

***Samādhi* as Depicted in Purāṇas- with Special Reference to Dāda Bhagavān: An Approach**

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Abstract

The word ‘*samādhi*’ is explained as ‘concentration’, *i.e.* deep meditation, which is said to be that contemplation in which the consciousness alone appearing in its spiritual aspect, remains like the ocean of coagulated milk made immobile and ceases to be operative. A *yogin* is said to be in deep meditation if he remains steady in contemplation with the mind deeply absorbed, like fire kept in a windless place. The Purāṇas have explained *samādhi* in various contexts. So, in this paper an attempt has been made to highlight and explain the *samādhi* which is elucidated in the Purāṇas. Besides, the views of Dada Bhagavan are also analysed in this paper.

Keywords: Purāṇas, itihāsa, yoga, meditation

Generally, the Purāṇas are a class of literary texts of the Indian tradition. The word “Purāṇa” means “old”, and they are considered as coming in the chronological aftermath of the epics, though sometimes the *Mahābhārata*, which is generally classified as a work of *itihāsa* (history), is also referred to as a Purāṇa.

Basically, *Yoga* is a spiritual practice. The term yoga is derived from the Sanskrit root *yuj-* “to join”, “to yoke”, “to unite”, but also “to subjugate”, with the meaning also “to control”. The English word “yoke” is also derived from the same Sanskrit (Indo-European) root. The old lexicon *Amara-kośa* records the *yoga* in the sense of armour, means meditation, union and junction (*yogaḥ samnahanopāya-dhyāna-saṅgatiyuktiṣu-* *Amarakośa*, III.3.22). The text *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* has truly elaborates yoga as:

ātma-prayatna-sāpekṣā viśiṣṭā yā manogatiḥ /

tasyā brahmaṇi saṃyogo yoga ityabhidhīyate // (*Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, VI.7.31)

Here, *yoga* consists: the contemplative devotion is the union with Brahman or God, affected by that condition of mind, which has attained perfection through those exercises which complete the control of self. Here, the word ‘*ātma-prayatna*’ means the practices of the five *yamas* and the five *niyamas* (*Yoga-sūtra*, II.30.32). In addition to these, the major Purāṇas have also discussed about the Aṣṭāṅga Yoga, such as, *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Āsana*, *Prāṇāyāma*, *Pratyāhāra*, *Dhāraṇā*, *Dhyāna* & *Samādhi*.

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Hence, *samādhi* is the 8th and final aṅga or stage of the eight famous component parts of yoga. In the Yoga Sūtra, it is defined as:

*tadeva artha-mātranirbhāsam
svarūpa-sūnyam iva samādhiḥ // (Yoga Sūtra, III.3)*

It means, when, in meditation, the true nature of the object shines forth, not distorted by the mind of the perceiver, which is absorption (*Samādhi*). When the object of meditation engulfs the meditator, appearing as the subject, self-awareness is lost. This is *samādhi*.

When the attentive flow of consciousness merges with the object of meditation, the consciousness of the meditator, the subject, appears to be dissolved in the object. This union of subject and object becomes *samādhi*. When a musician loses himself and is completely engrossed in his music, or an inventor makes his discoveries when devoid of ego, or a painter transcends himself with colour, shade and brush; they glimpse *samādhi*. So it is the *yogi*: when his object of contemplation becomes himself, devoid of himself, he experiences *samādhi*. The difference is that the artist or musician reaches this state by effort, and cannot sustain it; whereas the *yogi*, remaining devoid of ego, experiences it is natural, continuous and effortless. Consequently, it is difficult for an artist to infuse his vision of the sublime, which is associated with performance and realization of a particular art form, in to his ordinary daily existence. For the *yogi*, however, whose ‘art’ is formless and whose goal has no physical expression like a painting, a book or a symphony, the fragrance of *samādhi* penetrates every aspect of his ‘normal’ behaviour, activities and state of being.

Uninterrupted flow of attention dissolves the split between the object seen and the seer who sees it. Consciousness appears to have ceased, and to have reached a state of silence. It is devoid of ‘I’, and merges in to the core of the being in a profound state of serenity. In *samādhi*, awareness of place vanishes and one ceases to experience space and time.

The Purāṇas have also dealt with Samadhi in different ways. The Kūrma Purāṇa defines *samādhi* as:

*ekākāraḥ samādhiḥ syāddeśālbhāna-varjjitaḥ /
pratyayo hyathamātreṇa yogaśāsanamuttaram // (Kūrma Purāṇa, II. 11.41)*

The perception of one form (object of contemplation) alone is *samādhi* (trance); where in the awareness of the surrounding place is absent. Only the object is perceived. This is really the excellent injunction in the *yoga*.

The Viṣṇu Purāṇa calls *samādhi* as an act ‘when mind grasps as a result of *dhyāna* the real nature of that (the *Paramātman*) in which there is absence of the separate apprehension of the object to be meditated upon, the act of meditation and mediator. So the text says:

*tasyaiva kalpanāhīnaṁ svarūpa-grahaṇaṁ hi yat/
manasā dhyāna-nispādyam samādhiḥ so ’bhidhīyate // (Viṣṇu Purāṇa, VI.7.92)*

When the mind will be totally freed from material desires and the sense organs have no attractions to their respective objects, the *yogi* certainly attains the Highest Bliss., *i.e.* the Supreme Brahman or the Para Brahman, this is the great merits of *samādhi*.

The Agni Purāṇa has also elaborated the *samādhi* as:

*yadātmamātra nirbhāsam stimitodadhivat sthitam /
caitanyarūpavad dhyānaṁ tat samādhirihocyate //
dhyānanmanah sanniveśya yasthiṣṭedacalah sthiraḥ/
nirvātānalavadyogī samādhisthaḥ prakīrtitaḥ//* (Agni Purāṇa, 376.1-2)

It means, the meditation is called concentration (*samādhi*), which illuminates the self only, which is as calm as the unruffled ocean and which is association with the reflection or image (*rūpa*) of the immutable awareness (*Caitanya*).

So, here the word ‘*samādhi*’ is explained as ‘concentration’, *i.e.* deep meditation, which is said to be that contemplation in which the consciousness alone appearing in its spiritual aspect, remains like the ocean of coagulated milk made immobile and ceases to be operative. A *yogin* is said to be in deep meditation if he remains steady in contemplation with the mind deeply absorbed, like fire kept in a windless place.

The real position as well as the state of mind of a *yogi*, who is in deep meditation also explained in the texts of Agni Purāṇa. According to it the *yogi* or *sādhaka* does not hear or smell or see or spit out. Moreover, he does not feel the touch. His mind does not make any resolve. He does not think and remains like a log of wood without knowing anything. A true *yogi* who is absorbed in the Lord thus is stated to be in deep meditation. Just as a lamp remaining in a windless place does not shake, this is said to be similar. For a *yogi* who is in deep meditation, contemplating himself as Lord Viṣṇu, Divine portents occurs indicating success (Agni Purāṇa 376. 3-5).

The Bhāgavata Purāṇa also explains *samādhi* in different contexts. Thus these texts would be quoted and clarified one by one for the further research. The text says:

*taṁ brahmanirvāṇa samādhimāśritam
vyupāśritam giriśaṁ yogakakṣām /* (Bhāgavata Purāṇa, IV.6.39ab)

The meaning of the above verse is: Lord Shiva was dressed in saffron garment and absorbed in trance, thus appearing to be the foremost of all sages. Here, constant meditation concentrated on the form of the Lord is called *samādhi*, ecstasy or trance. So, *samādhi* means particularly concentrated attention. At another place in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, the word *samādhi* also explained as under:

*tebhya evaṁ pratiśrutya viśvarūpo mahātapāḥ /
paurahityaṁ vṛtaścakre parameṇa samādhinā //* (Bhāgavata Purāṇa, VI.7.38)

The meaning of the above verse is: O king, after making promise to the demigods, the exalted *viśvarūpa*, surrounds by the demigods, performed by the necessary priestly activities with great enthusiasm and attention. Here, the word *samādhi* means complete absorption with an undelivered mind. At another place in the same Bhāgavata Purāṇa, the word *samādhi* is also explained as under:

*evaṁ triloka guruṇā sandiṣṭaḥ śabdayoninā/
badaryāśramamāsādyā harimīje samādhinā //* (Bhāgavata Purāṇa, III.4.32)

It means: thus, directed by the Lord of the three Worlds, the source of the Vedas (Uddhava) went to the Badari hermitage and worshipped Lord Hari with deep meditation. Here, the Lord Hari is known as the source of the Vedas of this creation.

He is the source of everything of this Universe. Moreover, He has many names and many forms. However, Lord Krishna, who is also known as the incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu, is the great teacher (*guruṇām guru*) of all and Uddhava was meditating the Lord in that Badari hermitage for getting salvation. Hence, it is clear that *samādhi* means deep meditation or concentration as clarified in this Bhāgavata Purāṇa.

Thus, the various Purāṇas have discussed the merits and real sacred meaning of *samādhi* in different contexts. But one thing is clear here that the *samādhi* is meant for the *yogis* or serious mediators not for any ordinary man, who like to know only the meaning and benefits of *samādhi*.

The concept of *samādhi* brings with it the possibility of a deep hope about our growth as human beings. Sage Patañjali teaches us that we are always capable of experiencing *samādhi*—that at any moment we can become whole and fully present. If we understand this, that understanding becomes a fundamental acknowledgment of our true nature. Paradoxically, it seems that we need the journey—the journey of *yoga*—to discover what was present inside us all along.

In the Yoga Sūtra, “Samādhi Pāda,” Patañjali introduces the concept of *samādhi* and its stages in sūtras 17–23, and defines it more completely in sūtras 42–51. According to him the *samādhi* is two types, viz. *Savikalpa Samādhi* and *Nirvikalpa Samādhi*. The *Samprajñāta Samādhi*, is also called *Savikalpa Samādhi* as well as *Sabija-Samādhi*. Besides, in this *samādhi*, the *yogi* performs meditation with the support of an object. The *Samprajñāta Samādhi* is associated with deliberation, reflection, bliss, and I-am-ness. In addition to these, the *Asamprajñāta Samādhi*, is also called *Nirvikalpa Samādhi* and *Nirbija Samādhi*: it is meditation without an object, which leads to knowledge of *puruṣa* or Consciousness, the subtlest element.

So according to Patañjali, the *Samprajñāta Samādhi*, or *Samādhi* with higher knowledge, which occurs through the absorption of the mind into an object; and *Asamprajñāta Samādhi*, “beyond higher knowledge,” a very high stage in which there is no object of concentration; rather, the *yogi*’s consciousness is merged into Absolute Consciousness, *Puruṣa*. Because, only *Asamprajñāta Samādhi* destroys the seeds of all *Samskāras* remaining in the *citta* (the mind-field) and thus gives ultimate freedom, or *kaivalya* or *mukti* or liberation, it is the only state that brings about an alteration of consciousness which is completely permanent.

Asamprajñāta Samādhi is extremely difficult to attain because of the high degree of mental purity, desireless-ness, and non-attachment which is required to achieve it. Because, it is non-dual in nature—and thus there is no sense of an experiencer and an object of experience in *Asamprajñāta Samādhi* —“meditation experiences” cannot be properly discussed in relation to this *samādhi*. Thus, experiences that we read about or hear described reflect states of *dhyāna* or different stages of *Samprajñāta Samādhi*. These stages of *Samprajñāta Samādhi* unfold gradually, and repeated *samādhi* experiences act to purify the mind.

Dādā Bhagawān was a great sage and contributed a lot to the society for better living. His advises are still useful for all the people irrespective of caste and creed. If

a man follows his teachings in a positive way no doubt he must live peacefully in the society. So the views of Dādā Bhagawān on *samādhi* will be elaborated in detail.

After these Purāṇic discussions on *samādhi* now the views of Dādā Bhagawān will be elaborated. Dādā Bhagawān also admits these two types of *samādhi*. When a Seeker asked to Dādāji: In the path of Yoga the final destination is *samādhi*- a state of perpetual bliss. Kindly enlighten us in this matter. In the reply, Dādā ji explained it as: In the Yoga-*mārga* (path), there is a salutary, soothing physical effect experienced through the practice of Yoga. It pacifies the burning pain of mind, speech, body. However, there is no experience of the bliss of liberation. That happiness is experienced by the *ātma-yogi* alone. What is *samādhi*? The *samādhi* through the pain and strain of *deha-yoga* (body-yoga) keeps you ‘cool’ as long as you go on ‘turning the handle’ (practising it). But ‘the everlasting cool’ spring from *nirvikalpa samādhi*, is freedom from I-ness & My-ness. It is a natural, effortless *samādhi*. It pervades through all your activities; say walking, sitting, eating and even quarrelling. You are liberated only after attaining such a *samādhi* (Dialogues with Dādā ji on Life & Living: 2017, 399).

Again the seeker asked about the nature of *Nirvikalpa-samādhi*? And Dādāji replied as: “In *Nirvikalpa samādhi*, the body and the Self are experienced totally different and distinct from each other and the Self never gets engrossed in any phase of living. See, ‘I am so and so’ is the *vikalpa*, that is really called ego and it prevails even if you become a *yogi*. A *vikalpi*, a person with ego can never become *nirvikalpi* (egoless-Self)”. (Dialogues with Dādā ji on Life & Living: 2017, 400).

In addition to these, a seeker desires to know the advice of Dādā ji as how one can be freed from the *Sankalpa-Vikalpa* (I-ness & my-ness)? In the reply Dādā ji has given the advice as: “Those who have naturally become *Nirvikalpi* can elevate others to this status. The Self becomes *Nirvikalpa* on the elimination of ‘I’ and ‘My’ (*vikalpa* & *sankalpa*). Unless and until one is initiated into *Nirvikalpa* State, one can’t become *Nirvikalpa*. There are some *Yogis* who eradicate all your *sankalpa-vikalpa* except the one and that is: the tie of ‘I am’. One would be raised to an elevated state and gain a spiritual lustre, but not enlightenment and there would be no realization of true-self. The pure-soul (Self) has its own characteristics, its own intrinsic properties (*dharma*), its own pure phases. Pure Self is beyond contemplation and is flawless-untainted forever (*alakh-nirājan*). The Self is expressed fully in an enlightened person. As long as you are unaware of the goal of self-realization you cannot achieve that. Then, natural *samādhi* would never leave you even among widespread destruction and annihilation. ‘*Dhāraṇā*’ –concentration is imaginary. The Relative Self has indirect light. The experience of Real Self is endless where there is only the knower and the perceiver. The state of Mind that is fully adjusted and reconciled in every respect and in every phase is real knowledge. The Real *samādhi* is that which remains with full awareness of all the five senses. Non-attachment in every phase of life is ‘*purṇa-samādhi*’ (being in perfect synchronization with the Self)”. (Dialogues with Dādā ji on Life & Living: 2017, 400-401).

Finally, the seeker has asked to Dādā ji: Can’t one attain *samādhi* (ever-blissful state) by practicing Yoga and Meditation? In the reply Dādā ji has replied as: “How

can there be *samādhi* by pressing the nostrils? Just press those of a child and it will bite you! This can suffocate you. Absence of *ādhi*, *vyādhi* and *upādhi* (mental agonies, physical ailments, outside disturbances) is the real *samādhi*. Then, at the time of death one withdraws to the Self, and remains absorbed in the Self (*nirvikalpa samādhi*). My initiates (*Mahātmās*), endowed with the Right Vision, self-realization, die ‘a *samādhi*-demise’ ”. (Dialogues with Dādā ji on Life & Living: 2017, 400-401).

In the conclusion, it can be said that *samādhi* is possible for a pure & serious *yogi* as stated by Dādā Bhagawān. Besides, it has already been explained that *samādhi* is achieved by raising one object, one great wave of concentration, in the mind, by which all other thought-waves, all *samskāras* or past impressions, are swallowed up. The description of *samādhi* as elaborated in the Yoga Sūtras and in the Purāṇas is really very important to learn as it will be more helpful for all the aspirant of *yogic* practice for final destination of life. The views of Dādā Bhagawān are also very useful and relevant today for a better peaceful and realistic life in the modern society. So, finally, we must try to follow his teachings on *samādhi*, so that our life and feelings will be positive day by day.

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