

# kosmos

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## T H E M Y S T E R Y O F P R A Y E R

### Chapter One

#### Modern Man's Attitude to Prayer

Amongst those who have no thorough knowledge of the mystery, technique and special importance of prayer, the thought may easily occur that prayer is of no interest to modern man. Indeed, even amongst those who study spiritual science, one may find people who really cannot become familiar with praying to God. They wonder what there is left to pray for when everything is logical and perfect, when "everything is very good". Would it not be blasphemy to implore the Godhead for some special favour or "help in the hour of need" when everything is embraced by the Divine Will so that "even the very hairs on our heads are numbered", when not even a speck of dust can fall by chance.

It is a matter of course that the materialist who has no knowledge whatsoever of any purely spiritual or cosmic phenomena but has faith only in what can be weighed and measured, considers praying to be pure nonsense and the culmination of naivety and superstition. But can he, in the long run, base his life on this point of view? Can great knowledge of material matter and an ensuing acquisition of a prominent scientific and social position be a guarantee that he will never become unhappy?

And what about the developed religious person who already believes that everything is subordinate to the Divine Will? The person in question has even begun to see that this is so. Is this vision or this new knowledge a completely reassuring guarantee that he will never become unhappy?

either? No, certainly not. Knowledge, neither of the material nor the spiritual plane, can give such a guarantee. Of what use is it to be a brilliant geologist, physicist, chemist or even psychologist? Can that guarantee that one will never lose those one loves? Can that guarantee that one's spouse will not fall ill and die prematurely? Can that guarantee that one's children will become exactly the magnificent examples of health, morals, intelligence and standing that one had, in all sincerity, hoped for and dreamt of?

Is it not the distinguished religious scientist in precisely the same situation? Does the knowledge he possesses about the perfection of the universe give him any guarantee that he will not meet with the same calamities? No, knowledge alone cannot guarantee happiness.

## Chapter Two

### Prayer has its own laws - it is a science in itself

Can, then, prayer guarantee happiness? Yes, prayer can become so perfect that it, in connection with cosmic science, can completely expel the dark shadows of sorrow and ill-fortune from the mental sphere of the individual. Not that it renders him immune to pain or physical suffering. Physical suffering, despite a lot of prayer, very often remains quite unchanged. Nor is prayer an Aladdin's lamp by means of which one is able to offer one's loved ones a long life or ensure that one's children live up to the ideals of health, morals, intelligence and position which are every natural father and mother's sincere hope and dream. Prayer can do very little in this respect. Otherwise, prayer would be a means of disintegration and sabotage of the divine world plan. All such phenomena, as the above mentioned, have been determined previously by fate. This means, for the individuals concerned, that their temporary situation, whether good or bad, is an innate necessity. It is a continuation and necessary development of their building up of experience, a development from which they would be completely cut off if it could be prevented, for example, through prayer. It is true that it would be very attractive and pleasant if one could "save" a mother from dying, leaving her small children and thereby remove the trouble that would arise from such a catastrophe but if this same mother, as well as her children, were thereby prevented from reaching a higher plane of development, it can only be divine that such a prayer cannot

be granted. On the physical plane, there are many possibilities for relieving the surviving little children from the loss of their mother but there are absolutely no possibilities to compensate the mother for what she would lose by not being allowed to suffer the predestined premature death. It is not a punishment for anything but a necessary lesson, a necessary enrichment of the consciousness which could only occur in that very situation. Thus prayer cannot be used to make undermining inroads into the plan which Providence has for every living being. If a child is born with powers which stamp it as being primitive, it is of no use to pray that this child's power may suddenly change and thereby appear as highly intellectual ones. Such a prayer cannot be granted by Providence because outstanding talents only exist as a result of previous experiences, work and application and, without these phenomena, creation of talents would be impossible, because it would then be produced from "nothing" and "something" cannot come from "nothing", as we all know. It is exactly the same principle which manifests itself in the case of the prematurely dying mother, as well as the motherless children. The premature death is a result of a previous combination of fate-substances which she has created, either in the present or in former lives, and is just as natural a consequence as the outflow of water from a tap that has been opened. Praying to Providence that the water will not flow out from the tap despite the fact that one is keeping the tap open would be a very unnatural use of prayer, as well as the granting of such a prayer from Providence would also be considered totally abnormal. In the same way as the premature death is a result of causes which have already previously been set in motion and therefore must take place, in the same way, the situation to be "motherless" is a result of causes previously set in motion. But when something has been done, which means has happened, it cannot be undone; the death of the mother has occurred and cannot be undone. But when what is done cannot be undone, does one then think that, through prayer, one can make it undone? No wonder that many people, to a great extent, consider praying to be completely worthless because they, to the same extent, have experienced not having their prayers granted, which means, fulfilled by Providence. What is it then, they have prayed for? Is it not precisely phenomena or situations which, if they were going to be created by Providence, would have to have been created from "nothing" or Providence would have to make what is done undone? In the same way as it is useless to pray to Providence that the sun may rise earlier

or later in the morning, it is also useless to pray to Providence that this or that situation or event in the fate of a relative may or may not happen, the fate being as predestined by conditions previously set in motion as the appearance of the sun over the continent in the morning.

Thus prayer has its own laws, its own structure and its own specific purpose. Knowledge of prayer is a science in itself. Without this knowledge, prayer will, to a great extent, be used in situations and areas in which Providence cannot grant it and because of that disappointment, doubt and disbelief in Providence will arise in the suppliant's consciousness. He will therefore at worst become a denier of God. Wanting to use prayer for something for which it is not intended may thus give rise to rather serious consequences. How does one know, then, whether prayer is used in the right way or for the right purpose? - Did Christ not say that "whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give unto you"? There is no other condition but that the prayer should be "in Christ's name". - Yes, it is true that it was written like that but is it not obvious that it is implied that "whatsoever" does not mean everything in the absolute sense of the word? - If anyone, in good faith, gets the idea to pray that the inclination of the earth's axis may be altered in favour of an eternal summer in our latitudes, does one then believe that such a prayer will be "granted" which means fulfilled by Providence, even if it is in "Christ's name"? - Does one believe that one can change the course of the sun or the orbit of the moon through prayer by putting in the name of Christ in one's prayer? What does it mean then to pray for something "in Christ's name"? Well, is it not so that one, by "the name of Christ" understands the spirit of Christ? - Can anything else concerning prayer be of interest in connection with this name? Can it be the physical body which disappeared in the grave? - On the contrary, is it not the eternal "I" which arose glorified from the darkness of the grave and from whose countenance there sparkled across the spheres, "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live". Does one not believe that it is this aspect of the nature of Christ to which he referred concerning the granting of prayers? - Through this nature of his, he was one with the resurrection and the life which means, one with the unselfishness, one with the Godhead, which is the same as being one with the all-love, which in the shape of God's plan, will and manifestation reveals itself as the universe. This all-loving or unselfish being was thus the same as the spirit of Christ or that "something" which was indicated by the name Christ. Praying for something "in Christ's name" was the same then as praying for something in the spirit of Christ. Praying for something in the spirit of Christ

will, therefore, be the same as praying for something in contact with all-love, which means, unselfishness and thereby in contact with the divine will and the Godhead's direct wish. Can a prayer possibly have a better wind in its back? No wonder that Christ was able to promise "all" who prayed to God in contact with this spirit or unselfish nature that their prayer would be granted. How could it be possible that a prayer so strongly in contact with the Godhead's own wish and will should not be granted?

Consequently a prayer can manifest itself in two ways, that is in "Christ's name" or in the spirit of unselfishness, where one says "Father, thy will be done, not mine" or in the spirit of selfishness, in which it is one's own wish, one definitely wants to come true, quite without regard to the cost or how much it may harm or inflict suffering, viewed collectively or from the point of view of the great divine plan. In the former case, the prayer is granted whereas in the latter case it cannot be granted. The great problem for the suppliant is, therefore, to learn how to pray in "Christ's name", which again means, in the spirit of all-love, the spirit in which the prayer never in any way can be anything but a great pleasure and blessing for everyone and an inconvenience or misfortune for absolutely no-one.

### Chapter Three

#### Prayer - The Common Christian Conception and Attitude

Has the ordinary Christian not learned long ago how to pray in the spirit of unselfishness? Has not Christ, through "The Lord's Prayer", given him a magnificent example of how a perfect cosmic prayer, that is, a prayer which can only benefit everyone and harm no-one, should be? Is it not, in its innermost being, collective or promoting the well-being of everyone? Does not the petitioner make himself one with his surroundings or his neighbour? Who else is he thinking of when he says "our" and "us"? Yes, true enough - the Christians have an ingenious model for the perfect prayer but, even so, it does not cover everything they privately want or feel compelled to pray for. They have not yet become one with all humanity to such a high level that their own "private" troubles are inferior or unimportant in relation to those of all humanity. And it is in this, their struggle and distress brought about by their drive for selfpreservation, that they resort to prayer as a weapon or a means whereby they hope to be able to forestall, in a miraculous way, all the

many dark experiences which have accumulated in their fate.

But here one must bear in mind that the common Christian conception and attitude towards the dark experiences of life, up till now is based on the belief that these are "punishment" from Providence for "sins" which have been committed. They therefore feel themselves in the presence of an "angry" God. Their view of the Godhead has not yet become illuminated by the bright sunshine of intellectuality. They are still hindered to a great extent by primitive man's ignorance of the real structure of life itself. It is a matter of course that the supposed originator of the suffering and trouble in their destiny must be a being like themselves who lives according to the laws which exist within their own primitive day-conscious horizon. They are ignorant of any other higher form of manifesting conscious life than their own which is based in its entirety, on revenge and punishment, favours and caresses. They, therefore, find it immensely difficult to understand a level of consciousness in which revenge, punishment and special favours are completely excluded and only a one hundred per cent love is dominant. It is therefore the only natural thing for them to assume that the dark experiences in their destiny can be nothing but a "punishment" from a Deity. This superstition is so deeply rooted that it could not even be destroyed or removed by the life of Christ, his life being a living demonstration that such a consciousness or love really does exist. Was he not precisely the revelation of a state of high-intellectuality in which one neither hates nor punishes? Well, did he not turn the right cheek when he was hit on the left and did he not pray for his tormentors amidst his sufferings on the cross, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do"? Does one not believe his mission culminated here? Does one not believe that here God's own special state of consciousness was revealed? Does one not believe that it was here that the world redeemer was the model of the perfect man to come "in the image of God after His likeness"? No, that was not believed. The primitive concept of God was so strong that nineteen centuries were yet to elapse before it really began to lose its grip on the mental life of mankind. Yes, even today, thousands of beings are employed around the Christian world as this Deity's state-authorized ministers in order to preach "prayer" and "absolution".

As "absolution" can only be the same as "exemption from punishment" and as "punishment", in the absolute sense of the word, can only be revenge

- revenge being an expression of anger - this Deity of the Christian is still a God of anger. Indeed, this God was even so angry with "sinful" humanity that, according to the above-mentioned superstition, only the crucifixion or the suffering and death of Christ was able to appease him and, in this way, exempt humanity from punishment. Only by this innocent being taking upon himself, for his heavenly father, the "punishment" for the "sins" committed by all the people in the world and for those "sins" they were going to commit in the future could this Deity's desire for "punishment" or "revenge" on the "sinners" - on humanity - be satisfied. Would that not be a rather hard Deity and father but, on the other hand, a lovable son?

It is no wonder that this Deity was thrust into the background and this lovable son came into the light, the foreground of humanity's thoughts, - that he was praised and worshipped as humanity's "rescuer" and that every prayer in his "name" would be sufficient to remove all obstacles or dark shadows on the road to heaven. And this is, in fact, the structure of ecclesiastical Christianity today. And one can only say that it is fortunate that the concentration is more on the lovable son than on the rather strange father. His noble and perfect nature together with his behaviour towards his enemies and persecutors has, thus, not escaped the attention of the faithful. Indeed, they have gone so far as to consider it so sublime and divine compared to their own that they have felt it quite inconceivable that they should be able to develop themselves to make such behaviour their own. They have, by no means, understood, that this behaviour was exactly the model for their development. The result of world redemption could therefore only be "salvation" through "grace" or the atonement of the Godhead through Jesus Christ. The result of the world redemption was not to make people aspire towards developing the behaviour of Christ within themselves and by this means, in a natural and well-deserved way, eventually obtain the Kingdom of Heaven as a result of their own diligence, their own deeds and manifestations. No, they could arrive at this sublime result in a much easier way. Indeed, the good deeds did not actually mean anything. "Salvation" or the attainment of the "Kingdom of Heaven" could only be secured by virtue of "grace" and "absolution". And the concept of "grace" and "absolution" became a "sacrament" by the help of which the repentant "sinners" and the beings stricken with horror of the divine "wrath" might obtain "absolution" and avoid retribution no matter how many other beings might

still be suffering or in the trouble which had been brought about by their "sinful" lives. In reality, they might thus secure for themselves entry to the glory of heaven while their victims were still tortured by the torments and sufferings inflicted upon them. This sacrament was given its external ceremony in the form of the so-called "Holy Communion".

As we have seen from the above, it was thus possible for the "faithful" through "communion" and through prayer to put an end to his bad conscience, to find peace and to get the feeling that his "trespasses were forgiven" and that he had, thereby, come into the good graces of the Deity. It is a matter of course that this would give absolute peace and rest in the mind of the faithful. But take notice of the fact that faith is an absolute necessity in order to obtain such a result. But if one not believe, what then? "Faith" is not an act of will. It is a faculty which you either possess or do not possess. Those who do not possess this faculty cannot believe, no matter how much they want to do so. Prayer, according to the ecclesiastical terminology, also demands that one must believe in order for one's prayers to be granted. The beings who cannot believe have no part in the "grace" whatsoever. They become liable to the "wrath" of the Deity. They are "lost". They are certain of an eternal torment in the flames of "Hell". "Weeping and gnashing of teeth" will be their only manifestation in an eternal future in which "all hopes are abandoned". So austere is the ecclesiastical Christian conception of God.

#### Chapter Four

#### The World Redemption is the great Well-spring of Love

But do you not think that the great principle of world redemption might have an even greater purpose than merely to help the "faithful"? It is divine, of course, that the redemption mentioned - at a time when the ability to believe was the culminating field of consciousness in the great majority of humanity - was able to create a phenomenon which could help all unhappy people in their distress, which could comfort them and reassure them through the very ability which was most developed within them.

However, it would have been a very bad defect or shortcoming in the principle of the world redemption if it had not been able to lend a single helping hand to all those who, even against their own will, did not have the minutest form of ability to believe. If these hundreds of thousands, indeed millions of people, who today are not able to believe, live only in order to end up in "hell", a state from which they can



never, in all eternity, be rescued once they have arrived there, the authorised ecclesiastical Christian concept of the world does not give a particularly flattering picture of the Godhead though, in its terminology, this Godhead is described as "all-wise" and "almighty" besides being identical with "all-love" itself.

If the Godhead now is "all-wise", he knew beforehand how all the mentioned "unbelievers" would end in "hell". Why then has he created all these souls? It would have been much more loving never to have let these unhappy beings experience life. If he was "almighty" why has he not endowed everyone without exception, with the "ability to believe"? Has he been interested in creating beings only to see them suffer? And why let them suffer eternally? Of what use is this continuous suffering as they can never more be set free from this torment and as they are not going to acquire experience and knowledge from it through which they would be able to qualify for a perfect life afterwards? Does the Godhead delight in sowing sufferings? Is it a pleasure for him to see these souls groan under the most terrible torment, since he has decreed that they will never be set free? If not, why has he not, being almighty, transformed this phenomenon into glorious humanity? If he is unable to do so, he is not "almighty". And if he is unwilling to do so, he is not "all-loving", because a never-ending torment can have but one single purpose, namely, being amusement or pleasure for the person who demands its prolonged existence despite possessing the ability to stop it.

Is it not an ancient "heathen" concept of God that here looms forth from the Christian terminology? Is it not endowed with a level of consciousness which really belongs to the primitive, low human level where one cannot get sufficient hate and revenge on one's enemies, or simply an expression of pure sadism or perversity? But the believer does not see this. Through his faith, he has long ago found support and rest in his faith in Christ. He has come into the good graces of the Godhead and "his trespasses have been forgiven". He feels himself in contact with the Godhead. How the special details of this Godhead's conscious life appear is something which lies completely outside his wish to know. He feels satisfied knowing the special conscious life of Christ and his love. He even thinks that it is blasphemy to occupy oneself with the consciousness of God which, in the first place, he thinks is inaccessible for any researcher. He finds perfect satisfaction in the traditional thesis; "The ways of the Lord are past understanding".

But as the world redemption, with such great certainty, can give the believer salvation and bliss should one not think that today, when the world is filled with unbelievers as never before and the believers are in the minority, the world redemption also has a helping hand for all those souls, in order that no-one can be lost or end in an "everlasting hell"? In that case the Godhead would appear more in accordance with being all-wise, almighty and all-loving.

As the Godhead, through the principle of world redemption allows the birth of a being whose behaviour and appearance was pure all-love and pure lovableness towards friends as well as foes, is it not then likely that its purpose was, to some extent, to falsify the old heathen concept of God? Allowing a being to be born who by far outshines the concepts and ideals which people had formed of a Deity would sooner or later cause the heathen concept of God to decay. Sooner or later people had to realise that if a being in physical flesh and blood could be endowed with such a brilliant devotion to everyone, the almighty Godhead could not possibly be considered as an inferior being. If this were so, sooner or later one would have to revise one's concept of God. A Deity, who in intellectuality or love, is surpassed by a being in physical flesh and blood cannot be a true Deity. The highest consciousness or being of the universe must be at least as prominent in humanity and love as such an animal being. And is it not at this point that the well-spring of love from the world redemption is sending out its helping rays and leading the "unfaithful" to the heart of the Deity?

(To be continued in the next issue of KOSMOS)

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