

Imperience of Oneness and Commandments

-Sri.Vidyadhar Joshi

Dear Brothers and Sisters on the Path,

Humble Pranams.

I place before you a few thoughts on imperience of Oneness and the aspiration to follow the commandments so that the Oneness finds a practical expression in day to day living.

Master, has stated that one of the problem of aspirants is forgetting the remembrance of God even after doing the meditation as prescribed. Thus Oneness that is imperienced during meditations by the Grace of Master, does not get expressed as it should be. Oneness not finding expression in day to day living is a lapse in commitment which one should endeavor to overcome.

In the message at Bangalore on 18-12-1968, Master states:

“I remained very happy in your company. When all of my associates gather at one spot, it becomes a temple for me and it is their duty to make their hearts as the temple themselves. I am happy that all of you follow the meditation prescribed; but there are a few who remain non-attached after the meditation is over. They forget the idea of God and begin to remember themselves throughout the light of the Sun. It is their work to shape themselves for the Divine purpose. At its start if they think that this is our Mission and our God then they will be helped much in His remembrance. “

Master expresses his deep Love for us when He calls our gathering as a temple for Him. Temple is a place where one goes with Love and Devotion for the service of his deity. As I understand Beloved Master is expressing this idea that we are dear to Him, we are objects of his Love and unconditionally He finds us as deserving subjects to be served though we may not have made our hearts as temples yet. What does it mean to make our hearts as temple? How do we prepare our heart so that it becomes an abode of the Master? Revered Sir, explains in this regard, that it is obvious that only the temple of God can receive God, namely, a soul predisposed by Grace, grounded in the Path, purified of all blemishes of ego

centricity, transformed in will, established in virtue which are all made possible in this path with the aid of Pranahuti. A heart established in virtue is a heart that emanates love for all as Revered Master puts it in simple language. “We should have a good heart for all human beings. Then power will flow to them automatically”. I understand power here as unconditional love.

Pujya Lalaji Maharaj, gives the seven definite steps to prepare our heart as follows

1. Practice internal Japa
2. Heart should be kept clean from impressions of opposite sex, strangers and friendship with strangers.
3. Attention should only be on God and none else.
4. Make a determination to be with a heart full of attention and concentration.

5. Acquire attachment, love and intimacy with Sat and God

6. Erase yourself and entirely merge in It

7. Erase yourself in this work.

Master says that though we meditate as prescribed, some forget the wisdom meditation has granted and begin to remember their own self throughout the day. “It is their work to shape themselves for the Divine purpose.” I understand this as a command to follow the commandments. Spending a day with indifference to the Divine Impulse felt in the heart is not etiquette for a true spiritual sadhaka and certainly calls for repentance at bedtime. This lapse happens when we treat meditational experiences as isolated occurrences meant to be enjoyed only during times of meditation with no correlation whatsoever in day to day living. This unfortunately is the bane of modern day where so many practices in the name of meditation have emerged that promise so called benefits with no personal accountability on the person practicing. Master talks about personal accountability when he mentions above that it is the work of the

aspirant for shaping themselves for Divine purpose. Of course we are helped by the Master through the influx of Pranahuti, but that should never be taken to mean that the aspirant's role is ignorable or less important. It certainly is the work of the Master that makes the task of transformation into Divine Consciousness possible, provided full cooperation is there from the aspirant's side.

An Aspirant's Role is taking Support of Pranahuti, Following in letter and spirit the Meditational Practices and following of the commandments. These are integral and each are important.

Our sadhana has actually started with Pranahuti that is had during the introductory sittings. Pranahuti helps us in more than one ways that we can comprehend. It is certain that it generates pure aspiration in us for seeking Oneness with the Divine.

When we cleanse ourselves by following the cleaning practice and attend to the purity of mind by point B meditation, our sensitivity to feel the effect of Pranahuti improves. I am sharing here some of the feelings due to the effect of Pranahuti. One recurring strand in all these

feelings has been that the attention has been away from the petty self in varying degrees and harmony with the inner is invariably felt.

- Collapse of space and time

- Loss of any loci or reference of self in deep states of absorption

- A vast sheet of Silence

- Feeling of awe and wonder

- Lost in the wilderness of the company of the Divine

- Grandeur of Beauty of the Divine

- Nothingness or Void i.e. a feeling that can be described only by contrast.

- Sacred feeling of whatever it is

- Subsumed by the torrential Grace of the Master that dissolves any idea of separation
- Soothing vibrations with Reverence towards It
- Feeling of a deep state of Prayer
- Felt intensely alert to the presence of Master (absorbed) and asleep to the passing thoughts.
- Blankness
- Plainness
- Stillness
- Deep remembrance of the Homeland

After the taste of Pranahuti imperienced as some feelings above, there is a trail of feeling or thought that usually follows. For e.g., we feel to do our sadhana more

seriously. We feel determined. We feel our interconnection with other forms of life. We feel dependency on the Master. We feel our heart has opened to accept the will of the Master. We feel confident. We feel light. We feel happy. We feel concord and harmony with all that exists. We feel unconditional love for all. Though these and many conditions are felt, they have to be owned. These, in my understanding are concrete feelings that are expressible aspects of Oneness in day to day living.

There is one more thing I would like to share. The imperience of Pranahuti is not necessarily the same every time though the same description is used. I may use the word 'Nothingness' or void or deep silence or absorption, because I am trying to correlate what I felt with the vocabulary of something felt similar in the past but not necessarily the same. It seems the effect of Pranahuti that is had, gives a refined or more sublimated feeling at various times. Subsequent to such an imperience, there is an enlightened perspective that seeps that keeps on helping us to follow the commandments in a better way and develop conviction in it. That is the reason, it is very necessary to regularly take Pranahuti sessions and make a continuous attempt to improve the compliance of the commandments. It is by no means automatic just because we are having the Love of the Master. Here I would like

to remember the statement of Pujya Babuji Maharaj again that it is our duty to shape ourselves for the Divine Purpose. Purity of intent and attention is required to follow each commandment to express the Oneness that is imperienced in meditation. While the imperience grants us the courage to follow the commandments, following the commandments asserts the Truth of Oneness in the deep core of our being. Just as imperience of Oneness enables to follow the commandment, following the commandment strengthens the faith in our own Oneness with God. This faith is beyond ordinarily understood belief. It is spontaneous, needs no justification, and takes us in leaps and bounds closer to Him. We had occasion to discuss this point in detail on the seminar “Faith is the lively link connecting the mortal with the immortal”.

The imperience essentially reveals to us our true potential of being in Oneness with Divine and living in that consciousness. Yet by contrast, it also brings to attention our current state of being, which pithily shows the gap we are to bridge between our current state of gross consciousness and the Divine Consciousness we are seeking Oneness with. It is an internal conflict for some time that the abhyasi has to deal with till one learns to yield to the higher wisdom granted by imperience. When yielding to the higher wisdom becomes natural, it is the beginning of surrender.

Oneness Experienced is the truth. The separation felt after the condition has faded is an illusion. However, in the physically waking condition, this separation is ironically real. In the waking hours of the day, we see our individuality or separation in its gross form at play. That is why we go through so much strife, conflict, feelings, emotions, imbalance, agony, pain and unhappiness. What is the relevance of Oneness during such times? Though our imperience is so rich, we don't find our self wiser and all talk of Oneness appears mere philosophy.

How does one work towards removing this illusion? This is the imperience one has to gain by following the commandments and resonating with our original condition. That is the way to diminish the duality. In the manyness or diversity, yielding to the wisdom granted by Pranahuti is the way to build faith in that Oneness that is granted. This is where we have to remember the Truth of Oneness imperienced and then bridge the separative feeling by following the commandments which are integral and are required for holistic living. By integral, I understand that it integrates all aspects of our being, physical, vital and mental with the Goal of Oneness with Divine thus making our life holistic. This means the person, though an individual entity is free from the idea

of its separation from the whole (i.e. Divine) and functions in such a way that it feels the Oneness and expresses the spirit of that Oneness naturally.

The practice of commandments in day to day living, along with regular practice of meditation, cleaning, Pt A & B meditations and universal prayer, will reveal to us in our own being, that we are not separate from the Whole of creation, and this feeling of non-separation felt in the core of the being, verily intuits to us our Oneness with Divine. This keeps on refining infinitely. This enables us to become true expressions of the Divine which is the Goal of life.

Let us take a brief look at the commandments vis-a-vis the imperience of Oneness and the Goal of seeking Oneness.

1. Rise before dawn. Offer your prayer and puja(Worship) at a fixed hour preferably before sunrise, sitting in one and the same pose. Have a separate place and 'asan'(seat) for worship. Purity of mind and body be specially adhered to.

This commandment includes all the basics of our

sadhana. It is the foundation, the base of our sadhana. By meditating at pre-dawn hours we are attempting to reach our Original Condition that has been described as ‘Tam’ by Master in the commentary on commandments. Goal clarity lies in regular observance of this commandment. To begin with, this much clarity is enough that we have a higher potential to live in, a higher state of consciousness. We are made aware of this potential in Pranahuti and if we heed to that imperience, it beckons us to get up in the morning, shunning our sloth and indolence and sit for meditation following the basics given herein. The remaining commandments would make sense only to the one who is determined to follow the first commandment.

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

One must be clear here as to what is being asked in the prayer. Goal clarity is in understanding the first line of prayer clearly in our heart. Instead of being slaves of our wishes, we must be slave of the Master. The prayer takes us through all the stages of sadhana culminating in a state of consciousness where one is abiding in the state of prayer. It exhorts us to develop pure love and devotion in the heart. To develop love and devotion, we must

repeatedly remember the Oneness that is imperienced. By repeatedly thinking about Master, we develop love for Him. The injunctions He has given to do all acts of duty with conscious awareness of the Divine is the way to bridge our separative feeling with the Oneness through developing love for the One in expression. I state here an extract from the commentary on commandment 2 by the Master.

“Now for the form of prayer which may ensure the greatest good to everyone. I may say that one should be brought to the same state of mind which is usually developed at the time of prayer. The feeling that he as a true servant approaches the Great Master in the humble capacity of an insignificant beggar must be engrossed upon his mind. He may put up everything before his Master, resigning himself completely to His will. In other words he may assume his real form after surrendering everything to the Master. He should withdraw himself from all sides and turn completely towards Him losing all worldly charms. The remembrance of everything should merge into the remembrance of One the Ultimate, resounding all through in every particle of his being. This may be known as complete annihilation of self. If one develops in this state, in my view he should be considered as an embodiment of prayer. Every thought of his will be synonymous with that of the Master. He will

never turn towards anything that is against the Divine will. His mind will always be directed towards that which is the Master's command.

People should be exhorted to offer such a type of prayer. If one achieves and settles down in it what else remains for him to do except remembrance and that too such a one as never comes in consciousness even. Even great saints remained thirsting for it without even getting up to its brink. They remained longing for it forever. It is not an ordinary thing. One will be struck with wonder if he grasps its real significance. There is extreme simplicity, and in spite of the vibrations in it there is perfect calmness which can hardly be termed as such, and to say nothing of emotional excitations. If we call it 'light' it may not be correct. Similarly, 'darkness' may not be an appropriate expression for it. It is a state which none may perhaps like to appreciate. It is in fact the end of everything. All stages finish at this point. It is the absolute Reality the Source of everything the Ultimate Mark which we have finally to arrive at. What beyond? May the Lord bestow upon you all an opportunity to be blessed with its realization. Amen”.

3. Fix up your goal which should be 'Complete Oneness' with God. Rest not till the ideal is achieved.

We must be careful and extremely clear in the concept of Oneness with God. What is the concept of God we are to entertain here? It cannot be the God of religion. It cannot be the God of our perceptions. It cannot be the God of our intellection. For if we choose any of these, there would be as many plural Ones as one can possibly imagine. So necessarily we have to keep away from every conception of God as we can understand.

I found the explanation in the seminar, “Remembrance of everything should merge in the remembrance of One” published in BP Volume five as very beneficial in this regard. It states, “In the third Commandment, Master has asked us to fix our goal as “oneness with God’. Here in this passage we are asked to remember that One in all aspects of life and in every particle of our being where our self is totally annihilated. This leads to the most persistent question as to what we mean by God. Putting it straight the question is God the Oneness? Or is Oneness the God?....

...“Meditation gives an awareness of a different type of God. The experience of inner luminosity and many times such luminosity fading into gray accompanied by a sense of non-being suggests the presence of a reverential

‘Suchness’. This many considered as God who dwells within every living or non living existence. Meditation in such a case as in Natural Path is metaphysics that is experiential where we attempt and succeed in realizing our true essence in particular, humanity in general and Reality in its core and depth. Every meditation is examined from the premeditative and post meditative states of our consciousness. We incorporate the insights we gain from such an examination into our wisdom. We then find that the ‘Suchness’ is not only within but is everywhere. The awareness grants us a conviction that we are one with all that exists or rather all that exists is One. The ‘Suchness’ itself is something that is neither an awareness or perception nor a non awareness or a-perception, however, makes us directly be aware of Oneness of all that exists.

Oneness of existence is not possible in external perception as differences are real. By getting to know about, and this is all that any physical science can do, we may arrive at Advaita but the direct perception or direct knowing is possible only through Meditation. In the awareness of ‘Suchness’ there is a perception of Oneness. We are aware that the Master takes us out of time and enables us feel eternity. This condition that is imperienced compels us again and again to seek for the same; or rather the Oneness gets remembered and that is

for remembrance sake and such a remembrance has nothing else to seek for.” (Bodhayanti Parasparam Vol V Remembrance of everything should merge in the remembrance of One.)

4. Be plain and simple to be identical with Nature.

Pujya Dr. KC Varadachari states: “Man's diverse existence has made global and integral vision and perception and consideration and action impossible and abstract.” (Complete works of Dr KCV Reference:Vol 2 - 505)

Man’s diverse existence can be understood as the samskaras he has made for himself or the complexity he has woven around himself. That has made him totally gross and subsequently he feels that Divinity is an abstract idea and Goal, let alone expressing it in the real sense. So this complexity has to be shattered. It can be shattered only by curtailing our desires, reducing unnecessary activities that are not conducive for the Goal (superfluity) and shattering the network of complexity by attaching oneself with love and devotion to a fellow brother who has shattered his own network and knows the intricacies of the journey on the path. Then there is

an experience of Oneness with Nature.

Pujya Dr. KC Vardachari in his notes on commandments, states “If one should seek oneness with the Centre one should become simple and plain even like That. The only way of living like a lotus leaf untouched by the water (Padmapatraiva Ambhasa) is to reach the centre, and then experience the world, for then one does not lose oneself by hypnotic self-suggestions that are governed by desires.” (Dr KCV Vol 1 Commandment 4)

Commands 5,6 and 7 are essentially to be followed by developing an attitude of total yielding. This yielding is yielding to the imperience of void or nothingness that is felt within.

5. Be Truthful. Take miseries as Divine Blessings for your own good and be thankful.

6. Know all people as thy brethren and treat them as such.

7. Be not revengeful for the wrongs done by the others. Take them with gratitude as heavenly gifts.

An extract from the article “Yielding” from Bodhyanto Parasparam Volume 5 is relevant here. “Master in his fifth Commandment states "Be truthful. Take miseries as divine blessings for your own good and be thankful." It is necessary to know that our real condition/status is that of devotee. This call to live true to our condition of a devotee is possible only when we understand the lesson of 'nothingness' that is given to us every time we take Pranahuti. This is what we mean when we say 'imperience beckons.' When we try to live according to our status of a devotee we are faced with many problems that cause misery to us. To protest against such a serving for having practiced a value in life is immature. True it is that the pain caused by the misery mentally and physically is hard to put up with. It is only when we know and feel that inseparable oneness with the 'nothingness' that is experienced in meditation, we feel enabled to look at things in an objective manner and accept every hurdle, pain and misery in the path as a necessity to grow in spiritual life. In fact these miseries are nothing but loss or separation that is felt by us of things, persons and ideas that we thought are our own exclusively. This identification or owning of things and persons is the main illusion that we are able to appreciate when we are merged in an ocean of bliss during meditation where oneness alone is experienced without

any duality. We really own nothing and that is what the great Isa Upanishad states in its mantra that, all belongs to Him and therefore relinquishing all we should enjoy and be happy. This approach to the problems enables us to acquire one of the noblest spiritual qualities called as fortitude. Fortitude and forbearance cannot be cultivated that easily without the awareness of the true nature of ourselves as essentially Void/Nothingness. These attitudes are the basics of the quality of Yielding to the Divine Will. Thus we find in our system these qualities are developed by the constant influx of Pranahuti.

In his Sixth Commandment our Master exhorts us, to know all people as our brethren and treat them as such. The fraternity that we are asked to develop is again based on the requirement of not claiming everything that we see and feel as our own but share it with others in a spirit of fraternity. All existence has the same origin and their true nature is Nothingness. Ultimately all are the same and none of the separate existences have any claim of owning anything. This spiritual understanding once gained by reflecting on the quality of meditation that grants us an experience of Void, is the basis of the noblest spiritual quality called Maitri. It is not just fraternity or friendship that is the nature of our link with other existences but an essential oneness with all. There is an inseparable bond among all beings and things and

that is most important to understand and live up to. Once this is understood the attitude of Yielding that is required in realizing our essential oneness with all is gained automatically.

In his Seventh Commandment Master asks us not be revengeful for the wrongs done by others and asks us to accept them with gratitude as heavenly gifts. In reality there is nothing wrong that is done by any to another. But certain acts appear to be wrong done to the person by another because of two essential factors, one is to think oneself as independent and another is granting independent status to the other person who is said to have wronged him. Pruning is no wrong done by the gardener to the plant and in fact it is necessary for growth. The plant does undergo suffering due to the pruning and does not know that it is for its development to the true stature. The acts done by others are treated as wrongs because of a purely personal egotistic approach where there is a basic refusal to know the other as part of oneself. Separation is an illusion. It is necessary that we implement the commandment in full before we can say that we are yielding to the Divine. “(BP Vol III, YIELDING)

8. Be happy to eat in constant divine thought whatever

you get, with due regard to honest and pious earnings.

Here remembrance takes the form of happiness in the thought of Lord. The whole creation is for happiness and hence we practice state of happiness in whatever we get to feel oneness with it. Contentment is an attitude to be developed here.

9. Mould your living so as to rouse a feeling of love and piety in others.

Oneness vs Manyness or Diversity. Oneness is felt in meditation and manyness is a fact of life. When diversity alone is taken as truth, it is materialism. When Oneness alone is taken as truth to the exclusion of manyness, it can lead to sanyasa. For a practical spiritualist or Grihastha, Oneness and Manyness are simultaneously true without contradicting each other. A Grihastha uses the many facets of his life to express the One. This holds the hope that we can turn the attention of others towards Divine by moulding our selves on the line of commandments with attitudes of simplicity, purity, honesty, contentment, sharing, sacrifice and above all service to the One that is expressed in the many or diversity with a feeling of fraternal love. The basis of

universal prayer that we are asked to offer at 9:00 PM is love for all. Since love begets love, preparing ourselves for this noble task is the best way to rouse a feeling of love and piety in others.

10. At bed time, feeling the presence of God, repent for the wrongs committed unknowingly. Beg forgiveness in a supplicant mood, resolving not to allow repetition of the same.

Pujya Babuji Maharaj states that “Complete merging with the Centre is, however, not possible, so as to maintain a nominal difference between God and soul.” BWS Goal of Life. This means in our awareness, complete oneness with God will never be really complete. Humanity after all remains. Our defects however small or big will remain. When we remind ourselves of commandment 3, then it will come to our attention that complete Oneness as our Goal is ever receding. So this commandment helps us to grow in humility always.

Finally, I would like to add one statement from Pujya Dr KC Varadachari’s works which I find very relevant.

“The command of God or the vision to execute in the temporal context the intuited truths of the supramental vision is an imperative, a sacred calling which the mystic or the religious seer cannot even think of disobeying.”
(Complete Works of Dr KCV Vol x - pg 510)

I understand the command of God as commandments, the temporal context as our Grihastha life and intuited truths of the supramental vision as verily the imperience we get by the Grace of Pranahuti.

The imperative to follow the commandments thus can no longer be ignored or procrastinated any more, any further if we have to make practical sense of Oneness and thus shape ourselves for the Divine purpose which essentially is happiness for one and all.

Pranams