

The Secret of Prostrate Reverence

(Excerpts from Satsang of Pujya Sant Shri Asaramji Bapu)

Life is not meant to nurture the ego but to develop love towards God. The ego of wealth, power, beauty, intelligence, etc. keeps you from uniting with the egoless Lord Supreme, even though He is with you every moment. In order to destroy this ego, religion has devised the tradition of going to temples and making salutation by prostrating on the ground in front of the idol of God. Psychologists state that when a person is standing, his ego also stands tall and he is reluctant to reveal his concealed secrets; but when made to lie down, he begins to disclose those secrets gradually.



A Japanese youth during his travels went to the ashram of a Lama in Tibet. The Lama lived there with a number of his disciples. The youth told the Lama that as he had heard a great deal about him, he was eager to learn and attain something from him.

The Lama responded, There is nothing to learn in this ashram, nothing to attain. This ashram is meant only to lose, to forget whatever you have learnt so far. You have to remove your beliefs and notions. There are no rules or rituals to be followed here except that whenever an ashramite sees or comes across the Sadguru, be it while brushing his teeth, taking a walk or doing any other activity, he must lie prostrate in obeisance. And this could be 10, 20, 50 or even in excess of a 100 occasions in the course of a day.

The youth notes, While Japanese do not easily bow down in front of others. To do prostrate salutation 10 to 20 times in a day was extremely difficult for me but I remained there so that I could gain some experience. The first 5 to 10 days were difficult and troublesome but after sometime I became used to lying prostrate along with the rest of the inmates of the ashram.

After the first few days my reservations and stubbornness were gone and lying prostrate became quite natural to me. After that, even if Gurudev did not come out of his cottage I would pay obeisance at his doorstep. If I could not reach the door I would pay my obeisance to the trees in front of his cottage. Very soon I had started paying my prostrate obeisance even to the trees of the ashram. This would give me so much joy that I started to lie prostrate and pay obeisance anywhere and everywhere, feeling blissful in the process.

My sense of samarpana grew with the passage of time and one day the Guru showered His Supreme grace on me and said, Your task is now over. I did not make this rule to nurture my ego. In fact one who pays obeisance experiences joy, but the one who receives obeisance runs a terrible risk, for if he is not careful he may relapse into body consciousness and face misery.

The reverential prostration that is practised here is simply a process meant to eliminate the individual conceptions, notions and delusion. You have now become qualified through this process and can repose in Self-bliss even in my absence. You can remain in bliss without having to depend on the trees of the ashram for paying obeisance.

Note : Women should not perform prostration.