

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

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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 on prayer 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 God though we do not know to whom we pray and what we say when we pray.

The whole world prays to a God, barring a few - the atheists and agnostics. It seems like everybody knows the meaning of prayer. 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.

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.

I realized that most people are ignorant and do not understand the

truth about prayer. Therefore, 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 overcome our ignorance and realize the Divine Power we pray to within the temple of our heart. It will help us open our eyes to 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.

WHY DO WE PRAY?

People pray for the fulfilment of their desires. Some people are forced to pray because troubles strike them. Others pray because they seek something from God. There are some who pray out of love and gratitude to God. A very small fraction of humanity prays for the ultimate goal of salvation or liberation, *Moksha* or *Nirvana*. Some people don't pray. It is because they don't believe in God. They are atheists.

*Why do we pray, have you ever thought?
Or in rituals and in dogmas, are you caught?
Don't just pray to God when troubles come,
Pray because you love God till life is done.*

TO WHOM DO WE PRAY?

We all pray but, sadly, we don't know who in reality is the God we pray to. There are thousands of religions and millions of Gods created by man. However, God is a Universal Power, a power beyond name and form. Because we don't know the reality about God, we are unable to pray effectively.

God is not made of bone and skin. We can't define God. God defined is God denied. Until we look within and realize God, we will continue to pray to different Gods with different names and forms. The real Divine Power is formless. The God we pray to is

Universal. To realize God, we must look within. Over generations, because of mythology, we have believed and continue to believe in so many different Gods. We are even taught that God is an old man with a long beard sitting up in the clouds. Our confusion over God has led to unrest in the world, even war, instead of prayer unifying us in peace. To discover the true meaning of prayer, we must, first, discover the truth about God.

*God is not a statue, God is not a Saint,
God is not a picture that anyone can paint.
Until we stop and contemplate, who really is our Lord,
We will keep going around in circles, far away from God.*

HOW DO WE PRAY?

People pray in different ways. The most common way people pray is to close their eyes, fold their hands, and talk to God. There are many religions, and each has its own religious practices. Even within the same religion, prayers vary. Prayer today has become so full of rituals that it has become very complicated.

Effectively, prayer can be divided into 3 types – prayer that involves body, mind, and the voice; prayer that involves only the voice and the mind; and prayer in silence which is supposed to be the most effective form of prayer. While there are many

methods of prayer, it is a pity that most of us don't understand what we say when we pray. Just because Very few people evolve in the way they pray. Most people ask their God to solve their problems and fulfil their wishes. Very few grow in their belief to live with trust. But they are the ones who accept the Divine will. They pray in surrender, letting God choose what is best for them.

*Some people pray in silence
Some people scream and shout.
But most of us who are alive,
Don't know what prayer is all about!*

WHAT TRUE PRAYER REALLY IS

There is a difference between prayer and true prayer. Blindly following scriptures is not showing devotion to God. True prayer is an effective two-way communication. It's not only talking but also listening to God. True prayer builds a connection with God. It makes us love God. Prayer can never be true prayer unless we realize the truth about God. True Prayer is knowing who we are praying to and what we are saying.

Remember!

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

REALIZE THE GOD YOU PRAY TO

To make our prayer profound, we must first realize the truth about God. Throughout our life, we live with myths and we do not realize the truth about God. All religions are good. They teach us to pray to God. However, to realize the truth about God, we must go beyond religion. Religion is only a kindergarten to spirituality – religion teaches us the basics about God. We must graduate in the university of spirituality. God is a Power that exists in each one of us, but we are unable to realize this truth. To realize this truth, we must go on a quest that will take us from self-realization to God-realization.

FROM SELF REALIZATION TO GOD REALIZATION

True prayer is only possible when we move from self- realization to God-realization. We can realize the truth of the self only when we overcome ignorance. We overcome ignorance when we go on a quest for the truth. It is important to have a Spiritual Master to help us realize the truth.

The first step is to realize we are not the body or mind. We are the Divine Soul. This is self-realization. Self-realization leads to God-realization. The Soul in me and the Soul in you is one Power. It is nothing other than God, Divine Universal Consciousness. Just like the air inside two balloons

merges with the air that is everywhere, so does our Soul. It merges with the Universal Power that is omnipresent. This is God-realization. Realizing that we are all manifestations of the Divine. The moment we realize God, it opens the door to true prayer.

*At first, we must overcome ignorance...
We are not the body and the mind.
The Soul that we are, is the Divine,
On realization, we will find.*

SERVING HUMANITY IS PRAYER

True prayer is serving suffering humanity. Every person is an image of God. To serve them is to worship God. We search for God all the time. We seek God, call out to God. God appears to us disguised in all of His creation; therefore, we should not miss the opportunity to help people. This is true prayer. We should not look at people depending on the colour of their skin, religion, caste or economic status. God is inside each one of us. When God gives us an opportunity and appears as somebody hurt and suffering, we must not lose the opportunity of service. This is true prayer.

TRUE PRAYER IS SEEING DIVINITY IN EVERYTHING BEAUTIFUL

True prayer is realizing the presence of the Divine at all times. Everything beautiful in this world appears beautiful because of God. *Satyam Shivam Sundaram* - the Truth is God is Beautiful. Because of our ignorance, we think all things are beautiful 'creations' of God. The truth is that everything beautiful created by God is none other than God. When we realize God's Divine presence in everything beautiful, then we are praying all the time. This is how a true seeker is always connected to God, living like a Yogi.

LIVING LIKE A YOGI

To discover the true meaning of prayer, we must live like a Yogi. A Yogi truly loves God and seeks God and nothing else. The true meaning of Yoga is 'Yuj' or union with the Divine. Yoga is not just *Asana* – physical exercise or *Pranayama* – breathing techniques. A Yogi is always connected to the Divine just like a good SIM card never loses connection with the network. The Yogi lives in the Yoga of action, devotion, education or meditation. If we want to discover true prayer, we must aspire to like a true Yogi.

THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF PRAYER

True prayer has an ultimate goal. It is unification with the Divine. It starts with the realization of the truth, as we overcome ignorance. Realization will lead us to liberation from suffering. It is true prayer that will make us experience the Divine at all times as we live in joy and peace, in Yoga. However, the ultimate goal of prayer is beyond all this. It is the ultimate goal of our life too – unification with the Divine after liberation.

*Prayer leads us to the Ultimate Goal,
To realize that we are the Divine Soul.*

DON'T PRAY HARD, PRAY SMART

Prayer is all about praying smart; not just praying hard. Of course, we must have faith and trust, but we must realize the truth about God. We must love God, seek God, and yearn for God. Our yearning must take us on a quest to realize God. This is the way to pray, to feel God's Divine presence at all times. True prayer is going within, it is listening to God's voice. Let us change the way we pray. Let us pray sincerely, realizing the truth about God!

Prayer leads us to the Ultimate Goal...

To realize we are the Divine Soul.

It starts with Purification and then Illumination,

But our destination is Divine Unification.

About the Author - AiR

AiR – Atman in Ravi, is an Embodied Soul whose only mission in life is to 'Help People Realize the Truth'. He was born in Bangalore on October 15, 1966 as Ravi V. Melwani. At a very young age, he mastered the craft of business and revolutionized retailing in India. After making millions, he realized that life is not just about making money. He shut down his business at the age of 40 and started making a difference doing H.I.S. work – Humanitarian, Inspirational and Spiritual work.

As a part of the Humanitarian initiative 3 charitable homes were set up to provide free medical treatment and

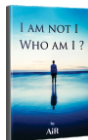
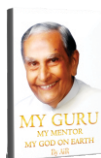
care to over 600 suffering homeless people. AiR also built Shivoham Shiva Temple in the year 1995 in Bangalore though AiR now believes that people should go beyond religion to truly realize God. Inspired by his Guru, Dada J.P. Vaswani, AiR went on a spiritual quest to attain Enlightenment.

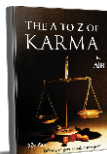
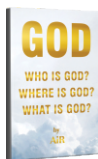
After a few years of intense search in retreat, he realized that we are not this body. We are the Soul, the Atman. He metamorphosed to AiR - Atman in Ravi, gave up his entire life as Ravi V. Melwani and started living as an instrument of God doing His Divine Will. He lives his life with just one mission - to help people Ask, Investigate, and Realize the Truth.

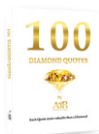
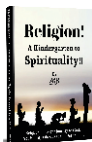
Based on his realizations, AiR has published over 32 books, composed and sung about 1115 bhajans, written several blogs, quotes, and poems. He is a TEDx speaker and is also invited to speak at several organizations like YPO (Young Presidents' Organization), Rotary Club, Lions Club, and at many corporates, schools, and colleges. He conducts AiR Spiritual Retreats and webinars every week on Zoom and Facebook Live to help people realize the ultimate purpose of their life. Being blessed with everything, he seeks nothing except to fulfil this mission of life.

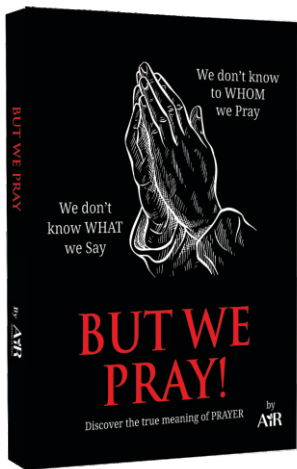
AiR has authored several books on various topics related to Life, Happiness, God, Spirituality, Karma and many of these books are also available as concise booklets.

BOOKS BY AiR









BUT WE PRAY!

The whole world prays to God. Every religion claims that their God is the real God and their prayer is the most effective form of prayer. Unfortunately, we don't even know the God we pray to, nor do we understand what we say in prayer. This book will make us conscious of what we say when we pray. It will help us know the God we pray to and build a Divine connection through prayer.

BUT WE PRAY!

We pray, but do we really know to whom we are praying? We say things to God, but do we really understand what we are saying?

While we don't know who God is, where God is, what God is, we are absolutely sure God is. It is essential to pray, to communicate with God, but should we not realize the truth about God and then pray? Should we not make our prayers effective so that our communication with God works?

This book will unlock the door to true prayer as it will help us realize God, not in some temple, monastery or church but as we search for the truth, we will realize God in the temple of our heart!

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A.i.R.
AiR Institute of Realization
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