

*True prayer is mental
utterance in secret.*



Abstract and train of thoughts¹

True prayer is unselfish love of humanity.

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¹ Frontispiece by Ilene Meyer.

True prayer is unselfish love of humanity.

Spartan Is it to thee, or to God, that I must confess?
Priest To God.
Spartan Then, *man*, stand back!
— PLUTARCH¹

To whom am I to pray?
I do not, for I am myself Parabrahm.
I only contemplate.
Contemplation is a state of mind.
— A CHELA²

THE WHOLE SUNDAY-QUESTION resolves itself into the demand to know whether it is in any degree right, or in accordance with divine law, than man should be so devoted to selfish toil, during the week, as to have virtually no time or strength left for prayer (*i.e.*, meditation) during the six days, and whether, therefore, it is right that the seventh day or Sunday should be set apart from it. All depends upon whether doing one's duty in the state of life to which one is called, is "doing," or not doing, "all to the glory of God." We think that work is prayer; and if so, the devotion of Sunday to innocent pleasure is really making it a day of rest.³

It is an act of will and a command.

Colonel Olcott was never an atheist "to our knowledge," but an esoteric Buddhist, rejecting a *personal* God. Nor was *genuine* prayer — *i.e.*, the exercise of one's intense will over events (commonly brought about by blind chance) to determine their direction — ever repugnant to him. Even prayers as commonly understood, are not "repugnant" in his sight, but simply useless, when not absurd and ridiculous as in the case of prayers to either stop or bring about rain, etc. By "prayer" he means — WILL, the desire or command *magnetically expressed* that such and such a thing beneficent to ourselves or others should come to pass.⁴

Unless enacted, prayers are useless.

Our prayers and supplications are vain, unless to potential words we add potent acts, and make the aura which surrounds each one of us so pure and divine that the God within us may act outwardly, or in other words, become as it were an extraneous Potency. Thus have Initiates, Saints and very holy and pure men been enabled to

¹ *Isis Unveiled*, II p. 212; [quoting Plutarch's *Laconic Apophthegms*. Full text in our Hellenic and Hellenistic Papers Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (PARABRAHM, DEFINED BY VEDANTINS) IV p. 450; [a Chela of a Vedantīn Sannyāsi of Benares addressing Ramji Mall Pandit on God.]

³ *ibid.*, (SUNDAY DEVOTION TO PLEASURE) IX p. 69

⁴ *ibid.*, (ZOROASTRIANISM IN THE LIGHT OF OCCULT PHILOSOPHY) IV pp. 519-20

help others as well as themselves in the hour of need, and produce what are foolishly called “miracles,” each by the help and with the aid of the God within himself, which he alone has enabled to act on the outward plane.¹

Loud prayers are disastrous.

Thus a prayer, unless pronounced *mentally* and addressed to one’s “Father” in the silence and solitude of one’s “closet,” must have more frequently disastrous than beneficial results, seeing that the masses are entirely ignorant of the potent effects which they thus produce. To produce good effects, the prayer must be uttered by “one who knows how to make himself heard in silence,” when it is no longer a prayer but becomes a command. Why is Jesus shown to have forbidden his hearers to go to the public synagogues? Surely every praying man was not a hypocrite and a liar, nor a Pharisee who loved to be seen praying by people! He had a motive we must suppose: the same motive which prompts the experienced Occultist to prevent his pupils from going into crowded places now as then, from entering churches, séance-rooms, etc., unless they are in sympathy with the crowd.²



The *mantra* may be uttered aloud, muttered silently or repeated mentally. The silent repetition is more effective than the loud but the purely mental repetition has the highest effect and is *japa* in the real sense of the term.³

Prayers should be for blessings on all that lives.

The greatest crime that was ever perpetrated upon mankind was committed on that day when the first priest invented the first prayer with a selfish object in view. A God who may be propitiated by iniquitous prayers to “bless the arms” of the worshipper, and send defeat and death to thousands of his enemies — his brethren; a Deity that can be supposed not to turn a deaf ear to chants of laudation mixed with entreaties for a “fair propitious wind” for self, and as naturally disastrous to the selves of other navigators who come from an opposite direction — it is this idea of God that has fostered selfishness in man, and deprived him of his self-reliance. Prayer is an ennobling action when it is an intense feeling, an ardent desire rushing forth from our very heart, for the good of other people, and when entirely detached from any selfish personal object; the craving for a beyond is natural and holy in man, but on the condition of sharing that bliss with others. One can understand and well appreciate the words of the “heathen” Socrates, who declared in his profound though untaught wisdom, that:

¹ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (E.S. INSTRUCTION No. I) XII pp. 533-34

² *ibid.*, (E.S. INSTRUCTION No. I) XII p. 535; [*Illustration: Prayer* by William-Adolphe Bouguereau, 1865]

³ I.K. Taimni I.K. *Gayatri*. Adyar: Theosophical Publishing House, 1978; p. 48. [Refer to “Commentary on the Gayatri by Judge,” in the same series. — ED. PHIL.]

Our prayers should be for blessings on all, in general, for the Gods know best what is good for us.¹

We shall be able to pray to Him properly, when we approach by ourselves alone to the Alone.

. . . *invoking God himself, not with external speech, but with the soul itself, extending ourselves in prayer to him, since we shall then be able to pray to him properly, when we approach by ourselves alone to the alone.* It is necessary, therefore, that the beholder of him, being in himself as if in the interior part of a temple, and quietly abiding in an eminence beyond all things . . .²



The ass's bray and the pious' pray are essentially the same words.³

¹ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (THE SECRECY OF INITIATES) XIV p. 42; [See Plato's *Laws*, Books 3, 7 & 10 (¶ 900 etc.); as well as Introduction to Book X by Proclus in Thos. Taylor's ed. — *Dara Eklund*.]

² Thomas Taylor (*Tr. & Annot.*). *Collected Writings of Plotinus*. (Vol. III of The Thomas Taylor Series) Frome: The Prometheus Trust, 2000; [*Ennead* V, i ¶ 6, p. 305. Full text in our Hellenic and Hellenistic Papers Series. — ED. PHIL.]

³ Consult "Origin and Affinity of the Languages of Asia and Europe," in: *The Asiatic Journal*, Vol. VII (New Series), January to April 1832, p. 10; discussing the research of Lieut. Col. Vans Kennedy, of the Bombay Military Establishment. First published by Longman & Co. in London, 1828, 324pp. Food for thought: if the pious bray, can asses pray? — ED. PHIL.

Prayers and supplications are vain, unless to potential words we add potent acts.

And thus make the aura which surrounds each one of us so pure and divine that the God within us may act outwardly, or in other words, become as it were an extraneous potency.

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (E.S. INSTRUCTION No. I) XII pp. 533-35; [Summing up Instruction I.]

① Each human being is an incarnation of his God — in other words, one with his “Father in Heaven,” just as Jesus, an Initiate, is made to say. As many men on earth, so many Gods in Heaven; and yet these Gods are in reality One, for at the end of every period of activity, they are withdrawn like the rays of the setting sun into the Parent Luminary, the Non-Manifested Logos, which in its turn is merged into the One Absolute. Shall we call these “Fathers” of ours, whether individually or collectively and under any circumstances, our *personal God*? Occultism answers, *Never*. All that an average man can know of his “Father” is what he knows of himself, through and within himself. The Soul of his “Heavenly Father” is incarnated in him. This Soul is himself, if he is successful in assimilating the divine individuality while in his physical animal shell. As to the Spirit thereof, as well expect to be heard by the Absolute. Our prayers and supplications are vain, unless to potential words we add potent acts, and make the aura which surrounds each one of us so pure and divine that the God within us may act outwardly, or in other words, become as it were an extraneous Potency. Thus have Initiates, Saints and very holy and pure men been enabled to help others as well as themselves in the hour of need, and produce what are foolishly called “miracles,” each by the help and with the aid of the God within himself, which he alone has enabled to act on the outward plane.

Woe to the unholy man who invokes the Sacred Trinity for personal advancement or pronounces It after the commission of some far-reaching sin.

② The word Aum or Ōm, which corresponds to the upper triangle, if pronounced by a very holy and pure man, will draw out or awaken, not only the less exalted potencies residing in the planetary spaces and elements, but even his Higher Self, or the “Father” within him. Pronounced by an averagely good man, in the correct way, it will strengthen him morally, especially if between two “Aums” he meditates intently on the Aum within him, concentrating all his attention upon the ineffable glory. But woe to the man who pronounces it after the commission of some far-reaching sin: he will thereby only attract to his own impure photosphere invisible presences and forces which could not otherwise break through the divine envelope. All the members of the Esoteric School, if earnest in their endeavour to learn, are invited to pronounce the divine word before going to sleep and the first thing upon awakening. The right accent, however, should be first obtained from one of the officers of the E.S.T.

Aum is the original of Amen. Now, Amen is not a Hebrew term, but, like the word Hallelujah, was borrowed by the Jews and Greeks from the Chaldees. The latter word is often found repeated in certain magical inscriptions upon cups and urns among the Babylonian and Ninivean relics. Amen does not mean “so be it” or “verily,” but

signified in hoary antiquity almost the same as Aum. The Jewish Tannaïm (Initiates) used it for the same reason as the Āryan Adepts use Aum, and with a like success, the numerical value of AMeN in Hebrew letters being 91, the same as the full value of YHVH,¹ 26 and ADoNaY, 65, or 91. Both words mean the affirmation of the being, or existence of the sexless “Lord” within us.

To produce beneficial effects, the prayer must be uttered by “one who knows how to make himself heard in silence,” when it is no longer a “prayer” but a command.

③ Esoteric Science teaches that every sound in the visible world awakens its corresponding sound in the invisible realms, and arouses to action some force or other on the occult side of nature. Moreover, every sound corresponds to a colour and a number (a potency spiritual, psychic or physical) and to a sensation on some plane. All these find an echo in every one of the so far developed elements and even on the terrestrial plane, in the Lives that swarm in the terrene atmosphere, thus prompting them to action.

Thus a prayer, unless pronounced *mentally* and addressed to one’s “Father” in the silence and solitude of one’s “closet,” must have more frequently disastrous than beneficial results, seeing that the masses are entirely ignorant of the potent effects which they thus produce. To produce good effects, the prayer must be uttered by “one who knows how to make himself heard in silence,” when it is no longer a prayer but becomes a command. Why is Jesus shown to have forbidden his hearers to go to the public synagogues? Surely every praying man was not a hypocrite and a liar, nor a Pharisee who loved to be seen praying by people! He had a motive we must suppose: the same motive which prompts the experienced Occultist to prevent his pupils from going into crowded places now as then, from entering churches, séance-rooms, etc., unless they are in sympathy with the crowd.

A clear conscience and a firm desire of benefiting humanity afford the best protection from air elementals, which throng public places.

There is one piece of advice to be given to beginners who cannot help going into crowds — one which may appear superstitious but which in the absence of occult knowledge will be found efficacious. As well known to good astrologers, the days of the week are not in the order of those planets whose names they bear. The fact is that the ancient Hindus and Egyptians divided the day into four parts, each day being under the protection (as ascertained by practical magic) of a planet; and every day, as correctly asserted by Dion Cassius, received the name of the planet which ruled and protected its first portion. Let the student protect himself from the “Powers of the Air” (Elementals) which throng public places, by wearing either a ring containing some jewel of the colour of the presiding planet, or else of the metal sacred to it. But the best protection is a clear conscience and a firm desire of benefiting Humanity.

¹ *Jāh-Havāh*, or male-female on the terrestrial plane, as invented by the Jews, and now made out to mean Jehovah, but signifying in reality and literally, “giving being” and “receiving life.”

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's Devotional Prayer.¹

CHANT THE NAME OF THE LORD and His glory unceasingly
That the mirror of the heart may be wiped clean
And quench that mighty forest fire,
Worldly lust, raging furiously within.
Oh name, stream down in moonlight on the lotus heart,
Opening its cup to knowledge of thyself.
Oh self, drown deep in the waves of His bliss,
Chanting His name continually,
Tasting His nectar at every step,
Bathing in His name, that bath for weary souls.

Various are thy names, Oh Lord,
In each and every name Thy power resides.
No times are set, no rites are needful, for chanting of thy name,
So vast is Thy mercy.
How huge, then is my wretchedness,
Who find, in this empty life and heart,
No devotion to Thy name!

Oh, my mind,
Be humbler than a blade of grass,
Be patient and forbearing like the tree,
Take no honour to thyself,
Give honour to all,
Chant unceasingly the name of the Lord.

Oh, Lord and soul of the universe,
Mine is no prayer for wealth or retinue,
The playthings of lust or the toys of fame;
As many times as I may be reborn
Grant me, Oh Lord, a steadfast love for Thee.

A drowning man in this world's fearful ocean
Is Thy servant, Oh sweet One.
In Thy mercy
Consider him as dust beneath Thy feet.

Ah, how I long for the day
When an instant's separation from Thee, Oh Govinda,
Will be as a thousand years,
When my heart burns away with its desire
And the world, without Thee, is a heartless void.

¹ Translated by Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood.

Prostrate at Thy feet let me be, in unwavering devotion,
Neither imploring the embrace of Thine arms
Nor bewailing the withdrawal of Thy presence
Though it tears my soul asunder.
Oh Thou, who stealest the hearts of Thy devotees,
Do with me what Thou wilt —
For Thou art my heart's beloved, Thou and Thou alone.¹



¹ [Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu (1486–1534) was a social reformer of Bengal and Orissa, and notable proponent for the Vaishnava School of Bhakti yoga. “A rather modern sage, believed to be an avatar of Krishna” (*Theosophical Glossary*). Because of his light skin complexion, he was sometimes referred to as Gaura or Golden; and Nimai, because he was born underneath a Neem tree (Cf. *Wikipedia*). In Sanskrit, chaitanya means consciousness (Cf. *Secret Doctrine*, I p. 6), or living spirit. (*Blavatsky Collected Writings*, IV p. 567) — ED. PHIL.]

Alexander Pope's Universal Prayer.¹

*Deo Opt. Max.*²

Father of all! in every age,
In every clime adored,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!

Thou Great First Cause, least understood:
Who all my sense confined
To know but this — that thou art good,
And that myself am blind:

Yet gave me, in this dark estate,
To see the good from ill;
And binding Nature fast in fate,
Left free the human will.

What conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This, teach me more than Hell to shun,
That, more than Heaven pursue.

What blessings thy free bounty gives,
Let me not cast away;
For God is paid when man receives,
To enjoy is to obey.

Yet not to earth's contracted span,
Thy goodness let me bound,
Or think thee Lord alone of man,
When thousand worlds are round:

Let not this weak, unknowing hand
Presume thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land,
On each I judge thy foe.

¹ This prayer was written in 1738 to correct the impression of fatalism which Warburton's ingenious exposition had failed to remove. Pope had really as little mind for dogma as most poets; but these verses represent what, in view of the instructions of Bolingbroke, corrected by Warburton, he now believed himself to believe.

² [*Deo optimo maximo*, often abbreviated D.O.M., is Latin for "To the greatest and best god," or "To God, most good, most great."]

If I am right, thy grace impart,
Still in the right to stay;
If I am wrong, oh teach my heart
To find a better way.

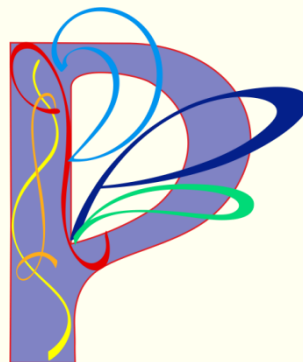
Save me alike from foolish pride,
Or impious discontent,
At aught thy wisdom has denied,
Or aught thy goodness lent.

Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.

Mean though I am, not wholly so
Since quickened by thy breath;
Oh lead me wheresoe'er I go,
Through this day's life or death.

This day, be bread and peace my lot:
All else beneath the sun,
Thou know'st if best bestowed or not,
And let thy will be done.

To thee, whose temple is all space,
Whose altar, earth, sea, skies!
One chorus let all being raise!
All Nature's incense rise!



Suggested reading for students.



From our Higher Ethics and Devotion Series.

- A WORTHY LIFE IS A VIRTUOUS LIFE
- ANGELS WEEP AT THE SIGHT OF HUMAN SORROW
- CHELAS AND LAY CHELAS
- CHELASHIP RULES FROM THE KIU-TE
- COMMENTARY ON THE GAYATRI BY JUDGE
- DISCHARGING THE DUTY OF ANOTHER IS DANGEROUS
- DIVINE VS. WORLDLY LOVE
- EYE VS. HEART DOCTRINE
- HARMONY IS THE ONE LAW IN NATURE
- HEART DOCTRINE AND HIGHER ETHICS
- KRISHNA IN PARADISE
- LIGHT ON THE PATH
- LOVE IS THE HEALING POWER OF THE SUCCESSFUL PHYSICIAN
- MAHATMAS AND CHELAS
- NARADA BHAKTI SUTRA
- PROCLUS ON THE TEACHER-DISCIPLE BOND OF LOVE
- PROTREPTICS TO DEVOTIONAL LOVE IN IN THE BHAGAVAD GITA
- REAL LIFE THRILLS IN THE SEVEN BRAINS OF THE HEART
- SEPTUAGINT'S SONG OF SONGS - TR. BRENTON
- STAND READY TO ABANDON ALL YOU HAVE LEARNED WITH THE HEAD
- THAT PURE DESIRE, OF WHOM LOVE IS BORN
- THE BHAGAVAD GITA - SEVEN ESSAYS BY JUDGE
- THE BHAGAVAD GITA - TR. JUDGE
- THE DEVOTIONAL SONGS OF KABIR SAHEB
- THE LEGEND OF THE BLUE LOTUS
- THE PATH, BY REGINALD WILLOUGHBY MACHELL

HIGHER ETHICS AND DEVOTION SERIES
SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS

- THE PERENNIAL WISDOM OF JAVIDAN KHIRAD
- THE STAR OF LOVE THRILLS THE NOBLE HEART
- THE STORY OF NARADA AND THE SUPREMACY OF BHAKTI
- THE TRANS-HIMALAYAN MAHATMAS ARE MEN LIVING ON EARTH
- THE VERY BEST OF ALL TALISMANS
- THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE - SEVEN MYSTIC SOUNDS
- THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE - TR. BLAVATSKY
- THEOLOGIA GERMANICA - TR. WINKWORTH
- THEOSOPHICAL JEWELS - THE AMARANTHINE DREAM
- TOWARD THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN
- WARNINGS TO WOULD-BE OCCULTISTS
- WHEN THE SUN MOVES NORTHWARD



Further reading.



On true prayer versus vain prayer.

- THE VOICE OF THE WILL IS THE ATOMIC POINT, THE LOGOS OF THE SILENT ALL
— *in our Constitution of Man Series.*
- THE PRAYER OF THE TRUE PHILOSOPHER IS HIS ADORATION
— *in our Living the Life Series.*

On self-adoration and selfish action.

- DOES YOUR MIND ELATE WITH SELF-ADORATION?
- INSTEAD OF BLACK AND WHITE MAGIC, READ SELFISH AND UNSELFISH MOTIVE
- SELFISHNESS IS THE CAUSE OF ALL SIN AND SUFFERING
- SELFISHNESS IS THE HALLMARK OF FAKIRS, HERMITS, AND YOGINS
— *in our Black versus White Magic Series.*
- POVERTY BREEDS GENEROSITY, WEALTH GREED AND SELFISHNESS
— *in our Down to Earth Series.*

