo Ashtava Anggani. 2-29.

These 8 steps of Ashtangyoga is described in the second chapter of Patanjali Yog sutra (Sadhan Pad) 2-29.

1, Yama : Social Discipline, 2, Niyama : Self Discipline, 3, Asana : Posture, 4, Pranayama : Breath Control, 5, Pratyahara : Withdrawal of Mind from the senses, 6, Dharna : Concentration, 7, Dhyan : Meditation 8, Samadhi : State of Super Consciousness

The first step of Ashtangyoga is Yama (Social Discipline). There are total 5 Yama.

Ahinsasatyasteyabrahmacharyaparigraha yamah 2-30

1, Ahimsa : Non Violence, 2, Satya : Truth, 3, Asteya : Non Stealing, 4, Brahmcharya: Celibacy, 5, Aparigraha: Non Possessiveness.

Yogi Patanjali gave so much importance of these Yama and Niyama that he said in next verse very clearly.

Jatideshakalasangamavachchinnah sarvabhauma mahavratam 2-31

These are unbroken by time, place, purpose, and caste, are (universal) great vows. So from the above verse itself we can understand the importance Yama and Niyama. It means one should not stop the following of Yama and Niyama in any situation if he wants to really make his body and mind get prepared for the Samadhi and Moksha. All these Yama and Niyama are very deeply connected with our each and every action in daily life. If people follow the Yama and Niyama then his Yoga journey will be very successful. If people follow Yama Niyama in any society and country then society and country will be more healthy and peaceful. We can see these days in society that people do not have patience and for small reason people do big crime, murder etc. Because people have forgotten the importance of Yama (Social Discipline) and Niyama (Self Discipline). Yama is social discipline and Yogi Patanjali gave so much importance of it that he put Yama in the first step of his Ashtangyoga. Yama is very important for Yoga sadhak as well as for normal common people. Yama should not be broken by anyone at any circumstances.

If we want to do Yog sadhana or want to live normal peaceful life then also Yama help and protect us as great foundation for the success in Yoga and life.

The Second step of Ashtangyoga is Niyama (Self Discipline). There are total 5 Niyama

Sauchasantoshatapahsvadhyayeshvara- pranidhanani niyamah 2-32

1, Saucha (Cleanliness), 2, Santosha (Contentment), 3, Tapas (Discipline), 4, Svadhyaya (Self study), 5, Isvara Pranidhana (Surrendering to God).

Yama and Niyama are very important part of Ashtangyoga given by Patanjali. Yogi Patanjali describe the benefits of Yama and Niyama with very specific verses.

Ahimsha Pratishthayam Tat Sannidhau Vairatyagah. (2-35)

If a person is practicing and following Ahimsa (Non Violence) then all kind of violence is dropped by itself.

Satyapratishthayam kriyafalashrayatvam 2-36

By the establishment of truthfulness the Yogi gets the power of attaining for himself and others the fruits of work without the works.

Asteyapratishthayam sarvaratnopasthanam 2-37

By the establishment of non-stealing all wealth comes to the Yogi.

Brahmacharyapratishthayam viryalabhah 2-38

By the establishment of continence energy is gained.

Aparigrahasthairye janmakathantasanbodhah 2-39

When he is fixed in non-receiving he gets the memory of past life.

Sauchat svangajugupsa parairasansargah 2-40

Internal and external cleanliness being established, arises disgust for one's own body, and non-intercourse with other bodies.

Sttvashuddhisamanasyaikagryendriyajayatmadarshanayojnatvani cha 2-41

Purification of the Sattva also arises, cheerfulness of the mind, concentration, conquest of the organs, and fitness for the enlightenment of the Self.

Santoshad Anuttamah Sukhalabhah 2-42

From contentment comes superlative happiness.

Kayendriyasiddhirashuddhikshayat Tapasah 2-43

The result of mortification is bringing powers to the organs and the body, by destroying the impurity.

Svadhyaad Ishtadevatasanprayogah 2-44

By repetition of the mantra comes the realization of the intended deity.

Samadhisiddhirishvarapranidhanat 2-45

By sacrificing and surrendering all to Isvara (GOD) comes Samadhi.

Yama Niyama in other Indian Yoga text and Scriptures:

Yama and Niyama both are very well described in Patanjali Yog sutra by great Yogi Patanjali.

However, Yama and Niyama both are also described in many other Indian ancient Yoga text and scriptures.

Hathyog Pradipika :

Hathyog Pradipika is another great Yoga text and widely well known by Yoga students and people around the world. Hathyog Pradipika is Mostly known as practicing of Asana (Yoga posture), Pranayama (Breathing control) and other Yoga practice methods.

But there are also 10 Yama and 10 Niyama have mentioned in Hathyog Pradipika.

These are the 10 Yama in Hathyog Pradipika 1, Ahimsa (Non-violence) 2, Satya (Truth) 3, Asteya (Non-Stealing) 4, Brahmcharya (Contenance) 5, Kshma (Forgiveness) 6, Dhriti (Endurance) 7, Daya (Compassion) 8, Aarjwan (Humility) 9, Mitahara (Moderate diet) 10, Saucha (Cleanness) There are 10 Niyama in Hathyog Pradipka 1, Tapa (Austerity) 2, Santosha (contentment) 3, Astikya (Faith in the Supreme God) 4, Dana (Charity) 5, Ishwar Pujan (Worship of God) 6, Siddhant Shravan (Listening of scriptures) 7, Lajja (Modesty) 8, Tapa (Austerity)

9, Mati (Discerning intellect) 10, Havan (Sacrifice) India is such a great country which have so many great scriptures and each scripture is full of knowledge and wisdom. There are also other scriptures which have mentioned some part of Yama and Niyama or almost similar concepts. Upanishad are known as very great scripture for getting more depth knowledge about Yoga, Meditation and Moksha. Yama and Niyama have been also described in Upanishad. Darshan Upanishad:1:6 , 2:1-2, Shandilya Upanishad: 1: 4, Yajnavalkya Samhita: 1: 49-50, So we can see most of the Yoga text and other scriptures are giving lots of importance of Yama and Niyama.

CONCLUSION

Yama Niyama is the most important and foundation of Yoga. If any sadhak wants to experience Higher level of Yoga Samadhi and Moksha then they must follow Yama Niyama in their life and Yogsadhana.

SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Scientific experimental research may be needed to show the results and benefits of Yama and Niyama. We need to do some experimentally research on dedicated Yogi and sadhak who has been following Yama and Niyama in their life since 5-10 years honestly. However, it will be too hard to find such subjects, in this materialistic world.

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