

PRAYERS AND PENANCE

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On February 20, 1976, Miss Melodie Cohen, a student from the U.S.A., asked Revered Dadaji:

“People do penances on themselves, like fasting, to pay for sins known and unknown. Do these penances have any value?”

The Discourse given by Revered Dadaji is reproduced below.

Right and Wrong Goals

Basically, penance is states of consciousness, and not necessarily practice. Practices of penance differ according to two main goals to be achieved through penance. One is the right goal and the way of life linked with the right goal. The other is the wrong goal, quite often mistaken for right goal by men that matter, through ignorance or inertia or wrong interpretations by others.

At times, people practice penance knowing well that it is for a wrong goal of life. They do so to fulfill some desire even for a wrong goal.

These are the two extremes: The penance to grow unto the right goal of life and the penance to go into the wrong way of life without knowledge or knowingly. Between these two extreme bases, there are diverse sub-bases for penance. All these bases have many practices, which are common. Some practices are not common.

Spiritual Goal is the Right Goal

The right goal of life to grow unto is the spiritual goal of life, beginning with growing to know one's own soul in the right spiritual way. The right ways are shown by High Beings through religions as well as outside religions, not by those who claim to be High Beings but are not so in reality.

High Beings have shown the way how to purify through penance so that the separating veils in the deeper consciousness of a human being are emptied out. Then, the soul becomes cleaner of the past of lives. Thereby, the human mind grows nearer the soul. And, as it grows nearer the soul, the light of the soul enlightens the human mind and makes it aware of what is spiritually right and what is spiritually wrong.

This is one basis. It is the most important basis for all human beings to grow through to realize their own soul.

Wrong Goal: Satisfaction of Ego-Centric Desires

Many of the average human beings are desirous of growing unto the spiritual goal of life but they know not the way, the right way. Victims of their own ignorance, most of them catch whatever is told to them by other human beings who try to satisfy their desires in the name of religions and even spirituality.

Besides, they interpret the Scriptures according to their own conceptual attachments linked with their desires. At times, they claim to get so-called inspirations and even so-called experiences. But such inspirations and experiences are mostly their own ideas. They have nothing to do with the right spiritual way.

In that way, too, because of their intense devotion towards the goal, albeit linked with their desires, their prayers and penances have some effect upon their human psychology. That, to an extent, if not fully, satisfies their human minds. Through that satisfaction, they claim that their penance works. If at all, it is the working at their human level of consciousness linked with their desires.

Three Trends in Life when One is Seized in Higher Mind

Behind such sincerity and devotion, some souls have got potential which has been growing towards fulfillment. There are Beings who can see the souls, not merely the outward forms of human beings. If they are given the charge of the souls and of turning the human mind concerned towards the soul, they seize such souls in their minds.

Then, one of the three trends begin in their life. One is towards satisfaction of their desires, right or wrong from the spiritual point of view. This is more so if the forces of destiny are in their favour.

Or, they get into states of dissatisfaction at the human level because their desires are not satisfied and even their destiny does not help them. When seized in the Mind Divine through this type of dissatisfaction, they are helped to grow nearer their souls by those who seize their souls. If their destiny is in their favour, their progress towards their own soul is faster provided they do not use the destiny for satisfaction of their own desires.

Between these two trends, one towards satisfaction of the desires and the other towards satisfaction of their soul, there are many mixtures of consciousnesses in human beings. These mixtures create a lot of confusion in their way of life and such groups of men are in majority, from ancient times till today.

Then, there is the third groups, of men and women. They are bent upon satisfying their desires even in ways which are wrong from the spiritual point of view or else they are indifferent to the way so long as their desires are satisfied. Though in good number, they do not form the majority in society in the present-day way of life, particularly in their behaviourism. Behind the scenes, in secrecy, they do many wrong things, trying not to be caught.

To gain the goal of satisfaction of their desires anyhow, such people also do penance with prayers, either given to them or of their own conceptions. They succeed to the extent the destiny favours them. In quite a few cases, even when destiny does not favour them, they succeed when they are influenced by discarnate spirit forces of the wrong nature through diverse temptations. When they yield, they are possessed by the discarnate spirits whose aim is to empty themselves through the incarnated human beings. In return, they give them some material gains by fulfilling their diverse desires.

Thus, there are three main groups, with subgroups within the main groups of human beings, who practice penance including or linked with prayers of different nature which suit their minds or which are given to them as so-called *mantrams* for their own satisfaction. These bases of penance through prayers, *mantrams* or otherwise for personal satisfaction, however laudable they may seem to be, make their soul not merely earth-bound or matter-bound but also bound to realms lower than the earth-bound states. In the worldly way of life, they may show some gains which may make others envy them but spiritually they are wrong.

Do Not Use Prayers and Penance for Self-Satisfaction

Many human beings use prayers, *mantrams* or other penances like fasting or giving up certain types of food, whether permanently or temporarily, or even on certain days of weeks or months for the sake of some religious custom and convention. Such prayers, *mantrams* and penances of diverse nature, if practiced for the satisfaction of their desires, make their soul more and more bound through their desires, fulfilled and unfulfilled. That lowers them unto lower spirit realms.

Therefore, it is advisable for all human beings not to use prayers and penance for self-satisfaction.

Only Saving Factor

There is only one saving factor for those who use their penance for self-satisfaction of their ego-self and that is if they are seized in the Mind Divine and permitted by the Mind Divine even if not Guided by the Mind Divine. If the soul that seizes them is really a High Soul, and more so a Descending High Soul,

descending, if not from the highest spiritual realm, at least from higher than material realms, then they are protected from devolution and degradation of their soul. But that is only under one main condition that whatever they gain through such satisfaction of their desires, they surrender in the right spiritual way through their own Entity and do not remain attached to their gains and to the thoughts of things and persons linked with that gain.

Then, they are guarded from the wrong spirit forces influencing them and possessing them and from the consequent devolution and degradation of the soul. They are not guarded if they use the gains for satisfying their desires of subjective nature, however laudable from the human or even humane point of view but not right from the spiritual point of view. Then, their gain continues so long as their destiny is in their favour; not afterwards. And, if they have misused the guardianship and the grace, they either get into difficulties or fall heavily.

Growth Towards the Soul

However, when they surrender their gains in the right spiritual way, they are not only guarded but are even graced in their own field of life. And, if they are found worthy during such trials, they get the chance of being Guided spiritually. The Guidance includes the Grace and the Guardianship. When the Guidance is used in the right way, according to the principles for execution of the Guidance, they grow towards their soul.

Three Principles: First Value, Obedience and Unto the Last

The principles in execution of the Guidance are basically three.

The very first value is to be given to what is Guided, no matter how important other things seem to be from any point of view. Second, obedience to whatever is Guided, from the innermost with feeling of love and dedication, and not merely a show of obedience in external behaviourism. And the third is not to wait but to persist and persevere unto the last by going after the Guided thoughts constantly with increasing speed till they are fulfilled irrespective of the price to be paid by way of tribulations or otherwise. They should be ready even to lay down their life in the fulfillment of the Guided work. Then, they grow.

Assertion of the Ego

The obstacle in the fulfillment of the Guidance is not the human life but the human ego. In spite of all efforts to surrender, the ego asserts openly or subtly. If one goes after the fulfillment of the three principles assiduously, the human being concerned does not die; the ego increasingly approaches its end.

Aim of Human Existence

Then comes the great gain: to grow to know the Divine Self within which is the first step, the first aim to grow unto in the human existence.

The next is to liberate the soul from the matter-bound state unto the spiritual realms.

Then, as one deserves, one should grow through the spiritual realms unto higher and higher spiritual consciousness till one's soul gets linked with and, if possible, oned with the Source of all souls that is God.

God Bless You.

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Editor's note: The above Discourse was edited by Byram on June 22, 2019 and finalized on June , 2019 in Ambatpada, Village Waki, Dahanu Road, India. Some words were edited out, some were inserted, and some sentences were moved around, and others inserted so that the thoughts would flow better and the message becomes clearer.