

Prayer for Spiritual Elevation alone - 18.4 - 139 L.E. (2011)

-Sri.Vidyadhar Joshi

Pujya Sri Ramchandraji Maharaj writes in the commentary on commandment 2 that, “It is also sheer folly to pray to the Great Master for worldly gains except in most special cases. Of course it is right to pray to the Master for that which is ordained. This comes under the rule of true etiquette and signifies our acceptance of Him as the Master, entrusting to Him our entire self.”

O Master! Thou art the real goal of human life;

We are yet but slaves of wishes,

Putting bar to our advancement.

Thou art the only God and power,

To bring us up to that stage.

It is probably correct to assume that a wish itself is a form of punishment. I am reminded of a short story in this connection. An ascetic is on a journey. Poorly clad and without any footwear he is going across a mountain stretch. He gets tired and weary and takes a break. Just then, he sees a caravan in which a donkey is also walking but without any load. Thinking that a ride on the donkey's back will save him from strenuous travel further, a wish arises in his mind. "O Rama, I wish I had that donkey." Just as he thinks thus, the donkey incidentally collapses due to exhaustion. The caravan leader does not want to leave behind the donkey. He spots the ascetic resting under the tree. He summons his men to get the ascetic and then makes the ascetic carry the donkey on his head. The poor ascetic is perplexed, "Surely I asked Rama for this donkey but not to carry on my head. How could the Lord misunderstand me?"

A moment later he realizes his folly, "Of course. How can the Lord misunderstand me? It is my wish only that got me into this trouble."

Just like that donkey we are carrying burden of our samskaras which are our past wishes. We wished for them thinking they will make us happy and relieved but the result is otherwise. Master says that to pray for

worldly gains is a folly except in special circumstances. How many times we would have committed this folly. Until now, we have been seeking anything and everything other than the Divine, thus only accumulating samskaras and undergoing their effect, pleasant or unpleasant. Taking a cue from the story above, it is wisdom to adhere to commandment 2 of the Master in letter and spirit.

Many of us are troubled with our own problems and wish that our problems get solved in the way we want them solved. Sometimes we even perceive these problems as obstacles in our sadhana and in subtle way, seek to solve our problems with the prayer given by Him, deviating from following commandment 2 in the right earnestness.

Even as our personal struggles are there with our lower nature, relationships, transactions with the world, health, wealth, expectations thereof etc not withstanding, our commitment to Master must be high and we must be determined to move towards Him. Our own mental fallacies and past impressions do not allow easily for such a state of mind to be established. This has to be consciously recognized, admitted in the deep core of our heart and should become the reason of our prayer. This is the honest admittance of “we are yet but slaves of

wishes”. Being slaves of wishes is nothing but self obsession. It is through sincere prayer that we can come out of self obsession and move gradually towards Master and his Mission which is far Superior most and fulfilling too. Needless to say that prayer must be for spiritual elevation alone. There are 2 aspects then. First relates to the fruition of samskaras and the other aspect is we remember Him, feel confident of His support and follow the commandments as the guiding spirit while we are undergoing the effect of samskaras. In a nutshell, then the commandments become the integrating aspect of our life. In parallel then what progressively develops is an attitude of service to Master as summum bonum of our life and this is what we start cherishing rather than seeking our own wish fulfillment. We are happy as long as we are able to serve the Master and happiness is serving the Master in whatever insignificant capacity.

The free will that we are given has the same creative power of the Divine. We can place this free will at the feet of the Master and choose to live in His Creation OR use our free will to live in our own creation, strengthening it with our wishes, desires, ideas, notions etc. and deluding ourselves that some fictitious God will keep on fulfilling those wishes and desires of our creation. However, we must remember this much that Spiritual elevation is ordained but fulfillment of desires

is not. To pray for spiritual elevation alone is etiquette.

Begin your puja with a prayer for spiritual elevation with a heart full of love and devotion.