

Namaskar

We are in the sixth session of Education through Yoga, by Yoga, in Yoga, about Yoga. Yesterday we were dealing with the *yamas* and *niyamas* as ethico-religious practices, precisely called as *Āchāra Dharma Nīti Mīmāṃsā*^{1 2}, *Āchāra Dharma Nīti Pranali*³.

So, we were saying that those are not moral-ethical practices. I gave you the example of Guruji's teachings where he brought in *yamas* and *niyamas* in *āsanas*.

Let me make a clarification here: Guruji spoke about violation of *ahimsā* in our *Trikoṇāsana*, that really did not mean that we were committing *himsā* in the sense it is understood in moral-ethical parlance, because you know what is *himsā* and what is *ahimsā* in moral-ethical frame. Yet it would be *himsā* in an *āsana*, on a part of body, or *himsā* on the mind, or by the mind, *himsā* on the breath, etc. But that *himsā* is totally different than our idea of *himsā* in moral-ethical principles. Yet, there was *himsā* according to Guruji. When we did our *āsanas* we were committing *himsā*. It is not that we were ferocious, not that we were like wild beasts, not that we were predators. So, it is totally a different parameter to understand what is *ahimsā* while you are in *Trikoṇāsana* or any *āsana*, or *prāṇāyāma*. When you are interacting within yourself it is a different connotation to *himsā* and *ahimsā*.

So, in yoga we are introduced to *himsā* and *ahimsā* unto ourselves, by ourselves, which is very important. While in social realm, we understand someone committing *himsā* on someone. Someone afflicted, inflicted *himsā*. So, there is one person who is in *himsā*, and the other person who is suffering, on account of *himsā*. So that's why these are not moral-ethical principles because *ahimsā*, *satya*, *asteya*, *brahmacarya*, etc. are subjectivistic, they are *intra*-personal, unlike in moral-ethical principle they are *inter*-personal, all the *yamas* and *niyamas* when they come in moral-ethical framework, there is interpersonal aspect of all that, and here is an intrapersonal.

So that's why one more point I am divulging you to reinforce the position in your mind, that Patañjali is not speaking about moral-ethical principles, because *ahimsā*, *satya*, *asteya* can come in *prāṇāyāma*, in *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, *samādhi* even. So in what way would they come? We don't become predators there, we don't become ferocious, yet there can be *ahimsā*. I will just give you one more example before I draw a curtain on this. If there is a baby next to me, I just give a mild pinch. The baby cries, it's an affliction to the baby. But suppose I give the pinch of same intensity to an adult, the adult doesn't feel any affliction by that pinch, for a

1 *Mīmāṃsā* = One of the six *darśana*. The essence of the Veda was distilled by the great seers (*ṛṣi*). Its doctrine are known as *darśana*. The six Indian schools of thought (*darśana*) were presented to us by six *ṛṣi*; Kapila presented *sāṃkhya*; Patañjali, *yoga*; Gautama, *nyāya*; Kaṇāda, *vaiśeṣika*; Jaimini, *pūrva mīmāṃsā*; and Bādarāyaṇa, *uttara mīmāṃsā (vedānta)*. Yogācārya B.K.S. Iyengar *Aṣṭādālā Yogamālā*, Allied Publishers Private Ltd, Vol. 7, p. 57.

2 *Mīmāṃsā* is a Sanskrit word that means "reflection" or "critical investigation" and thus refers to a tradition of contemplation which reflected on the meanings of certain Vedic texts.
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mīmāṃsā

3 See also lesson N. 4 note N. 7.

baby, which is a tender baby; a mild pinch also will make him cry. But for an adult person, the same pinch of same intensity may not create any affliction at all. That person will not cry. So, the parameter of *hiṃsā* has so many aspects, which also we have to consider.

Now, when we are in *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, etc., we are not pinching ourselves to say that we are committing *hiṃsā*, yet there is *hiṃsā*. We may not be agonized, we may not be afflicted, yet there will be *hiṃsā* committed. So, therefore, it's a totally different parameter for both *hiṃsā-ahiṃsā* in the social realm as well as in the yogic realm. Anyway, the point is that these are ethico-religious principles.

6:01

And therefore we have embarked upon the concept of *dharma* yesterday. And I made a brief description about what *dharma* is in comparison with religion. Then yesterday (5th lesson) we took that definition which is very popular, very famous in philosophy, Indian philosophy, which as I said:

One who is falling, one who has fallen, one who is about to fall, one who may fall, that which sustains is *dharma*.⁴

Now let me open out this little analysis here. When it says it sustains, what is it? Say, understand this concept of *sustaining*. If a pavement dweller is to be sustained, it is not very expensive. It doesn't cost more. Perhaps you can just give a tent to the person and he would be sustained. He is a pavement dweller after all, but somebody who is a multi millionaire, multi billionaire is to be sustained, you can understand the cost of it. So, with reference to economics, in the dimension of economics, sustaining a person who is poor is simpler. Sustaining a person who is very rich is difficult.

So, *dharma* will sustain a human being who has average duty consciousness, who doesn't have sufficient duty consciousness, sustaining him will be one proposition. And one who has very high degree of this consciousness, sustaining that person will be another proposition, *dharma* will sustain him very well. So, that's how that aspect also has to be understood.

Now, does *dharma* merely sustain us? Does it mean that we must be just sustainable and sustained in the world, to be in the world, we require much more than mere sustenance. So, the sustenance concept is also flexible. And *dharma* will cater to all that.

Now, there is one of the statements in one of the *Dharmaśāstra*⁵ *Grantha*⁶, it is said:

If you sustain *dharma* in one degree, *dharma* will sustain you in hundred sub degrees. We need to do little bit. It will do a lot.

4 See also lesson N. 5, note N. 4.

5 It is a genre of Sanskrit theological texts, and refers to the treatises (*śāstra*) of Hinduism on *dharma*. There are many *Dharmaśāstras*, variously estimated to be 18 to about 100, with different and conflicting points of view. Each of these texts exist in many different versions, and each is rooted in *Dharmasūtra* texts dated to 1st millennium BCE that emerged from Kalpa (Vedanga) studies in the Vedic era. ... <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dharmaśāstra>

6 In Sanskrit, *grantha* is literally 'a knot'. It is a word that was used for books, and the script used to write them. This stems from the practice of binding inscribed palm leaves using a length of thread held by knots. Grantha was widely used to write Sanskrit in the Tamil-speaking parts of South Asia from about the 5th-century CE into the modern times. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grantha_script

So, that is how *dharma* works, that's the proportion in which it works. It doesn't just reciprocate. It has always the bounty.

Therefore *dharma* has been considered to be something like mother. For a mother, you need to do a wee bit, and the mother will give you abundant. The mother doesn't have mercantile mind that you are given something like ten units, and she would give therefore ten units to the child. No! The mother's magnanimity is different. Similarly, *dharma* is considered as a mother, and it has that magnanimity. So, it not only sustains, when it is said that it sustains, it does much more than that, it has that magnanimity.

The statement in the text there:

... .. *dharmo rakshatiye rakshitaḥ* ⁷

if you protect *dharma*, it will protect you, hundred folds, thousand folds, million folds. So, that is another definition of *dharma*.

10:38

Now, as I said, it won't be sufficient for us that we are sustained by *dharma*, we need much more than that. Are we all in this world just living to be sustained or do you look for something much more? *Dharma* also gives that. There is another definition of *dharma*. There are several definitions of *dharma*.

I will give you another definition of *dharma*. According to that definition, it is said:

*yataḥ abhyudaya niḥśreyasa siddhiḥ saḥ dharma*⁸

What is *dharma*? Where do you get *abhyudaya*? Not only sustenance, but then evolvment. You get that wealthiness, *abhyudaya* is a wealthiness. So, you get the wealthiness in all the *laukika* ⁹ worlds, all the planes in which we will be moving. So, *dharma* gives *abhyudaya* in all the *lokas* ¹⁰.

7 *Manusmṛti* 8.15. which is a collection of Sanskrit verses dealing with 'Dharma', a collective name for human purpose, their duties and the law. Various topics will be dealt with, but this volume of the series includes 12 discourses (*adhyaya*).

<https://www.wisdomlib.org/hinduism/book/manusmriti-with-the-commentary-of-medhatithi/d/doc200909.html>

8 *Dharma* (is) that from which (results) the accomplishment and Exaltation of the Supreme Good. 'Abhyudaya' means knowledge of the essences. 'Niḥśreyasa' is final cessation of pain. That from which both of them result is *dharma*. ... This dharma will be later on described as been characterised by forbearance. If it is the effect of constant contemplation and other practices of Yoga and is the same as adristam (the invisible, potential after-effects of actions, or Merit and Demerit) than it is producible by positive performances. Vaiśeṣika phylosophy, *Kaṇādasūtra* (*Vaiśeṣikasūtra*) I. 2, in *The sacred books of the Hindus*, Translated by various Sanskrit scholars, Edited by Major B. D. Basu I. M. S. *Vaiśeṣikasūtra* p. 5-6

<https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.274471/page/n49/mode/2up>

9 a. (i) relating or belonging to or occurring in every-day life, common, usual, ordinary, current (opp. Vedic or learned); belonging to the world of (--°ree); m. pl. ordinary people (opp. scholars, adepts); men of the world; people; n. affairs of the world, general custom: -gña, a. knowing the ways of the world; -tva, n. usualness, ordinariness. www.sanskritdictionary.com

10 Loka is a Sanskrit concept in Indian religions, that means plane or realm of existence. According to Hindu cosmology, the universe contains 7 upper and 7 lower planes of existence. In the Purāṇas and in the Atharvaveda, there are 14 worlds, seven higher ones (*Vyahrtis*) and seven lower ones (*Pātālas*) viz. *bhu*, *bhuvas*, *sva*, *maha*, *janas*, *tapas*, and *satya* above and *atala*, *vitala*, *sutala*, *rasātala*, *talātala*, *mahātala*, *pātāla* and *naraka* below.

The scholar Deborah Soifer describes the development of the concept of lokas as follows:

So, there is the concept of *Sapta Lokas*. So it will take care of us, not only sustains us, but it will give you *abhyudaya*. *Abhyudaya* is to enrich us. So, it gives *abhyudaya* in *lokas* and then it gives *niḥśreyasa*. *Niḥśreyasa* means ultimate Good, final Good, ultimate Good. So, *dharma* in its repertoire has so much to offer that it will give us *abhyudaya* to *niḥśreyasa*. That's why the definition which comes in *Vaiśeṣika Darśana*

yataḥ abhyudaya niḥśreyasa siddhiḥ saḥ dharmah

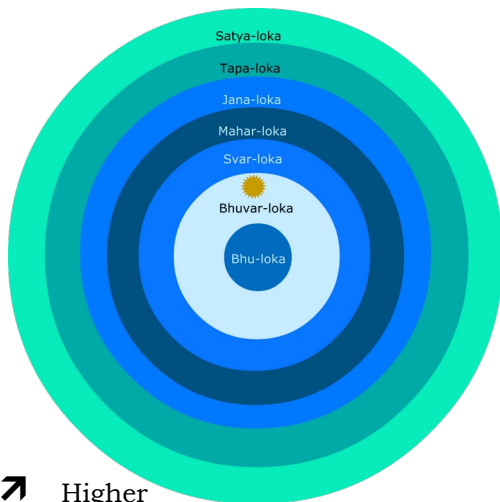
Now, this *dharma* concept is so subjectivistic.

Another misconception prevalent is: the *punya* is *dharma*, and *pāpa* is *adharma*. *Pāpa-punya* (virtue-vice) that's one pair. *Dharma-adharma* is not the same pair. *Dharma-adharma* is another pair.

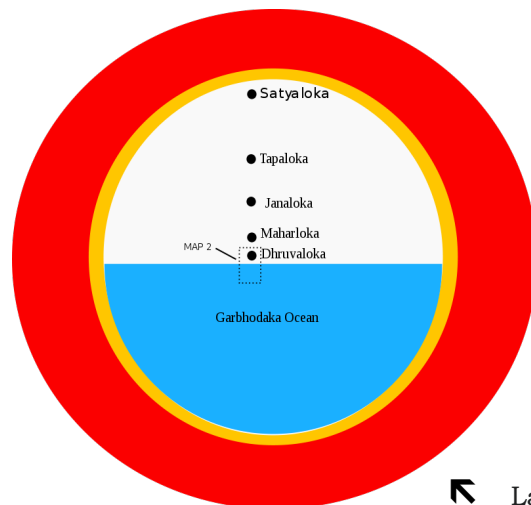
13:30

The concept of a *loka* or *lokas* develops in the Vedic literature. Influenced by the special connotations that a word for space might have for a nomadic people, *loka* in the Veda did not simply mean place or world, but had a positive valuation: it was a place or position of religious or psychological interest with a special value of function of its own. Hence, inherent in the 'loka' concept in the earliest literature was a double aspect; that is, coexistent with spatiality was a religious or soteriological meaning, which could exist independent of a spatial notion, an 'immaterial' significance.

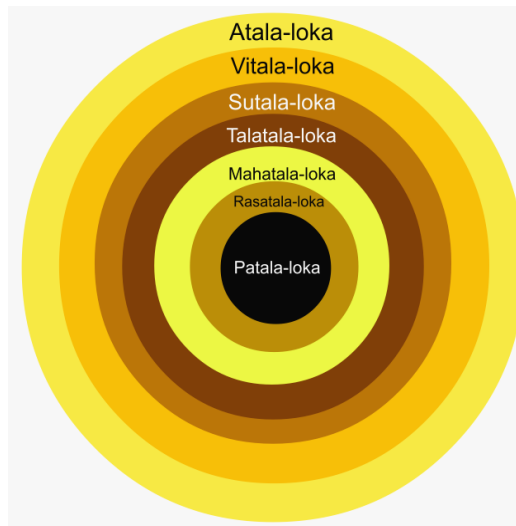
The most common cosmological conception of *lokas* in the Veda was that of the *trailokya* or triple world: three worlds consisting of earth, atmosphere or sky, and heaven, making up the universe. ... <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Loka>



↗ Higher seven Lokas
Bhurvaloka is the space between the earth and the sun.
Bhu-loka literally means 'the earth-world'.



↖ Large scale structure of the *Brahmanda* (material sphere-like Universe). The Cosmic Egg.



← The Lower seven Loka of Hindu Cosmology

Generally, the *puṇya* will be universal. The vice is vice, anywhere, anytime, the virtue is virtue anywhere, anytime, except few exceptions. Generally, we can understand that the virtue is virtue in any location, in any region. So, we know what are virtues for human beings, and what are vices in human beings. So if, both things, if they are bad things in us, we say these are vices, if they are good things, we say these are virtues. The man has been endowed with intelligence to identify *pāpa* (vice) and *puṇya* (virtue). To some extent, we have this faculty to identify something that is virtuous, something as vicious. It is not something altogether out of sphere of human intelligence.

So, therefore, what is *pāpa* and what is *puṇya* can be determined, can be said, can be declared and can be understood. Man is endowed with intelligence to understand vice and virtue. However that is not the case of *dharma*. The *Mahābhārata* has a wonderful quotation, which says:

The *dharma* is decided in the deep core of the heart. In the deep core of the heart *dharma* is decided.

Dharma is quite relative, it changes from person to person. The *pāpa-puṇya* doesn't change from person to person. What is *puṇya* to me is also *puṇya* to you. What is *pāpa* to me is *pāpa* to you. What I consider as virtue is also considered as virtue by all others. What is considered as vice is also considered as vice by others. But this is not the case of *dharma*.

*dharmasya tattvaṃ nihitaṃ guhāyām*¹¹

In the deep cave, this complex concept of *dharma* is decided. What is my *dharma* and what is your *dharma*, it has a personal reference. What is *dharma* for me may not be *dharma* for you. But what is *puṇya* for me is *puṇya* for you also. What is *adharma* for me may not be *adharma* for you. But what is *pāpa* for me is also *pāpa* for you. So, not to confuse between *pāpa* and *puṇya* and *dharma* and *adharma*.

16:42

I'll just give you one example here. Very well know that the two persons in, actually, counter-position to each other, are both adhering to *dharma*. Therefore, in discussions of the *dharma*, this example comes very often.

In *Mahābhārata*, Bhīṣma fought against Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, of whom he was a devotee. Bhīṣma was a devotee of Kṛṣṇa. His name has been mentioned as one of the prominent devotees of Nārāyaṇa, of Kṛṣṇa. There is a long list:

Prahlād, Narada, Parashar, Puṇḍarikā, Vyāsa, Ambarīṣa, Sukha, Sounaka, Bhīṣma Kavya.

Bhīṣma comes there. He is a devotee. But in the battlefield of *Mahābhārata*, he is standing against Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is not siding Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the battle. He is standing in opposite. That is his *dharma*. He was not in *adharma*, it was his perfect *dharma* to be positioning himself in opposition of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. On the other hand, in Rāmāyaṇa, Vibhīṣaṇa another devotee, devotee of equal calibre, because his name also appears in that verse:

Prahlād, Narada, Parashar, Puṇḍarikā, Vyāsa, Ambarīṣa, Sukha, Sounaka, Bhīṣma Kavya, Rukmāṅgada, Vasiṣṭha, Vibhīṣṇadhya.

11 This is a verse spoken by Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja in the *Mahābhārata Vana-parva* (313.117).

His name comes there. He betrays his brother, who is pitted against Bhagavān Śrī Rāma, and he joins Śrī Rāma. He fights along with his Bhagavān, it is *dharma*. Bhīṣma fights against Bhagavān, it is also *dharma*.

Dharma has so many other factors to be considered, so *dharma* is a complex concept. That is why *Bhāgavadgītā* also says that the *karma*, the principle of *karma* is very difficult to comprehend and understand. This is not that *dharma* is complex, we are complex. So, one of the lessons to follow, we will try to divulge this as to how we ourselves are very complex. We are not simple. Our psyche, consciousness of human beings is very complexed. All dogs are dogs, all cats are cats, all elephants are elephants, all lions are lions. All human beings are not human beings. In their consciousness fabric, all human beings are not human beings. Sometimes human beings can be worse than a cobra. A human being can be worse than a lion. A human being can be worse than a tiger, can be worse than a crocodile. That is why human psyche itself is very complexed. Whereas, we end up saying *dharma* is confusing, confounding, yoga is a very complex subject. We are complexed, not that they are complexed.

So, therefore, in *Dharma Nīti Mīmāṃsā*, the *dharma* is so important. Today we are all, actually in run up to yoga; the essential yoga is far away from us. But today yoga has become very fashionable, and we all think that we are all doing yoga. But there is a verse in *Bhāgavadgītā* sixth chapter, which describes that, for a neophyte, for a raw beginner, the yoga is in his *karma*.

Whereas we have made the yoga so technical subject - get a mat, get a prop do the pose like this, technically do like this - so we are taught to do the pose technically perfect. We have made the subject very, very technical. Whereas *Bhāgavadgītā* says: Where does the Yoga commence for a beginner?

BG 6.3 *āruruṣor muner yogaṃ*
karma kāraṇam ucyate

... ..

The essential yoga starts when the seeker has *karma* consciousness. When the seeker has *karma* consciousness, that is to some extent *dharma* consciousness. More concern about right and wrong from *dharma* point of view; not right and wrong from technicality point of view. Otherwise you will say somebody is doing right *Trikoṇāsana*, somebody is doing wrong *Trikoṇāsana*. So, that is right and wrong technically.

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But yoga doesn't lie there, in that correctness, yoga doesn't lie there. For a raw beginner, where does it lie? *Karma kāraṇam ucyate*. *Karma*, *karma* consciousness. That is, in my *Āchāra Dharma Nīti* am I right? In the posture I might not be right, but I might be right in my *Dharma Nīti*: I should score merit. I might be right technically in the posture, but I am wrong in my *Dharma Nīti*, *Āchāra Dharma Nīti*: I would't score merit. So, yoga is all in *dharma*. So, essential yoga starts when you are conscious about *right* and *wrong* relatively absolutely.

The *karma*, the consciousness must be pure for the yoga to be pure. Not that your posture is pure, correct, perfect, therefore you are right; your *prāṇāyāma* is right, therefore you are right. In human dynamics, the intent, the drive, the motive is very important. You just can't assess a person by the activity, whether it is a right activity or wrong activity. There can be a right activity or wrong motion. So, in

any case it will be a wrong activity, because the motive, the very motive is wrong. The drive is wrong, motive is wrong. So, first of all the motive should be right, the intent should be right, justifiable.

I will give you an example here. Once, a disciple goes to an *ācārya*, and he says, my colleague knows *Bhāgavadgītā* by heart. And I do not know the *Bhāgavadgītā* by heart, but my colleague knows, therefore I am going to learn by heart *Bhāgavadgītā*. Understand the intent. My colleague knows *Bhāgavadgītā* by heart and I do not know it, since I consider him as my competitor, he is my colleague and competitor, he knows, I do not know, therefore I want to know. So, he tells his *ācārya*: I want to by heart *Bhāgavadgītā*. Now, it is a good intent: I want to by heart *Bhāgavadgītā*. But when the *ācārya* investigates, why did it dawn on you today? Why did it occur to you today? He said: because my colleague knows it. So his *ācārya* told him don't by heart it for some time, because you have a wrong drive. The wrong drive will make your act also wrong. First, set right your drive. So, *ācārya* tells him: It is a good intent to by heart *Bhāgavadgītā*, but I advise you, don't do it know, wait for a while, let this competitive nature in you subside. Do not have this competitive approach to by hearting *Bhāgavadgītā*. So, he prevents him from by hearting it. He says wait for some time, let us do it at some other time, not now. This is not the time to embark upon it. Have a launch of it. Understand this advice, because the intent was not right. So, there is a maxim:

... ..
yatkratur bhavati tat karma kurute |
yat karma kurute tad abhisampanyate ||¹²

We know this maxim: as you sow so you reap. This is not the perfect, precise maxim. It is not as you sow so you reap.

As you have the drive, so you reap. As you have a drive, so you sow. As you sow so you reap.

So, behind even sowing seed we have intent. But if the intent is not right, whatever you sow will not be right. And whatever you reap may not be right. And therefore, students of yoga need to understand, so first step in, identifying whereas something is right or wrong, first check your intent. Check your drive. That is very important, because that's the first factor which must be right. If that is not right, then it's going to go haywire.

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So, *dharma* tells us about assessing our own intent.

- Why am I doing something?
- Why I feel like doing something?
- What is the intent?
- What is the drive?

So, yoga will tell you about this. Classical yoga gives this consciousness. Preparatory to classical yoga, you are prepared to develop this kind of inquiry. Don't just do good things. Why are you doing good things? If I am doing good things because my rival is doing good thing and I want to compete with him, your good thing is not a good thing. Intent, drive, is so important. That is the source of our *Karma*.

12 *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad* 4.4.5

So *dharma* tells us about that. Yoga will start teaching you that, that you must develop *karma* consciousness. Until you develop *karma* consciousness your classical yoga will not commence. It will be all preparation. That is why the *Dharma Nīti Mīmāṃsā* is so important in yoga and the entire practical aspects of it are completely put in a frame of ethico-religious practices. *Dharma Nīti*, as I said yesterday - right from *ahiṃsā*, first of the *yamas* to *asamprajñātasamādhi*, last of the *Āṣṭāṅga* - it is all *Āchāra Dharma Nīti Mīmāṃsā*.

So I wanted to open out one more dimension of this *dharma*, and once you are in yoga the process of yoga is such that you will always try to assess your dynamics. What are dynamics? Don't be confused between activity and dynamics. Activity is mere activity; what are dynamics? Drive, motive, motion, execution, purpose. For all these have to be assessed, all these have to be ensured that they are proper. So in dynamics try to consider that.

Yesterday I made reference to Guruji's statement: 'my yoga is dynamic meditation'. What is dynamic? It comes from the concept of *dharma*. So the core of Guruji's practice was in *dharma*, not his fervor, not his enthusiasm, not any challenge, not any motivation, but *dharma*. So, *Dharma Nīti Mīmāṃsā* is so centric in all-practical aspects of yoga. So I wanted to add one more dimension here.

So that is all for the day, but before I sign off, let me deal with one question which came to me. Somebody said, somebody is practicing *Sūrya Namaskār*.

QUESTION: Is *Sūrya Namaskār* a complete yoga? And is it sufficient to be just doing *Sūrya Namaskārs*, will it become whole yoga?

ANSWER: So something in answer to this question: *Sūrya Namaskār* is *Sūrya Namaskār*. Yoga is Yoga. Although there are some *yogāsanas* that you identify in *Sūrya Namaskārs*, it doesn't become yoga. Fundamentally and basically because *Sūrya Namaskār* is a motion. You are in motion, it has to be done in motion, motion becomes paramount in *Sūrya Namaskār*, whereas in yoga, when it comes to *āsanas*, *sthīrasukham āsanam*¹³ steadiness is important, whereas in *Sūrya Namaskār*, motion is important. So *Sūrya Namaskār* is good as a form of exercise and beyond exercise. It is good for coordinating body, mind and breath, because in motion it's a different proposition to coordinate body, mind and breath. And of course *Sūrya Namaskārs* are sun worships. Basically, if you revere sun, you should revere sun, you should know why you should revere sun. Then *Sūrya Namaskār* should be *samantraka*¹⁴, then it will have greater benefit rather than merely a mat exercise, a corporeal exercise. Those should be 'sun salutations'. So, you must be saluting the sun in what you do, its value will be enhanced.

But *Sūrya Namaskārs* is nowhere not only uncomplete yoga, not even yoga. Because in yoga you need to be steady, *sthīrasukham āsanam*, meditative practice of yoga, you must be steady

BG 6.13 *samaṃ kāyaśīrogrīvaṃ*
dhārayann acalaṃ sthiraḥ
... ..

13 2.46 *Āsana is perfect firmness of body, steadiness of intelligence and benevolence of spirit.*
B.K.S. Iyengar *Light on the Yogasūtra of Patañjali* HarperCollins Publishers

14 1) [adjective] accompanied by mantras.
2) [v.s. ...] possessing charms or spells.
<https://www.wisdomlib.org/definition/samantraka>

Bhāgavadgītā. it's stipulated that you must be sitting straight, steady, erect, firm, unmoved. Whereas in *Sūrya Namaskār* there is motion. So don't confuse between *Sūrya Namaskār* and Yoga. Although it is said that those are all *āsanas*, they are not *āsanas*, the postures have come in there, some of the yogic postures have come there.

In yogic postures for them to become *āsanas*, they are supposed to stay, they are supposed to maintain so many other implications are there, nuances are there for *yogāsana*. When they come in *Sūrya Namaskār* none of those are adhered to. Therefore *Sūrya Namaskār* is good, it has its own virtue, but it should not be mixed up with yoga. Hope that satisfies the questioner.

Thank you very much.

Namaskar.

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