

# Rise Before Dawn

- Sri. Rajesh Raina

In the age old traditions of India, we have learnt from Gita that everyone should do their duty in all fields of their action. What exactly constitutes our duty, especially in today's modern world is quite unclear and needs thought and guidance. It is towards the solution of this problem, that Sri Ramchandra's Commandments are the most enlightening.

The commandments in our system are truly a blessing. They are blessings in fact for the entire humanity in the most subtle and most effective form. The commandments are of great spiritual significance, since their true essence was imperienced by Rev. Master in his super fine state of super consciousness.

In the finer states of consciousness we come closer and closer to the Divine nature and those qualities get reflected in us. This we know very well from the examples of the people past and present who hold the Divine in their heart and move steadily towards that. Divinity is just and balanced, and the commandments are

a reflection of that state of consciousness which is the finest and the subtlest. By living the commandments we aspire to live closest to the true nature of our real self.

"Rise before dawn". The first call is to rise. Rise above conflict and confusion. This is some viveka, when we understand the need to rise early in the hour before dawn. Rise towards one's duty. Rise above from the grips of sloth and matter. This is some vairagya, when we can gather our energy to orient ourselves towards the goal and act there upon. The first statement further tells that we have to rise to the condition which is similar to the one that exists before dawn. The condition of "before dawn" is a condition of pause before expansion and is a reflection of the original condition at the time of creation as explained by Rev. Master.

The condition before dawn is the closest to that of perfect calm and stillness, when there is neither expansion nor contraction and is our original state of balance. By meditation at this hour we develop the intimacy and recognition of this external condition, which then we can recognize even internally as an underlying condition in our daily life full of activity.

The mind is rested and the senses are folded down during sleep. So we are advised to get up before dawn whilst the mind is still in its state of repose, when the material heat has not exerted its influence on our senses and we are asked to begin our meditation. This ensures that we will be able to have a better awareness of our inner self.

"Offer your Prayer and Puja". What is it, which we can offer to the Lord? It is only our prayer and submission. By becoming cognizant of the Divine presence in our life through the medium of prayer, we develop the link to the real. When we feel the link to the real, humility towards the Divine makes its presence felt in our hearts.

We sit in one and the same pose such that it aids in the sense withdrawal and the mind therefore does not get its input from the senses and stays in a settled state. Congenial vibrations, because of same time and place enhance our remembrance of the task at hand and further aid in getting us into the meditative mood.

"Purity of mind and body be specially adhered to". The characteristic of purity is equilibrium and balance. A settled and pure mind begins to recognize the inner craving for its own union and the role that the Master

plays in one's evolution begins to dawn upon us. Purity of body is a matter of minimum etiquette and preparedness for the task.

So, even in the first commandment itself Rev. Master identifies the higher ideals, the prayerful attitude and purity of mind required to reach our goal. The following of the first commandment results in development of will and purpose with humility and submission towards Divine, and this enables a person to look beyond the confines of individual consciousness and become more conscious of the Divine. When this happens, all the commandments of Rev. Master seem natural.

"Begin your Puja with a prayer for spiritual elevation with a heart full of love and devotion". There are various reasons, why we remember God. Sometimes we are devoted because of our material needs; sometimes we are devoted because of our intellectual craving for knowledge; sometimes we are devoted because of our attachments. It is here that the Master truly guides us and exhorts us to devotion of God, primarily for the purpose of spiritual elevation. Spiritual elevation that is for one and all.

The true offering of prayer acts as a connecting link with the Divine and creates in us a state of vacuity, which enables the flow of Divine grace into our being. Rev. Master has mentioned in the book, that being in Prayer is the true state of our being. Rev. Master says "He should withdraw himself from all sides and turn completely towards him losing all worldly charms". If one develops within a true state of prayer, following all the commandments will become natural and easy. All of us can feel that when we are in a prayerful mood, it is easy to forgive and forget many of the hurdles that we come across.

One of the key characteristics of the spiritual elevation is in itself development of true love and devotion. True love and devotion further leads to dedication and service without a selfish motive. Hence through this commandment Rev. Master provides a direction for the spiritual elevation of the humanity. If we can work with the sense of dedication and without selfish motive, we will achieve Nishkam Karma or work without concern for result and attachment to the results. This would be spiritual elevation in its true sense.

"Fix your goal, which should be complete oneness with God. Rest not till the ideal is achieved". Rev. Master

makes it amply clear in the commandment that it is essential to fix our thought upon the goal. Elsewhere he gives us a guarantee that a powerful will made as a first step and maintained, shall never fail to achieve a complete success. By remembering our goal, we maintain that will to reach the homeland. This would really be constant remembrance, if our goal is in our sight all the time.

Because of our entanglements and reactions to thoughts, we have limited or bound ourselves. By reminding ourselves constantly of the goal, we use the thought force in us appropriately to get rid of the entanglements and stay away from any other whirls that we may come across. Rev. Master has cautioned against forming any expectations about the results, such that additional channels are not formed. This he has reminded us, is the principle behind the concept of Nishkam Karma expounded in Gita.

The commandment says that we should attempt complete oneness. This means that currently we do feel separateness or aloofness at one time or another. If we want to rid ourselves permanently of this aloofness that we feel at one time or the other we must not rest till complete oneness is reached. In that state alone, we can

experience total freedom that oneness brings in its wake.

It is common experience that we start with lot of enthusiasm and it dims as we make some progress and this is primarily because we did not apply our will towards the goal at the very beginning of the task.

If we get stuck at one step or the other and lose the view or the goal, we will feel the separateness in one form or the other and that Master has so vividly cautioned against. When one contemplates the significance of this with respect to various age old traditions and rituals, as also with modern day commercialization of spirituality, the gratitude towards Master for providing an eye opener, through this commandment knows no bounds.

The first three and the tenth of the commandments are the key guiding principles in the daily practice of PAM and are explained with clear meaning and importance by Rev. Master, for which we are ever grateful.