

Some thoughts on Commandment 2: Prayer and Goal

- Sri Vidyadhar Joshi

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On the auspicious occasion of Pujya Babuji Birthday Celebrations, I feel happy to share with you a few thoughts on my understanding of commandment 2 and Prayer. As we dwell in our Beloved Master's thought, it is imperative that we also take this opportunity to contemplate on the Goal, the method and means so as to give an impetus to our sadhana and make full use of this occasion. This is important because the Goal that we talk about is not tangible in normal sense of knowledge. How do we know God or Divine or Master? It is not possible in normal sense of knowing but we do need to feel assured that our movement is on the right path. Movement to where? Movement to our homeland. This can happen only with some serious contemplation on states of mind that are felt during the course of sadhana that gives an inner sense of purpose and poise. Another advantage of such an exercise is that it strengthens our faith.

Faith as defined by Master is not the ordinary or dictionary definition of "strong belief in the doctrines of a religion, based on spiritual conviction rather than proof." He defines faith as "a lively link connecting the mortal with the immortal". This is neither a matter of belief nor a

matter of conviction. It is a matter of imperience or anubhava. The Goal continues to remain unknown but surely not elusive in the sense of feeling it or imperiencing it. It is the heart that feels convinced and this is far superior than having the mind get persuaded by any convictions. This is not to say that convictions and beliefs are totally useless. We all do start with some elementary belief but in the long run, they do become redundant and their utility is outlived once real faith about the Goal is established in our heart. In my opinion, Master has asked us to do this exercise when he says, **“Faith in Reality, faith in the right course you have adopted for realization, faith in the worthy Master whom you have submitted to, this is the rock upon which you must build the edifice of spirituality if you really aim at success.”** I feel that contemplation on Master’s messages in view of our practice and meditational experiences, is necessary to strengthen such faith.

With this background in mind, I seek now your indulgence to dwell on Commandment 2 and particularly the Prayer in the hope that we strengthen our faith in Reality, the means and the Master.

Before that I would like to stress one more aspect. In my limited understanding, I feel Commandments 1, 2 and 3 are atomic in nature. By that I mean that Master has divided them for the sake of understanding and practice but each commandment essentially contains or links the

other commandment in full. Commandment 1 which is about “Basics” of practice states that “Rise before dawn. Offer your **Prayer and Puja** (worship) at fixed hours preferably before sunrise, sitting in one and the same pose. Have a separate place and ‘asan’ for worship. **Purity** of mind and body be adhered to.” If you mark the words Prayer, Puja and Purity, these are detailed in Commandment 2. “Begin your **puja** with a **prayer** for **spiritual elevation** with a heart full of **love and devotion.**”

The Prayer as explained in commandment 2, sets the Goal and the act of reaching the Goal is perennial, continuous. Prayer, is the **Ideal**, if you notice in the commentary on commandment 2. Commandment 3 then states “Fix your Goal which should be complete oneness with God. Rest not till the **ideal** is achieved”. So this sets out the determination and will needed to move towards the ideal. Any ideal is never reached 100% but it can always be approached closer and closer to 100%. In this sense the Goal becomes limitless and Prayer too becomes eternal. To arrive at the Goal is to arrive in a condition where one is eternally in a state of Prayer. Thus we see that commandments 1, 2 and 3 should not be treated in isolation but treated atomically and form the basis of our sadhana.

To start with commandment 1, it is called “**Basics**” because without the practice of meditation on Divine

Light and evening cleaning, it is not possible to gain any nearness to the Goal. This discipline is a must. Master has given the most effective method which is aided by Pranahuti so that from very ordinary state of gross consciousness, we get a taste of godly consciousness. Regular and disciplined practice alone leads us to a state where we can make sense of the Goal of oneness. To arrive at this state, the practice has to be done with love and devotion as commandment 2 ordains. It also ordains to pray for spiritual elevation alone and not seek anything penultimate. So here we come to the essence of Reality which is Prayer.

Before we dwell over the Prayer, Master says, offer prayer with a heart full of love and devotion.

The question is, how do we fill the heart with love and devotion? This is not a one time activity to be somehow done just before morning meditation. Our heart should always be full of love and devotion towards Master. It is a state of consciousness we should be in. The hint is given by Master in the commentary on commandment 2, the first paragraph itself. He says, **“Prayer is the sign of devotion. It shows that we have established our relationship with the Holy Divine. When the idea of Divine Mastership is established our position turns into that of serf. Now service is the only concern of the serf. Take for example the case of Bharata. He never allowed his heart to be**

contaminated with anything but the esteem, regard and devoted worship of the Master. This example must be kept in view for maintaining the relationship which is the true form of devotion. This is the connecting link between the Master and the serf.”

We must recall here the story of Bharat and Lord Rama. Kaikeyi succeeded in exiling Lord Rama thus paving way for Bharat to rule the kingdom of Ayodhya. Any person who cares for riches would exult in such an acquisition, that too of a kingdom. But the state of consciousness Bharat is in, he does not care about the kingdom at all. He cares about the company of Lord Rama. He could do this because he maintained highest purity in his heart, not allowing it to be contaminated by “anything” other than the esteem regard and devoted worship of Lord Rama. In simple terms it means that heart is free of desires and only then it can be made an abode for Master. If Master has asked us to keep this example in mind, then it implies that our endeavor also should be to become desireless. For this aspiration to develop, we must repeatedly remember the Master as one who is ever present within and everywhere. He prescribes the means to develop love and devotion as follows: The means consist of endeavouring to remember the Principle, i.e Ishwar. He further says, **“Whatever act you do, do it in the thought "It is the Divine's command and therefore it is my duty to do so", so that the state of**

remembrance should continue steadfast and one special benefit that accrues is that the creation of samskars (Impression) ceases. Retaining the remembrance of God at all times, engenders in us a deep attachment to the Divine and leads to the state in which love for Him develops and overflows. Gradually through this, devotion attains its full form. It is therefore very essential to adopt this procedure.” Note

that cessation of samskaras is the beginning of becoming desireless. This aspiration to become desireless is itself a shift in our orientation as most common people believe that happiness is directly proportional to fulfillment of desires. But all fulfillment of desires achieves is that it creates a potential trail for the next desire in addition to creating a samskara for undergoing the effect of the fulfilled desire which becomes the cause of a future misery. Thus the endless cycle of samskaras, joyful or otherwise, can never cease. This cycle can be broken only by taking to a higher aspiration of life which is seeking nothing but God. When we do become desireless, we can do our God ordained duty with love without being attached and can stay balanced. This is the state described in Srimad BhagavadGita as “Sthita Pragnya”. In our system to become desireless does not mean to take to monkhood or Sanyasa. It is imperative for householders to have duties to fulfill. These require action and not renunciation. It is possible to be desireless even in the

midst of action and for that Pujya Babuji Maharaj has said that devote all actions to Him. Do your duty as ordained by Master or better still, Master himself is doing it. Symbolically, this is what Bharata did, by placing Lord Rama's paduka on the throne and ruled the kingdom in the consciousness that it is Lord Rama's and not his. This is an example of trusteeship and devotion at its best. We too can surely live in the present and devote all our actions to Him, remembering His presence in our heart. So remembrance of the Master in our heart is love and it is the way to keep it pure and dedicating our actions to Him through such instrument of remembrance is devotion or worship. So in the example of Bharata, we see primarily 2 facets

1. Not allowing heart to be contaminated by anything other than esteem, regard and worship of Master, i.e maintaining purity of self. This can be done through remembrance of His presence in us. (which imperience grants)
2. Dedicating all actions to Him for they are for Him. In reality there should not be any separation in as personal or Master's. Everything is He and everything is for Him. This is the highest form of worship.

Now coming to the Prayer proper.

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

*we are yet but slaves of wishes putting bar
to our advancement. Thou are the only God
nd power to bring us up to that stage.*

If you read through commandment 2, you will notice that this Prayer is almost given in the fag end of the commentary. I feel it is so, so we can understand the context and depth of the Prayer. It is not as simple as it seems. Each line in the prayer is again a stage of consciousness and all stages of progress are in the prayer and ultimately the Prayer converges in a state of endless humility.

When we do this Prayer, each and every line has to be deeply felt and is a sort of an exhortation.

When we say “O Master,”

Here we are pleading to God, someone we love. It is with a feeling of pang. It is a cry just like a baby cries for its mother.

Thou art the Real Goal of human life.

This should carry a deep sense of seriousness within, an exhortation to the self that He indeed is the Goal and here the feeling of a “bandha”, one who is bonded should come. Bonded to the Master. We know we are connected to Him and there is no separation. When this is

really established in our hearts, we say we have developed Viveka and Vairagya. Superfluous activities vanish and purpose of all activities, converge to seek the only Reality, Master. In the course of our sadhana, we must remind ourselves several times and contemplate deeply on this line. The confidence to feel Master as the Goal is a direct result of meditation on Divine Light aided by Pranahuti. If Master is the goal of life and practical life has so many actions and emotions, all have to be submitted to Him, for His purpose. The sense of service should be there in all our thoughts and action. To recall again, Babuji Maharaj writes in His commentary earlier, **“When the idea of Divine Mastership is established our position turns into that of serf. Now service is the only concern of the serf”**. Literal meaning of serf is that he is a farmer bonded to a piece of land and to the will of the landlord. All the serf can do is follow the will of the landlord. Now let’s see for ourselves if every thought that occurs to us and every action that we do, is to serve Him. This again is a stage of development of consciousness. If we analyse, we will know how much of a selfish consciousness we live and what should be our sadhana. This is the basis for contemplation on the next line of prayer.

We are yet but slaves of wishes, putting bar to our advancement.

This is in utter helplessness that we feel the separation from the Master, as we present ourselves to the

Master, simultaneously a contradiction is felt because deep down we are aware that we are not totally free from the clutches of desire and that prevents us from feeling Oneness with Him. Though the link with Him is felt, the presence is felt, yet pain is also felt. This craving is good because this helplessness allows us to yield to Him and feel our dependence on Him.

The first two lines of Prayer itself denote that praying for anything other than Master or seeking any kind of relief is contrary to the Goal. We are thus seeking a shift from being a slave of our wishes to being a slave to the Master. While being a slave to our wishes binds us, being a slave to the Master, liberates us. It is done through an act of love and devotion of every thought and action to Him until it truly becomes our condition.

Thou art the only God and Power, to bring us up to that stage.

Whom are we to look forward to? It is only the Master. Acceptance of this line in the core of our consciousness is the beginning of surrender to the One God, the One Power in expression.

Master says in Method of Training,

“The abhyasi meditates on the heart as I have already said, but there must be yielding attitude towards the master. If there is anything difficult in the path of righteousness, it is surrender, if taken up

directly (that ensures the result). People usually surrender verbally alone by going to the temple and bowing to the idol. It is not surrender at all. Actually, it is a sort of state when one feels like a child going to the lap of his mother even if a tiger attacks him. He does not know whether his mother can save him from the tiger. The Best way of surrender which I have stated is to "Feel dependence upon God". Before it as already said there must be yielding attitude to a really capable Master. By doing surrender we generally know "I am doing it". So we proceed with the "I" which should be shaken off. In this way "Self" develops but not surrender. Surrender is really the outcome of Bhakti (Devotion) if it is done in the real sense. Real Bhakti is the inner attachment with the Being. Of course Bhakti (devotion and love) is the chief instrument and the highest type of Bhakti is that when an abhyasi "May not feel what he loves and for what he is loving". There are such instances in the scriptures also relating to Lord Krishna. The consciousness of separate entity not only bars the spirit of surrender but sometimes produces altogether different results from those desired. If a tiger feels he is a tiger, he will pounce upon his own cubs. If a man thinks himself to be a man he will torment others like a demon. How do we know that our Surrender is complete? It is when we begin to know that the abhyasi

is surrendering naturally to all humanity. When surrender is perfect the idea of surrender itself is gone, and it becomes completely natural. "To acquire naturalness should be the main care of the abhyasi". Surrender and cooperation are twin sisters."

Thus we see that the stages from Viveka-Vairagya to dependency to devotion and surrender are contained in the Prayer. One thing to note is that Surrender is an outcome of Bhakti or devotion, does not mean that devotion gets over. Devotion to the Master always remains no matter what stage we develop to. Surrender is an outcome of devotion and Surrender also changes its nature till it develops to surrendering to humanity. I have struggled for sometime to understand what does it mean to surrender to humanity and how is such a state an outcome of Bhakti. The way I feel today about this is that we sense of separation with others tends to dissolve and one feels humanity as oneself, so much so that the Prayer is felt for the whole of humanity. The "We" and the "us" in the prayer becomes truly real. Otherwise though we use the words "We" and "us", it's actually meant in our psyche as "I" and "Me". This transition in feeling from "I" to "me" to "us" is I believe not just a play of words but genuine feeling within. We will deeply aspire to see the whole of humanity as seeking the same Goal of Oneness with God.

I conclude that Prayer given by the Master, though starts with a few words and sentences, actually is a deep state of consciousness when settled in and covers all stages of development. A person who has become an embodiment of Prayer is a real man.

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