

Prayers Pay

Source: Stories for Inspiration, by Swami Shantananda Puri Maharaj

Message from the Master:

In all impossible situations even, if once we pray to the Lord in a helpless surrender, He will never let us down. He is the only safe and guaranteed refuge.



PRAYERS PAY

John was an officer working in the collector's office at Ahmedabad. He had married Martha some twentyfive years back and they were an ideal couple. They had never quarrelled even once in their married life.

Everyday in the evening John used to come home with some book or newspaper. Martha used to bring a large jug of tea and while she poured cup after cup of tea, John used to read out to her some juicy portions from either a book or newspaper. This used to go on for 2 hours. One day after the tea was over, John casually called Martha and told her – “Martha, I am very sorry to have to tell you this. I am bored with this life and I want to live in freedom. So I have decided to divorce you. I hope you will have no objection to it.” Martha was too stunned to reply as this proposal for divorce came to her as an unexpected and sudden thunderbolt. She gathered herself up and replied – “John, you know that I have never questioned your decisions. This has come as a surprise. We have been living together in wedlock for more than twentyfive years and as a concession therefor please give me fifteen days’ time more. I assure you that I shall never stand in the way of your wishes.” John readily agreed.

The entire night she spent in prayers to the Lord as she felt thoroughly helpless. Now she recollected that for the past two months her husband used to come late at night and go to a separate bedroom for sleeping. There had been no tea sessions. She took it for granted that

he must have had a lot of work in office and hence the late-coming. She had been stupidly blind to this slowly widening chasm between her and John. Next day also she spent in prayers imploring the Lord to help and guide her.

She suddenly remembered what her guru had once told her about the visualisation method for achieving a goal. He had said – “Supposing you want to be a millionaire, you just visualise yourself i.e. imagine that you are already a millionaire. Stand before a full-length mirror and assert with confidence some hundred times ‘I am a millionaire’. Further, imagine you are sitting in an opulent office room and in front of you there are three or four phones and you are speaking in those phones to your brokers on selling and purchase of shares worth several lakhs of rupees. One should do it daily.”

It was 5.30 p.m. As in the old normal days she brought a big jug of tea with two tea cups and filled up both the cups. She imagined as if John was reading a book loudly and she was interjecting with appropriate comments and appreciation. She did it for full two hours. She repeated this act of visualisation everyday evening while the entire day time she spent in praying before the Lord. Ten days were over and it was the eleventh evening. At 5.30 p.m. when she brought a jug of tea and cups to the tea-table, to her utter surprise and joy, she found her husband John sitting in his usual place and pouring over the newspaper.

She could not believe her own eyes. While they were sipping tea, John, as in old days, began reading out loudly some juicy portions from the newspaper.

Everyday since then John began returning from the office in the evening and the life went on as in the earlier days. When fifteen days were over Martha gathered all her courage and asked John after the teatime, “John, you remember that you were supposed to ask me some question today.” You may ask. John looked non-plussed and said – “Do not talk in riddles, Martha. I do not remember anything. Tell me what question I was supposed to ask.” Martha replied patiently and inwardly praying to the Lord – “The other day you told me that you wanted a divorce from me and I asked you for fifteen days’ time. Now you can revive that proposal.”

“Oh Martha ! Forget it, I say. It was just a casual thought – call it a temporary aberration of the mind, if you like. I cannot imagine how such a thought could ever have crossed my mind.” Martha, with tears brimming in her eyes, ran to her Puja room, knelt on the ground and thanked the Lord again and again.

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