

We don't know
to WHOM
we Pray



We don't
know WHAT
we Say

**BUT WE
PRAY!**

Discover the true meaning of PRAYER

By
AiR
Atman in Ravi

**We don't know to Whom we Pray
We don't know What we Say...**

BUT WE PRAY

By
AiR
Atman in Ravi

Discover the true meaning of PRAYER

We don't know to Whom we Pray
We don't know What we Say...

BUT WE PRAY

Discover the true meaning of PRAYER



Copyright © AiR Institute of Realization 2020

AiR asserts the moral right to be identified as the author of this book.

All rights reserved.

No part of the content of this publication (except images) may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

Publisher: AiR Institute of Realization

Kemp Fort Mall, No-97, Old Airport Road, Bangalore-560017

Content

Preface	
Introduction	
1. Why do we Pray?	01-08
2. To Whom do we Pray?	09-16
3. How do we Pray?	17-32
4. What True Prayer Really is	33-42
5. Realize the God you Pray to	43-49
6. From Self-Realization to God-Realization	50-65
7. Serving Humanity is Prayer	66-74
8. True Prayer is Seeing Divinity in Everything Beautiful	75-81
9. Living like a Yogi	82-89
10. The Ultimate Goal of Prayer	90-97
11. Don't Pray Hard, Pray Smart!	98-109
Afterword	110-124
Poem	125-130
FAQ	131-139
About the Author	141-155



Preface



Why write a book on prayer? Aren't there enough books on God, theology, and prayer? How would one more book make any difference? Even as a child, I was a staunch believer in God and I too used to pray in a certain way. But one day, when my Guru, my Spiritual Master provoked me and I went on a quest, I realized the truth about what prayer truly is. I had been praying for over 40 years, but while I had been reciting *mantras*, *bhajans*, *aarti* I realized that I did not know to whom I was praying and what I was saying. This inspired me to stop and contemplate, and to put my thoughts together and write a book on prayer.

Just as I had lived in ignorance for 4 decades, people live through life without realizing the truth. No doubt they are sincere in their devotion to God, but they don't stop to ask questions: Who is God? Where is God? What is God? Of course, God exists. We all know it. But if we truly love God, should we not go on a quest? Should we not get to the bottom of the root and realize the truth? I started writing this book because I was inspired to share with people how I transformed the way I pray. First, I used to pray to Lord Shiva. Now I pray *through* Lord Shiva. The change in the way I pray happened after I realized that God is not a statue, God is not a saint, God is not a picture that we

humans can paint. God is a Power, a Power that lives inside the temple of our heart. A Power that is everywhere. God is not only omnipresent, God is also omniscient - knows everything and omnipotent, all-powerful. Unfortunately, we pray to a God but we have no clear idea as to whom we are praying to and what we say when we pray.

The whole world prays to a God, barring a few atheists and agnostics. It seems like everybody knows the meaning of prayer. There is nothing complicated about it. Different religions have different Gods and prayer is a mode of communicating with the Divine. I stopped to ask myself the question, 'We live on one earth but how many Gods exist? If different people are praying to different Gods, then which God is the real Divine Power?' To add fuel to the fire, every religion claims that their God is the real God and their prayer is the most effective form of prayer.

But, do we even know the true meaning of prayer? Why do we fold our hands and pray to God? To some, prayer is just a thanksgiving to the Almighty, while to others, it is going to God in troubled times. Different people pray for different reasons but most people are constantly asking for something in their prayer. Is that what prayer truly is? Is it a method to ask God to fulfil our wishes? When I introspected, I found answers that made me change the way I pray and even changed my very belief in God.

PREFACE

I started contemplating and reflecting to find out the truth about God and the relevance of prayer. Was prayer just talking to God or was it also listening to our Lord? Furthermore, do we really understand what we are telling God in our prayer? Most prayers are hymns, songs, *mantra*, *aarti* – termed differently by different religions but, by and large, these are just memorized pieces of our voice to God. Not many people understand what they say when they pray.

When I realized that the world needs to wake up and realize the truth about prayer, I started writing this book. With my mission of helping people realize the truth, I felt the need for people to understand what prayer truly is. If people truly want to reach out to the Divine then to begin with, they must first realize the truth about prayer.

This book will help us open our eyes to what we say when we pray. It will help us overcome our ignorance and realize the Divine Power we pray to within the temple of our heart. It will help us discover the true meaning of prayer. After reading this book, we will not just pray, but we will understand to whom we pray and what we say.

Introduction



Do you pray? Chances are you do, otherwise, you would not be reading this book. But, do you really know the Divine Power you pray to? Most people know their God by name but where is the God that we pray to? While we pray to 'our' God, others pray to 'their' God, and this makes us ask the question, 'How many Gods exist?' There are hundreds of religions in the world and if we add up all the Gods of all the religions, there would be millions of Gods. Since we pray to a God, it is very important to know that God before we discover the true meaning of prayer. Therefore, in the pages that follow, we will not only investigate what prayer is, but also ponder on the reality of God.

Based on their belief system, followers of various religions go to several holy places of worship. Christians go to churches, Muslims to mosques, Hindus to temples, Sikhs to gurdwaras, and many others go to monasteries and synagogues. But they all go for one purpose—to pray. It is said that over 80% of the world, over 6 billion people pray. But not many know what prayer truly is. Not only are we praying to different Gods and uttering different prayers, we don't really know what effective prayer is! Is our God listening to our prayers? Where is our God in reality? We

INTRODUCTION

are quite unsure about all this but somehow, we are sure that our prayers will reach the Divine.

Different people pray differently. Some remove their footwear, some go on their knees and some raise their hands towards the sky. There are numerous methods of prayer and the irony is that everybody thinks their prayer is right. Followers of a religion are not only confident about their God and prayer but are sometimes so obsessed that they make it their objective to convert people to their religion and their way of prayer.

Why do we pray? There are various reasons why we close our eyes and speak to God. The most common reason is that we have a problem and we want God to solve our problem. Sometimes, we fold our hands in prayer, not because of a problem, but because we want God to fulfil a wish or desire. Most prayers fall under these two categories, although there are a few people who pray in gratitude or who pray just to praise the Lord. There are many people who simply pray and it seems like they pray because they are told to pray. Of course, they must pray because if they don't, then their God will be displeased! They are made to live with this fear and thus, prayers are often not just inspired by faith, but also by fear.

Despite the fact that we are not clear about the concept of prayer, prayer is very important. It is communicating with

God. It is showing our love for the Divine, the Creator. Unfortunately, we don't understand all of this because we grow up believing in mythology. We are told about Santa Claus and about different Gods who ride on different animals. This kind of prayer is fine for young children who would, otherwise, not understand God and prayer. But it is strange that as we grow up, our theological beliefs remain the same – we continue to believe in all that we believed in as kids. Somehow, we just never grow up when it comes to our prayers and God.

There is no doubt that God exists. In my earlier book I wrote, *'We don't know who God is, where God is, what God is, but God is.'* There is no doubt that a Creator exists. God is beyond human comprehension but that, in no way, can dispute the existence of a Divine Power.

We are so programmed and taught that we must fold our hands, close our eyes, and do dozens of other things, that we don't stop and question any of these practices. It is considered blasphemous to question any religion even though it may be out of love for God. If one investigates the history of religion, what will we discover? The people who questioned and did not agree are the ones who branched away to create their own religion, a subsection of the earlier one or even an altogether different one. Have all these religions ultimately helped to realize God and discover true prayer? Unfortunately no!

INTRODUCTION

Religion is only a kindergarten to spirituality. It only teaches us the ABC about God. It makes us pray but doesn't help us understand what we say. After all, there is a life purpose for us human beings who live on earth. Most religions by and large, agree that we must return to God. The goal is one though the paths may be many. But there are so many myths, rituals, dogmas and superstitions that the common man is lost in his religion. He wants to reach God, but he doesn't learn to climb the ladder to heaven. Of course, we must believe in God and move forward with prayers that are full of faith, hope, trust, and enthusiasm. But is that enough? Our love for God must take us on a quest that will help us overcome ignorance and lead us to self-realization and God-realization. However, the way to God is prayer. It is communicating with the Divine. It is understanding the truth and wiping away the darkness in which we live. God is not a distant being, living in a faraway planet. It is unfortunate that we don't realize this in our prayers. It is time to stop and reflect. It is time to discover who God truly is, to realize Divinity in our Soul. It is time to question prayers that we so often utter without realizing what we say. Life is short, and we must discover the true meaning of prayer before the journey is over. Of what use is it to pray if we don't understand what we say?

***Remember! If we pray
but we don't understand what we say,
then we don't pray, we just bray.***

01

WHY DO WE PRAY?



One of the first things we teach a child to do is to pray. The moment children are able to walk, to talk, we teach them to pray. Why do we find it so necessary to introduce them to prayer? If I look back at my life, I started praying when I was barely 5 or 6 years old. When I was 8 years old, I used to go to the temple practically every day and even used to fast on Mondays. At that time, I did not even know why I was praying. My grandfather was a devout believer and over a period of time, he made me understand the importance of prayer. Till the day he passed away, he used to constantly pray. He believed that God was all-powerful. He had complete trust and faith in the Divine Power.

Different people pray for different reasons. Some, like my grandfather, prayed because of their faith in the Divine. The world is divided into several religions as we know, and our prayers are governed by the scriptures of our religion. Whatever be our religion, the motivation for our prayers is the same. If it is not faith, then our prayer is inspired by fear. Many religions talk about how God will be displeased if we don't pray.

Why else does one pray? There are a few who pray to God in gratitude. As they count their blessings, they fold their hands to their God Almighty and express their thanks. Don't we owe a prayer of gratitude to the one who has given us life? If we stop to think of it, each human being has more than seven wonders within. Not just eyes to see, ears

WHY DO WE PRAY?

to hear, a nose to smell, a mouth to eat, hands to grasp, and legs to walk and touch, but also a heart that beats and pumps blood. We human beings are also blessed with lungs that supply oxygen from the air, a brain and an intellect, but do we ever realize this? Those who do, offer prayers in gratitude for all these gifts – for the gift of being human.

But stop for a moment and think as to why we really pray. There are some people who don't pray. Neither are they moved by faith or fear nor do they pray out of love or gratitude. This is because they don't believe in the Divine. The first step even before we pray is to believe that God exists. Although God is different to different people around the world, the God of every religion is considered to be the Creator of the universe. Those who don't believe this, don't find it necessary to pray. They believe in a theory that we human beings came from apes. But if that was true then why are apes not becoming humans today? And if human beings came from apes for whatever reason, where did apes come from? Dinosaurs?

Theories like these or the belief that everything beautiful and intelligent on earth just came out of a big bang seems strange because even if there was a big bang, then who caused it? For those who use their intellect, they believe in God and this leads them to pray. Because of the confusion in today's world with so many Gods, some people have

become agnostics. They are not sure about the existence of a Divine Power. Some agnostics believe that there is a Creator, a Power that they are not sure of.

Therefore, the first step even before prayer is belief. It is for this reason that a young child is taught to pray, and it becomes a part of our belief system, our habit and philosophy of life. But while prayer might have become intertwined with our way of life, why do we really pray?

Prayer can be broadly classified into praying by choice and praying because we have no option. It is most unfortunate but true that a large number of prayers are indeed inspired by helplessness. People go to God when they have no option. Even the so-called atheists and agnostics are often compelled to go on their knees when there is no hope but God. What happens when a doctor tells us that our most loved one will soon die? Of course, we cry, but the next thing we do is go to God and pray. We human beings instinctively know that God controls life and death, that God can grant us extended life if he desires. And so, we plead in entreaty to grant our loved one an extra lease of life. Yes, indeed it is true that many people go to temples, mosques, and churches when they have nowhere else to go. This type of prayer, which is not optional, covers a huge part of the world's prayer.

It is not fair to say that all prayers come out of helplessness.

WHY DO WE PRAY?

Millions around the globe pray because they love God. They pray to express their gratitude rather than to ask for favours. But isn't it true that we all ask God for something? Of course. Very often we go to God and ask God to grant us success and wealth. It is also quite common for people to plead to God that they may win the love of their life and they may marry the one they dream of. Prayers don't stop after marriage. Do they? We often pray to God to bless us with children. Some even specifically pray for a boy or a girl. Kids in school pray to God for a good rank. Politicians pray to win an election. Prayers happen everywhere, not just by individuals, but even by groups. Doesn't a football team start their World Cup final with a prayer? What is this prayer for? They want to win the cup! How can God make them win the cup? If both the teams are asking God for the same favour, then whose prayer will work? This makes us ponder further on the magic of prayer.

People spend their entire life's savings going on a pilgrimage. Their religion teaches them that it is the ultimate goal of life to take blessings from God and so, they put everything else aside and prioritize to go to where their God is said to be. Christians may go to Jerusalem or Bethlehem, Muslims go to Mecca and Hindus will go to Kailash if they believe in Shiva or the dozens of other pilgrimages, depending on which God they believe in. While a fraction of humanity is fortunate to go to such places of pilgrimages, most of humanity prays on a regular

Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

