CONTENTS

Prayer for a United World

Foreword: Learn to Meditate

If You Want His Answer (poem)

Devotion and Worship

Meditations on God

Expansion of Consciousness

On Finding God

On Material Concerns

On Self-Improvement

Christmas Meditations

About the Author
PRAYER FOR A UNITED WORLD

By Paramahansa Yogananda

May the heads of all countries and races be guided to understand that men of all nations are physically and spiritually one: physically one, because we are the descendants of common parents — the symbolic Adam and Eve; and spiritually one, because we are the immortal children of our Father, bound by eternal links of brotherhood.

Let us pray in our hearts for a League of Souls and a United World. Though we may seem divided by race, creed, color, class, and political prejudices, still, as children of the one God we are able in our souls to feel brotherhood and world unity. May we work for the creation of a United World in which every nation will be a useful part, guided by God through man’s enlightened conscience.

In our hearts we can all learn to be free from hate and selfishness. Let us pray for harmony among the nations, that they march hand in hand through the gate of a fair new civilization.
FOREWORD: LEARN TO MEDITATE

Meditation is the science of God-realization. It is the most practical science in the world. Most people would want to meditate if they understood its value and experienced its beneficial effects. The ultimate object of meditation is to attain conscious awareness of God, and of the soul’s eternal oneness with Him. What achievement could be more purposeful and useful than to harness limited human faculties to the omnipresence and omnipotence of the Creator? God-realization bestows on the meditator the blessings of the Lord’s peace, love, joy, power, and wisdom.

Meditation utilizes concentration in its highest form. Concentration consists in freeing the attention from distractions and in focusing it on any thought in which one may be interested. Meditation is that special form of concentration in which the attention has been liberated from restlessness and is focused on God. Meditation, therefore, is concentration used to know God.¹

In response to the love of exalted devotees, God has manifested Himself in various cosmic forms. He also manifests Himself in truth, in divine qualities, in the creative power and beauty in nature, in the lives of great saints and avatars (divine incarnations), and in the soul of every human being. Thus meditation on any of these concepts brings a deep realization of the omnipresent Absolute, of Him who is ever-existing, ever-conscious, ever-
new Bliss. And because meditation gives direct perception of God, it raises the practice of religion above the differences of dogma.

In this book are meditations of three types: prayers or loving demands addressed to God, affirmations about God or truth, and spiritual guidance and inspiration to be directed to one’s own consciousness. Select a meditation that meets your present need. To help focus your mind on that spiritual thought, practice the following meditation instructions: Sit on a straight chair, or in a cross-legged position on a firm surface. Keep the spine straight and the chin parallel to the floor. With eyes closed, gently focus your gaze and concentrate your attention at the point between the eyebrows. This is the seat of concentration, and of the spiritual eye, or divine perception, in man. With the attention fixed at this center of calmness and concentration, practice the meditation you have chosen. Audibly or mentally repeat the words slowly, concentrating on them intently until you become absorbed in the inner meaning. Meditate until you feel that the concept on which you are meditating has become a part of your own consciousness.

The first proof of God’s presence is an ineffable peace. This evolves into joy humanly inconceivable. Once you have touched the Source of truth and life, all nature will respond to you. Finding God within, you will find Him without, in all people and all conditions.
IF YOU WANT HIS ANSWER

By Paramahansa Yogananda

Whether He replies or not, 
Keep calling Him — 
Ever calling in the chamber 
Of continuous prayer.

Whether He comes or not, 
Believe He is ever approaching 
Nearer to you 
With each command of your heart’s love.

Whether He answers or not, 
Keep entreating Him. 
Even if He makes no reply 
In the way you expect, 
Ever know that in some subtle way 
He will respond.

In the darkness of your deepest prayers, 
Know that with you He is playing 
Hide-and-seek.

And in the midst of the dance of life, 
disease, and death, 
If you keep calling Him, 
Undepressed by His seeming silence,
DEVOTION
AND WORSHIP
To Begin a Meditation

Lock the eyelid-doors and shut out the wild dance of tempting scenes. Drop your mind into the bottomless well of your heart. Hold the mind on your heart that is bubbling with life-giving blood. Keep your attention tied to the heart, until you feel its rhythmic beat. With every heartbeat feel the pulse of almighty Life. Picture the same all-pervading Life knocking at the heart-door of millions of human beings and of billions of other creatures. The heartthrob constantly, meekly announces the presence of Infinite Power behind the doors of your awareness. The gentle beat of all-pervading Life says to you silently, “Do not receive only a little flow of My life, but expand the opening of thy feeling-powers. Let Me flood thy blood, body, mind, feelings, and soul with My throbs of universal life.”
To Awaken Mental Freedom

Sit still with a straight spine. Cover up your fidgety eyeballs with the sheets of your eyelids. Hold them still. Then loosen your mind from the consciousness of body-weight. Relax the nerve-strings that are attached to the heavy muscles and bones of your body. Forget the consciousness of carrying a heavy bundle of bones tied in the thick cloth of flesh. Rest. Free your mind from the consciousness of a beast of burden. Do not think of your body-load, but feel your soul untied from the constant material quality of heaviness. Mentally race in your fancy’s airplane above, beneath, left, right, in infinity, or wherever you want to go. Feel and meditate on this, your mental freedom from your body. Dream, dwell, and feel this body-aboveness when sitting still; the consciousness of freedom will constantly increase.
Universal Prayer

May Thy love shine forever on the sanctuary of my devotion, and may I be able to awaken Thy love in all hearts.

O Father, receive Thou the fervor of my soul, the devotion of incarnations, the love of ages that I have kept locked in the vault of my heart.

Divine Father, in my temple of silence I have made a garden for Thee, decorated with the blossoms of my devotion.

With aspiring heart, with zealous mind, with flaming soul, I lay at Thy feet of omnipresence all the flowers of my devotion.

O Spirit, I worship Thee as beauty and intelligence in the temple of Nature. I worship Thee as power in the temple of activity, and as peace in the temple of silence.
I Will Wait for Thee

In the center of my heart I have a mystic throne for Thee. The candles of my joys are dimly lighted in the hope of Thy coming. They will burn brighter when Thou appearest. Whether Thou comest or not, I will wait for Thee until my tears melt away all material grossness.

To please Thee my love-perfumed tears will wash Thy feet of silence. The altar of my soul will be kept empty until Thou comest.

I will talk not; I will ask naught of Thee. I will realize that Thou knowest the pangs of my heart while I wait for Thee.

Thou dost know that I am praying; Thou dost know that I love no other. Yet whether Thou dost come to me or not, I will wait for Thee, though it be for eternity.

I will drive away all despondency in order to make a mighty effort to feel God by meditation, until He finally appears.
My Offering to Thee

Each morning I offer my body, my mind, and any ability that I possess, to be used by Thee, O Infinite Creator, in whatever way Thou dost choose to express Thyself through me. I know that all work is Thy work, and that no task is too difficult or too menial when offered to Thee in loving service.

Divine Mother, with the language of my soul I demand realization of Thy presence. Thou art the essence of everything. Make me see Thee in every fiber of my being, in every wisp of thought. Awaken my heart!

Beloved Father, my wordless chants of yearning for Thee will sing in cadence with my heartthrobs. I shall feel Thy presence in all hearts. I shall watch Thy hands working in the law of gravitation and in all other natural forces. In the tread of all living creatures I shall hear Thy footsteps.

Thou unseen Charmer of Souls, Thou art the fountain flowing from the bosom of friendship. Thou art the rays of secret warmth that unfold buds of feeling into blossoms of endearing, soulful words of poetry and loyalty.
As I radiate sympathy and goodwill to others I open the channel for God’s love to come to me. Divine love is the magnet that attracts all blessedness.

Father, enter Thou into my soul through the portals of my heart’s devotion and through my ardent prayers.

I will not become too much attached to things, as this will cause me to forget God. We lose possessions, not as a punishment, but as a test to see if we love material things more than the Infinite Lord.

I obey Thee in the temple of discipline.
I love Thee in the temple of devotion.
I worship Thee in the temple of my love.
I touch Thy feet in the temple of stillness.
I behold Thine eyes in the temple of delight.
I feel Thee in the temple of emotion.
I fight for Thee in the temple of activity.
I enjoy Thee in the temple of peace.

I will rise with the dawn and rouse my sleeping love to waken in the light of true devotion for the peace-God within.

Heavenly Father, in an invisible church built of devotion granite, receive Thou my humble heart offerings, daily renewed by prayer.