



29. Rajoguṇa – Nature and Effects (111-112)

विक्षेपशक्ती रजसः क्रियात्मिका यतः प्रवृत्तिः प्रसृता पुराणी ।
रागादयोऽस्याः प्रभवन्ति नित्यं दुःखादयो ये मनसो विकाराः ॥ १११ ॥

*vikṣepaśaktī rajasah kriyātmikā yataḥ pravṛttih prasṛtā purāṇī,
rāgādayo'syāḥ prabhavanti nityam duḥkhādayo ye manaso vikārāḥ.* (111)

111. *Rajas has projecting power (vikṣepa-śakti). Activity is its very nature. From it, the initial flow of activity has originated. From it, mental modifications such as attachment and grief are also continuously produced.*

The rajas attitude of māyā creates the agitations of the mind (vikṣepa). Māyā expressed at the mental level manifests in the form of mental agitations. The māyā which creates restlessness in the mind is called ‘rajoguṇa’, from which all activities are born.

When the mind is active, we act in the world outside; when the mind is quiet, all actions end. During deep sleep, the mind is at rest and is calm, therefore, no activity is taking place. Activities are only possible when the mind is active. A mental picture exists before every activity. Our association with objects and beings creates more and more attachment. We see a possibility until it becomes an agitation. Then desires and passions arise in the mind. To satisfy them, man has to act in the world outside. For, it takes less exertion to yield to them than to fight them. From this activity alone, the mind’s various attitudes are born. Thus, the mind gains its experiences of joys and sorrows. The nature of avidyā when expressed in a given personality is called ‘rajoguṇa’.

Rajoguṇa creates agitations in the mind. Due to these mental agitations, objectively we act in the world and subjectively we experience desires, passions lust and consequently, joys and sorrows.

कामः क्रोधो लोभदम्भाद्यसूया अहङ्कारेष्यामत्सराद्यास्तु घोराः ।
धर्मा एते राजसाः पुम्प्रवृत्तिः यस्मादेषा तद्रजो बन्धहेतुः ॥ ११२ ॥

*kāmaḥ krodho lobhadambhādyaśūyā
ahaṅkārerṣyāmatsarādyaśtu ghorāḥ,
dharmā ete rājasāḥ pumpravṛttih
yasmādeṣā tadrājō bandhahetuḥ.* (112)

112. *Desire, anger, greed, hypocrisy, arrogance, jealousy, egoism, envy and so on – these are the dreadful attributes of rajas, from which the worldly tendencies of man are produced. Rajas is, therefore, the cause for bondage in life.*

Objectively, all actions arise out of the rajoguṇa aspect of māyā. Reactions arising subjectively in the human personality are explained in this verse.

Desire, anger, avarice, hypocrisy, arrogance, jealousy, egoism, envy and so on, all of them manifest because of rajoguṇa. They are the lower types of emotions created by rajoguṇa in the psychological layer of the personality. These reactions created by the agitations of the mind are terrible because they multiply the agitations and man gets totally shackled by them. Since all worldly activities arise from rajoguṇa, it is said to cause all bondages in life. For under the forces of rajas, man becomes limited by his own lower impulses.

Rajas generates agitations (vikṣepa), and these very agitations of the mind veil (āvaraṇa) the Self in us. When a rājasika man gets exhausted due to his own overexertion, he gets tired and feels sleepy – a state when he is about to enter tamas. That is, rajas must necessarily lapse into tamas. Once the higher Awareness is ‘veiled’, we are apt to act foolishly and get more and more entangled in the mad pursuit of objects of pleasure.

