
AFFIRMATION AND PRAYER

CHELA: This is a satsang with Gururaj Ananda Yogi, U.S.A., 1982, number 4, recorded at U.C.L.A.

CHELA: Beloved, gentle Guruji, we read in the Book of Joshua, "Thou shalt meditate day and night, for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and thou shalt have good success." From the Book of Matthew: "Whatsoever things that ye desire, when you pray, believe that ye shall receive them and ye shall have them." "The Lord is my Shepard. I shall not want." "Ask and ye shall receive." Et cetera, et cetera. It is said that there are over three thousand promises in the Bible, thus giving us scores of back up data and validation for the use of affirmations in the planning of our daily lives. When considering the use of affirmations, one cannot help but encounter your teachings concerning attachments, expectations, karma, etc. Affirmations are attended in the approach of so many denominational teachings. Please guide in the ramifications of their use.

GURURAJ: [Silence on tape. Recording begins in the middle of Gururaj's response.] ... So here we have meditation, prayer, and affirmations. Shall I tell you a story about affirmations? You know truck drivers ... (I don't know if I told you this before. Hmm? No?

CHELA: We like truck driving jokes.

GURURAJ: Truck drivers always suffer of constipation. All truck drivers suffer of constipation because every time, every time they open their mouths they say, "Oh, shit!" [Laughter.] One has to be very careful with affirmations. [Laughter.] What are you affirming to yourself? When you say and this has been done in the Emile Coue Clinics which started up in France that you start off by saying, "I'm getting better and better every day." And he found phenomenal results by people just affirming this to themselves. But what is truly an affirmation? I feel Emile Coue indulged in auto suggestion. And all forms of auto suggestion does not reach the spirit. It only reaches certain layers of the mind and helps in repatterning the grooves that are already set in the mind. Many people, as most do, might require mental treatments: that I'm getting better and better. And, of course, Milton started it off first; the great English poet. Good.

But what is the basis of affirmation? Do we only want to shift energies in the mind, or do we want to go deeper? You say, "My headache is going to get better. My headache is going to get better." You affirm that to yourself all the time, and

your headache can get better. But be careful by curing the headache you do not develop a toe ache. You see. It's a shifting of energy.

Affirmations are very good if you have understanding and a firm conviction of what you are affirming. That is important. You can say to yourself, "I'm going to get a million dollars in twelve months time." And keep on saying that. That million dollars won't come. It's not going to fall out of the sky. But before you demand that of life and life is of abundance as we know before you demand that of life, you've got to work out a plan, a scheme, a business plan whereby that would become possible. So, when you have the proper plan and the scheme and not just words affirming something, then that planning and that scheming will give you conviction. And with the conviction, if you keep on affirming to yourself, then it could come to fruition. So what you affirm becomes confirmed. Do you see? So it is just idle repeating a phrase to yourself if there is no conviction, and conviction is gained by understanding the problem, by a wider perspective. So if affirmation is combined with meditation, then naturally in the quietude that is produced in your mind will help the affirmation to have a firmer grip in your mind. So you first have the conviction and you have the affirmation. And it is backed up with the quietude and the energies that are generated by meditation. Good.

Now we all know what meditation is because most of you practice meditation. All of you, I think, yes? Prayer. Who are you praying to? Is there some entity sitting up there that is answering your prayer? No. Who answers your prayers is you yourself. No one answers your prayers for you. It's only you that answer your prayers. Now if prayer is combined with meditation bringing the mind to a nice, quiet state and then praying afterwards that prayer could go deeper within yourself.

Prayer should not be bargaining. And I think I've said this before. "If my son passes his exam, I will donate a hundred dollars to the American Meditation Society or a hundred dollars to America's... of Guruji's tour of America." Now that's no good. "If," that word should not be there. You see. You're doing business with Divinity. "Lord, if You do this, then I will do that." That's business. So in prayer there is no business involved. You do what you have to do, and you have that conviction which is affirmed in your heart, confirmed there too, and then you pray. And your prayer is answered, producing first the quietude of mind and doing what you have to do. Give that donation first. Then say, "Lord," within you, that's Lord there "Let this come to fruition. May You give my son all the energies he requires and the understanding he requires to pass his exam." Right. And you will find that the thought forces that you have set off will go to your son because thought is a very powerful energy. It will go to him in that area which is most required by which he would be a success.

So we don't do business with God. What we rather say is this: that this is what I desire. Now this desire must also be a burning desire. You must feel it in every cell of your body, and you can only feel it in every cell of your body if you have

the firm conviction. Now to have the firm conviction in yourself as far as your son is concerned we're only using this as an example; it applies to everything practically you have the firm conviction that: "I know he's intelligent. I know he has been working hard. And I know what he will need at the time of examination is complete control of himself so he can concentrate." And your thoughts that are sent forth in that way will definitely help the boy in being able to concentrate. We've experimented on this many, many times. And there were controlled experiments. And it has worked. Invariably, it has worked. So that is prayer.

In prayer you don't beg. You don't beg. You say, "Oh, God, forgive me my sins, and do this and do that for me and do that." Why the devil should he do that for you? Why are you so special? You don't beg. Fool by begging. What is to be achieved? You are making yourself a beggar when you are the master of all destiny, when you have all the divinity within yourself. And a true meditator does not even need to pray.

And then after all, when do people pray? Going to church and praying and singing the hymns, do you think that is prayer? That is not prayer. I know many people that go to church to meet people. Many people go to church to show off their Sunday best. Now I know many pastors and priests, but they are just waiting for the communion, the wine and bread. After they finish their sermon, they get dead drunk. Yes. And many people sitting in church are waiting to reach home for their roast beef. They'd rather not go to church. Not that I say you must not, but if you do go, there has to be a sincerity. And there is one advantage in going to church. The atmosphere becomes conducive to a greater quietude of mind. Therefore, I've always said in London we had a press conference where the press was invited and I tell them that I want to fill the churches, not empty them. But what the churches are doing are just mere words, words, words, and very little said. Give the person something to work on. The priest's first quality, or the pastor's, should be he might have studied in a theological college, but that is not enough he must have spirituality to impart spirituality. That is why our churches are getting emptier and emptier every day, and the disco clubs are getting fuller and fuller. And they both perform the same purpose. The one blows the mind, and the other makes the mind go to sleep. Yes, basically the same. There was this young boy who used to go with his grandfather to church regularly every Sunday. But the grandfather used to fall asleep. And the priest did not like the idea because it was a reflection on his own ego that during my sermon someone falls asleep. It was a bad reflection on him. So he gets this boy aside one day and tells this boy, "Look. I will give you twenty five cents. As soon as your grandpop falls asleep, you wake him up. You nudge him awake, and every time I'll give you twenty five cents." So it worked well for about two or three weeks where the boy did not allow grandpapa to fall asleep. But the third or fourth week grandfather fell asleep again, and the fifth week he fell asleep again during the sermon. So the pastor went up to the boy and said, "Look. We made a bargain. We made a deal that you should keep

him awake." So he says, "Well, I made a better deal. My grandpop is giving me fifty cents not to wake him up."
[Laughter.]

Real prayer is something that you just don't sit down to do. You can take a half an hour off. Nothing wrong with it. And you can do your bargaining and your begging. OK. But the real prayer is to be twenty four hours of the day where your every breath is a prayer. Every word you say is a prayer. Every laugh you laugh is a prayer. Everything you see around you becomes a prayer. That is praying. That is the living prayer. There's no begging or bargaining there at all. And how does this come about? By meditation and spiritual practices where everything you do is an offering, and every offering is a prayer. Do you see?

How much do we offer of ourselves during the waking hours of the day? You can offer yourselves during sleeping hours too, by the way. How much do we offer? No. Nothing. We grab, grab, grab. We never offer. And offering does not mean in money terms only. That's only a small part of it. But offering of ourselves in thought and love. You start loving people which is brought about through meditation where you become more mellow inside, gentle, soft inside. Even your work might demand a hard exterior. Doesn't matter. But the core is soft like some of the lovely sweets you have here in America. That core is soft. And when that is gentle and soft inside, every thought you think becomes a prayer because it comes from that gentleness, that softness within. And the heart is very soft. It is only the covering that is hard. That covering is created by ourselves because we indulge in begging and in bargaining and not in offering. And if you don't offer, you suffer. Do you see? So if our hearts and minds are filled with loving thought for others, that is a prayer. So prayer must not be something abstract or a thought process. A prayer is a living process. People only pray when they get into trouble, and they have some big problem. If they have some big problem, they pray, "Oh, God, please help me. This is my problem. Help me." And you cry. It is good therapy only when you cry. When you, when you are in trouble and you cry, it is very, very good because you are releasing the tensions that are built up in your system by the problem. So the more you cry, the better it is for you. And if you don't cry, laugh. Same effect. So tears and laughter are two sides of the same coin. But if you live the living prayer, then you can do both and enjoy them immensely. How many of us can really laugh? Very few. Very few. People laugh at little funny story or so because that funny story is understood by the mind. And being funny it turns the mind funny, and it expresses itself in laughter. But when we can learn to laugh from the heart, ahh, that's a different laughter, that. You can love with the mind also and think that you're loving. But to love from the heart, that's a different thing altogether.

So these are various levels in prayer. Every day we pray, and it becomes say the Lord's Prayer and it becomes so mechanical. It becomes mechanical. You say it for the sake of saying it. But we do not take into account the deep meaning behind those words. "Oh, Lord, give us this day our daily bread." What does it mean? Are you praying for bread? You're not. You're not praying for bread. What it really means is this: let this day suffice unto itself. And let me not worry about tomorrow. Let me be away from the projection of tomorrow; tomorrow does not exist. Today exists. So give me this day, give us this day our daily bread. Let me be self sufficient and fulfilled. Not the stomach. Let me be fulfilled today. Do you see? We don't understand our prayers. We don't understand the real import or the deep meaning behind them. You see? Let me be fulfilled this day. And these, all these words of prayers, they might seem so mundane. Oh, why pray for bread? You can work for bread. Why pray for bread? You work for bread, not pray for bread. A loaf of bread is not going to land on your lap by praying. You've got to work for it. Right. But that is not what it means. Bread is filling. Right. So it is used symbolically that let this day be fulfilled. Let me live this day to its fullest. Tomorrow you pray that again. Let Monday be fulfilled. Let Tuesday be filled. Let Wednesday be filled. Et cetera. And that is how we go through life. So we have to understand what we are praying about.

This young man was told, he says, "Why do you pray like this? 'Give us this day our daily bread?' Why don't you pray: give us this week our daily bread. A week's supply?" Yes. So this chap answers; he says, "No, I'd rather pray for this day because then I can get it fresh every day." [Laughter.]

Prayer has great value. Prayer has great value, and it is only given to we so called human beings that has some thinking ability to pray. Animals also pray. Now I'm not talking about P R E Y but P R A Y. Animals also pray. Theirs is a living prayer, yes, because they have no needs. Their needs is only food and water. And instinctively that is all that they would want. They do not store in their barns all the hay. A Biblical story. No. They provide for their daily needs. Do you see? Isn't that a greater prayer than ours that want to store up on earth that which should really be stored in heaven? That means that inner self of yours. So they pray better.

We pray for abundance. Fine. Nothing wrong with that. Have abundance. How do we use it? In a possessive way? For security? Why does a person want to have a few million pounds in the bank or whatever? Why? Because he feels inadequate. He feels I might get sick or I might get old and this will look after me. Yes. So his thoughts are of sickness and of old age and disability. Do you see? So he is starting off from the wrong angle all the time. He is thinking of sickness when he is not sick. Another projection. He is thinking of old age. Who knows if he is going to live to that old age? You see? Projections. Projections. Projections. And these create insecurities, inadequacies, and then one accumulates or tries to accumulate. So that is not "give us this day our daily bread." We are contradicting ourselves. On the one side we want to accumulate, and on the other side we say, "Give us this day our daily bread." This day. This day. We don't ask for tomorrow. You see?

So when these contradictions arise, what is the value of prayer? Rather not, rather not be a hypocrite because all the barns you store up with the hay, a fire might just come along, and all is gone. And with that accumulation you develop attachment.

A person is very poor. Say in Calcutta, for example. He has not a roof over his head. And you have millions of people sleeping on pavements. So poor. So he sleeps on pavements. He hasn't a penny in his pocket, so he is not afraid of being robbed. He sleeps peacefully well on the pavement. And there in India you can because of the hot weather. Very hot. So he finds himself a little job, and he starts earning a little money. So by earning a little money Unemployment is rife there. Seven hundred and fifty million people have to be fed and jobs given. It is no joke. While here in America you have, I believe, eight million unemployed in one of the world's most prosperous countries. You have two million people living under the bread line in the world's most prosperous country. So India would be so, so much worse off. Right. So now this man finds himself a job, gets a little pay. So he gets himself a little room. Now because he has a little room, he gets himself a few sticks of furniture. Now he has to lock the door. Right. Then he gets further on, and he gets a house. Then he has got to have one or two dogs to protect his possession. And he advances further. Accumulates. Accumulates. And he has a little mansion; so, now he has to have guards around and his dogs. Right. You see? And then he goes and progresses further to a bigger mansion. And he's got to have burglar bars and burglar alarm systems installed and plus his dogs and plus his guards and ... do you see? So from that security of not worrying there's not a penny in his pocket; he's sleeping on the pavement; happy as the lord, perhaps and now he has got to find all these means to protect what he has accumulated. And his energies are more in the protection of what he has accumulated. I know a family in Cape Town, living quite near me in the same neighborhood. Husband and wife can never go out together. One has to stay at home while the other goes out. They cannot take a holiday together. They can't leave the house alone. Because of their possessions it might be burgled. Do you see? You see how we tie ourselves up like the silk worm spinning and spinning and spinning and then later finding itself entangled in its own web that it had spinned; it's own cocoon or whatever. You see?

So all these things are created by ourselves, and when we get trapped, then we start praying, "Oh, Lord, protect me. Help me." Why must He help you? You help yourself. As the saying goes, "God only helps those that help themselves." Which means the inner self. The inner self can only be brought to the fore to help your life in its daily practical living to make it smoother and more joyous. And that is the purpose of prayer.

Prayer should have no need nor want. When you pray for a need, that is a selfish prayer. When you pray for a want in your life, that is a selfish prayer. Prayer should always be for others, never for yourself. Always for others. But what

happens is this and this is the beauty of it when you pray for someone else, there is no selfishness, and because there is no selfishness, it rebounds back upon you. You pray for someone's prosperity, and that will rebound on you tenfold. So the giver is the true receiver, and the receiver might sometimes be the loser. You see? You see the value of prayer? Pray for others. Always pray, pray, pray for others. Pray for other's health and prosperity and happiness, and it will inevitably and invariably rebound upon you. Do you see? So all begging is gone, all bargaining is gone, and all selfishness is gone. So you are now praying for someone else. That means that you are projecting the goodness of yourself out, and that reflects back. So you're doing it for yourself, by yourself, and yet someone else benefits in the process because the intention is not for yourself. That is, prayer involves that sharing, that you're sharing yourself with others. And what is the best that you can share is your prayers and your love for others. It is returned tenfold. That is how one must pray, not kneeling down and doing all the Hail Mary's or what have you.

This young man went to the priest, and he said, "I want to make a confession." So he starts in the booth, "Yes, my son, what do you wish to tell me?" So he says, "Father, I have sinned." "You have sinned? What do you do?" "I slept with a woman." So the father asks, "Was it with Jacqueline So and so?" He says, "No." "Was it with Mary X Y Z?" So he says, "No." "Was it with Katherine A B C?" He says, "No." So the father says, "Well, my son, I forgive you, but sin no more." Meanwhile his friends were waiting for him outside, this boy's friends, and the friends asked him, "Are you saved with your confessions?" And he says, "Well, I don't know about that, but I got a lot of new leads from the father." [Laughter.] So with prayer there is also confession. To who do you confess? Confess to yourself by admitting to yourself the things that you personally feel are not conducive to your progress. That is the first step. In my kind of work I have to be in touch with people with all kinds of problems. All kinds. I handle quite a number of alcoholic cases. And the most difficult part I had with them was this, is to make them admit that they are alcoholics. And once they sincerely admit that, then the rehabilitation program can begin. So that's a very difficult part, not only in a disease like alcoholism but in everything in life. We don't want to admit the truth. We find so many excuses not to accept the truth. We dodge the truth. We go around about the truth. But we never want face the truth. And there meditation helps you to look into the mirror because you can ... oh, your mind is so confused and running around with thoughts upon thoughts upon thoughts that you do not have a moment for silence. So in those few moments of silence it gives you an opportunity to look at yourself in the mirror and say, "This fault have I." And by admitting it to yourself and then perhaps to a friend (if you wish to), confidante, someone to whom you can pour your heart. It's also good therapy to be able to pour your heart.

Many people that have problems, they just want to air them. They just need a listener. All of you can do that. Just to listen. Listen not for the sake of listening only, but to lend a sympathetic ear. It helps. And then whichever way some help could be given to the people on the same path, on the path of this world that we are passing through. It helps.

So we have to admit to ourselves what our fault is and then try to correct it. And that is also a form of prayer. To be honest to yourself is prayer. To be sincere with yourself is to pray. It is a prayer. "Man know thyself." How are you going to know yourself? And "yourself" is not just the body. Know yourself means to accept and admit and perhaps to analyze, work out a plan, a scheme how I'm going to better myself. That is a prayer. I'm talking of living, practical prayers and not going into a corner and doing all the hallelujahs and all that kind of thing. So the basis of prayer, then, would be honesty and sincerity, not to someone else, but to yourself. Charity begins at home. It applies to our own little home, three bedrooms and lounges and what have you. But the real home is inside. Be charitable there. Let the charity begin there inside you through meditation and spiritual practices. And then that overflows into your home environment, by which I mean the four walls, and then further beyond it.

So prayer is good as long as it is done in the right way. Affirmations are good if you have the conviction of what you are affirming. And meditation is the greatest of all because you just let go. In meditation you do not cling. Prayer has an element of clinging. Affirmations has an element of clinging. But in meditation you let go. You don't cling to nothing. You expect nothing. You are just there, you and your mantra. That's all. And your mantra is you. And when you reach the stage when you reach the finest level of your mantra, it remains as an impulse, the impulse of life which you are as you are. Then admittance, acceptance, all this just fall into place. Do you see? You just are. And your mantra goes to that finer level deep within yourself.

My mantra has thirteen syllables, and I feel all thirteen (given to me by my guru) and I experience all thirteen syllables in one impulse. And even as I am speaking to you, it is going on all the time, like the heart ticking away all the time. It is there all the time. Total, I am totally aware of it all the time. Do you see? And when that happens, you don't need to pray because that is a prayer itself. A constant remembrance starts developing in you so spontaneously first with some effort and then later so spontaneously your mantra is ticking away all the time. And the vehicle through whom your mantra was given to you is present all the time. So you see how gurushakti and mantra meditation combines?

[END SIDE ONE]

GURURAJ: So what happens there that the seer and the seen becomes one. And the object also merges. The knower, the known, and the knowing becomes one. And with practice this carries on for twenty four hours of the day even during sleep. Then you can sleep the way I sleep: fully, deep sleep but fully aware of everything around me. Yes. And we had this experiment because I want you to know what science says about it where they wired me up onto some machines where they could measure the depth of sleep. And yet I was aware of what was happening in the room all the time, and

yet I was in deep sleep. I was in total deep sleep. And the machines measured it. Yes. And we did this at St. Thomas' Hospital in England, and we did it in, at the [Hruska] Hospital in Cape Town in a sleep laboratory. You must have heard of a sleep laboratories. You see? So you are aware twenty four hours of the day. The only time when I am not aware is when I have a nightcap before sleeping. Then I go into a blackout. Yes. Do you see? And then when I sleep although the lights are off and it's totally dark; my eyes are closed but I just see light, light, light, light, light, all the time. Then I get so fed up with it sometimes, and I say, "Why the hell don't they switch off the lights!" Do you see.

And that is prayer. That is meditation. The half an hour in the morning and half an hour at night, those are just boosters. What we are interested in, as I was telling someone this morning, is the twenty three hours in between. How the quality of life should improve and could be improved and must improve. That is the purpose of meditation, prayer, and affirmation. Otherwise, we are wasting our time. You see? So in the beginning some effort is required, and later it just becomes spontaneous. It becomes so much a part of you that, as the saying goes, "the girl can't help it." You see? It just happens.

Ten past twelve. How about fasting today? I can carry on. Hmm? Aw.

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