

Dayā

What is *dayā*? The word *dayā* comes from a *dhātu*(root) which is द् - *day*. द् *dhātu* has the meanings of *dāna*, *gati*, *rakṣaṇa*, *himsā*, *ādāna*. What does *dayā* mean? Let's take each of these root meanings and explore what the word *dayā* will mean, and how it will fit Pujya Swamiji.

The word दया is derived from धातु द् with the affixes अङ् and टाप् and has the common meanings Pity, tenderness, compassion, mercy, sympathy

धातु द् + प्रत्यय अङ् + प्रत्यय टाप् = दया

धातु द् भ्वादि आत्मनेपदी दान-गति-रक्षण-हिंसाऽऽदानेषु = to give, to go, to protect, to hurt, to take/accept

Dāna. *Dāna* is what? Give, give and give. The best way of giving is, giving without expecting anything in return. Give because you think something needs to be given. Pujya Swamiji gave *brahma-vidyā dānam*, for which there is no equivalent return possible. That is *mahā dānam*. Let us consider the root meaning of *rakṣaṇe*, protection. He protects whoever seeks his protection. Whoever went to him was protected by Swamiji. *Rakṣaṇe*, to protect, how does one protect? Somebody may protect you by giving you shelter. How long? How long can one give this type of protection? Until they have accommodation. Somebody may protect you by giving you food. How many times? Once in a while. Somebody protects you by giving you a job, helping you get a job. Somebody helps you by giving you education. Somebody helps you by giving you some wealth or some resources. But how does Pujya Swamiji continue to protect us? He protected us in a unique way by showing us how to live life. He protects us by giving us the *śāstra-buddhi* to us. Showing us how to live in the world. You want to be free from the problem of becoming, even when living in the world. How? How to be *jīvan-muktāḥ*? I want to be happy here and now. I want to be protected from my own insecurity. Oh lord, protect me from myself. So *rakṣaṇam* is not just *rakṣaṇām* from other forces. *Rakṣaṇam* is by changing my very understanding. *Rakṣaṇam* by helping me recognize what is the purpose of my life – *puruśārtha niścaya*. First level of *rakṣaṇam* is to help you see that there is a *puruśārthain* life other than just running round and round, without knowing the right direction, running from here to there, there to here. What are you going to get by reaching there sir? Have you ever thought about it? Who is going to awaken this thought that one has to see the purpose in one's life, in a so far rudderless life? When the wheel of *karma* turns, when good times don't seem to be coming, when your age catches up, when your beloved leaves you, when everything seems to go wrong in life, then where do you go? That's when one sees a midlife crisis, midlife blues. Then they will ask "what is the purpose of life?" Then they

will come looking for a swami. "Is there a purpose to life? What is the purpose of life?" And swami is sitting there willing to answer. *Puruṣārtha niścaya*, biggest *rakṣaṇam* is to make me see why and how one should live, what is the purpose. Even having heard that the purpose is *mokṣa*, one word, I don't understand at all. I think my purpose is to make money, that's where my freedom lies. If I have more money, I can plan more holidays. Why not? The teacher has to have immense *dayā*, compassion to just make me see that in and through every seeking in your life, you are only seeking to be a non-seeker. You are not seeking for the sake of really gaining anything. You are seeking so that you may not seek. All of us are begging for something, not because we want to continue to be beggars. We want to be free from beggary, free from having to bend, putting our hand forward saying "*dehedehi*." (Please give).

One's growth lies in learning to give, to contribute more and more. One can only give when one feels bigger, one feels rich. There is a difference between being moneyed and being rich. Moneyed is anybody who has money in his pocket. The one who can give what's in his pocket is rich. *Dānam* is to give. You give till it hurts to give. That's *dānam*. Giving 5 rupees when I have 5 million rupees is not *dānam*. It is *dānam* but it is not really *dānam*. If you want to build your muscle in a gym, you don't go and lift one piece of paper. "I'm going to become world number 1." No. What do you have to lift? Your trainer checks you out, how strong you are now. If you can lift a 50 pounds, he'll make it 100. You have to struggle. In that struggle to lift alone is the strengthening of the muscles. In the same way, if I give what I can easily give, there is no pain in giving. It's giving, but it's not giving that will make you grow.

Swamiji shared one of his own experiences with us. Swamiji's grandfather was visited by a person who worked for him. He came with an offering – a pumpkin, a white pumpkin, *pūśnika*. He brought and gave a *pūśnika* to Swamiji's grandfather. And Swamiji's grandfather gave him one or two bags of rice. And then somebody asked: "He only gave you a pumpkin. Why did you give a bag of rice? That's not an equation. You can buy the pumpkin for a fraction of the cost of the bag of rice." What did Swamiji's grandfather have to say? He explained - What did that person possess? He possessed very little. He has a creeper perhaps on his hut, he probably has three or four pumpkins, of which he gave one pumpkin to me. What did he give? 25% of his wealth he gave to me. If I gave him one measure of rice, is that giving? If I give one measure of rice, is it hurting me to give? No. I should give enough that makes me feel the same degree of difficulty and pain that he feels in giving this one pumpkin. That is *dayā*. That is giving.

Prior to his becoming a *sannyāsī*, Swamiji used to pick coconuts from the family garden to be sold to generate income for the household to be run. On the way, if anybody asked, Swamiji would give away the coconuts. His mother, he recalled never asked him to stop giving. It's not today that he is *Dayānanda*. He was *dayāvān* all the time. How giving! Have we ever come back from him empty handed?

As a caring teacher he gave us food and a wonderful place to live. He gave us clarity about *puruṣārtha niścaya*. *Mokṣa* is not one more *puruṣārtha*, *Mokṣa* is the only *puruṣārtha* .

He taught us "what you really seek is non-seeking" is the *vyavasāyātmikā, niścayātmikā buddhi*. He also taught us how to gain preparedness for *mokṣa*. "*Svakarmaṇa tamabhyarcya siddhiṃ vindati mānavaḥ*". Doing your *svakarma* as an offering is the way to gain the preparedness for this knowledge.

He clarified what *karma-yoga* means by teaching that *karmanī eva adhikāraḥ te ma phaleṣu kadācana* is not just topical. It's not just *Arjuna* being addressed by *Krṣṇa*. *Karmanī eva adhikāraḥ sarveṣu lokeṣu*, applies to all - you only have a say over what you do. You have a free will which you can exercise to do. *Ma phaleṣu*. You cannot be the author of the result of an action. Just because you can't be the author of the results of action, don't gravitate towards inaction. Why? *Īśvara* gives you the *phala* inkeeping with your action. *Mā karmaphala-hetur bhūḥ*. Don't try to be the author of the result of your action. *Mā te sangostvakarmaṇi*. May you not become a person who is given to inaction. He unfolded *karma-yoga* in a way that could be logically assimilated. *Samatvam yoga ucyate*. That ability to accept all possible outcomes of an action with an attitude of sameness, irrespective of whether the result is equal to, less, more, or opposed to what I expect is *karma-yoga*. Not only that, the ability to make right choices is *karma-yoga*. *Yogaḥ karamasu kauśalam*. This is Swamiji's contribution to the entire humanity.

Thus he taught us the means to gain *adhikāritoam*. He set up *gurukulams*. Not one. Not two. He set up four *gurukulams* himself. And many more through his students. He has over 220 *sannyāsī* disciples and many more who are not *sannyāsīs*, teaching in all parts of the world. There are teachers in Brazil, Japan, Australia, UK, USA, Canada. He created all these teachers and is doing our *rakṣaṇam*. Not only *rakṣaṇam* of students but *rakṣaṇam* of the entire universe by giving continuity and vibrancy to this brilliant teaching *sampradāya*. That is *rakṣaṇam*.

Then considering the *dhātorthā* as *ādānam*, receiving. *Dānam*, giving. *Ādānam*, receiving. He receives us all with love. You give him brick-bats, he receives that also. In public life, you never get only accolades. You get both. Normally, success are well-documented and failures are not. For Swamiji, there is no failure or success. *Nimitta mātram bhava savyasācin*. He always said, I am only a *nimitta*. *Īśvara* does everything, I don't do anything. *Īśvara* takes care of everything. Even though Swamiji could have said, "I did this", he never had that kind of mentality to claim that he did. Quiet. Always working, quietly achieving so much. So many people came to this *gurukulam* and received help from him. Somebody wants their daughter married – "Swamiji I want money." Somebody wants their children's medical care – "Swamiji I want money." Somebody wants a letter written to the school for recommendation for admission. Anybody came, he never turned them away. Accepted everybody as they were. *Ādānam*.

The same root *day* also has a meaning of *himsā* - hurt. The word *dayā* therefore also has the meaning *himsā*. He does *himsā*, weakens all that I don't want. My *avidyā*, my ignorance he removes. My wrong, misplaced ego, he hurts its being by making me see it doesn't pay. He hurts, weakens, my incapacity to give, by enabling me to see that I could give

more. In that way. While not being hurting me, he hurt, weakened, removed what had to go. Like the *viśaraṇa*, *avasādana* meanings of the *dhātu Sad* in the word *Upaniṣad* this *himsā* meaning can be taken as *viśaraṇa*, *avasādana*, weakening. This *dayā* of Swamiji helps us loosen the hold of all wrong things, *adharmā*. We have just been exploring the possibility of considering the root meaning *himsā* also to make the word *dayā*. We need not consider this root meaning to explain *dayā*.

Then finally the root meaning of *day* as *gati*, *gamayati*—causes to reach. Where does Swamiji make us reach? *brahma gamayati*. *Dharmam gamayati*. Where I need to go, *puruṣārtham prati gamayati*. "Now Swamiji is gone. What will happen to my *puruṣārtha*?" *Nahi kalyāṇakrt kaścid durgatim tāta gacchati*". He has put us at ease, by teaching the Gita, that a *kalyāṇakrt* never really ends up on the wrong road. This is how he has set up the royal highway for us. He has told us what it takes to get where we want to get. Highway is only a simile in the context of *mokṣa*, because you don't have to go anywhere to be who you are.

If there is no going anywhere, why there is this pursuit of *mokṣa*? Swamiji used to give an example. There is this person who is sitting in his house. He is crying, "Take me home, please take me home!" So someone comes and told him, "Hey, you are already at home." He says "No, I am not at home, take me home." He would not listen to anyone. Then one kind man came. He offered "I will take you home." He took him, took him around the village and brought him back to the same spot. This is our story. All of us are like this man who says, "Take me home", because *mokṣa* is me. Swamiji doesn't just say, "you are home, if you don't understand forget it" He doesn't say that. He says, "Okay, I will take you home, come for a course." Come, I will take you. Then he slowly teaches us. After the teaching we recognize that we were never away from home. Until that understanding comes, he never at any point says that you will not understand, you are useless, you are silly. No! He always says, "You are at home, you don't recognize it; I am only helping you recognize that you are at home." What does this call for? Extraordinary *dayā*. If you tell that person sitting in his house and crying, ten more times that, "Hey you already at home, Look your wife is here, your son is here, your bed is here." That is ordinary *dayā*. The person doesn't understand. He insists "No I am not at home" Because he had one too many drinks. Then just to humour the person you take him around the village and bring him back. That is extra-ordinary *dayā*.

Swamiji says you need an extra ounce of *dayā* to help a person who you don't see being in trouble. You see the person as being perfect as he is. In one class Swamiji carefully looked at all people in the class and did not start to teach for a few minutes. Later when somebody asked "Why Swamiji was not saying anything?" he said, because, "I see everybody is perfect as they are, nobody needs to change. I am wondering what should I teach, and to whom". Not seeing anything wrong with any of us, and yet be able to spend years sitting here teaching us, class after class, day after day. Coming from the hospital and arriving directly in the lecture hall. What would you call that other than *dayā*? What do you call it? Is there a better word for it? That is *dayā*.

The *dayā* in him was total. Totally accepting us as we are. Aware of our limitations, and yet validating each of us as we are. You're okay as you are, there is nothing wrong with you. You're wonderful. I never heard him say anything different to anybody. For him every person was acceptable. Swamiji's teaching in this context was a two-step response. Don't respond to a behaviour. See the behaviour, accept the behaviour, by seeing what's behind the behaviour. There's a background behind that behaviour. And that background is not the person's making. Given that background, there will be this behaviour. He has a particular parentage, his parent's had their parentage, his parents' parents' had their parentage. It is a *sampradāya*. His mother did something, therefore he is what he is. Is the mother to blame? No. Grandmother is to blame. Is grandmother to blame? No, grandmother's blame is shifted to her mother. Where will you stop? Finally you have to stop with the mother of all mothers and the father of all fathers. Who is that? *Jaḡataḥ pitarau vande*. The parents of the entire universe are *Pārvatī-paramesvarau*. The seeming disorder needs be understood as within the order of the all knowledge *Īśvara*, and if one can accept a seeming disorder, self-acceptance is much easier.

Swamiji could see clearly nobody is to blame for what we are. We are all helpless. When it comes to myself, I expect others to understand me. But when I am at the receiving end, it is hard to understand and accept that others too maybe as helpless as I am. *Ātmaupamyena sarvatra samam paśyati yorjuna*. *Ātmaupamyena*, by seeing everybody, invoking that same feeling that everybody is like me, I don't want to be hurt, they also don't want to be hurt, I am helpless in my own ways, so are they, they all are helpless in their own ways. I recognize this. When you recognize this, there is an acceptance of the person. It is a two-step response. Every person is always okay. A particular behaviour is perhaps not appropriate. It doesn't serve that person well. No judgment.

He taught us what no one else could teach us. He is a father, he is a mother. He's more than that to us. Mother and father gave birth to us. My teacher in Nagpur, Swamini Brahmaprakasananda, she's a gynaecologist. He told her, you deliver people into *samsāra*. I deliver them out of *samsāra*. This is how it is. It is Swamiji, who is Dayananda, who is delivering us out of *samsāra*.

Even in his way of going he was giving. He did not just vanish one day. He gave us all ample notice, gave us an opportunity to go and seek his blessings more. And by staying on for so long, he made us stay with that emotion that he is not going to be around. I see a certain glory even in that, he was very kind to us. He gave us enough opportunity to close the loose ends, to settle accounts.

To recap, *dayā* has several meanings through all its root meanings - *dāna*, *gati*, *rakṣaṇa*, *himsā*, *ādāna*. All meanings fit in so wonderfully with Swami Dayananda. One could talk hours about his *dayā* alone, there is so much there. *Dayā* is his name. The name is *anvartha*, a very appropriate name for Swamiji. Because he was only *dayā*. Always kept giving giving giving.

Until now what we did was just explored the meanings of the word based on *dhātuartha*, the root meaning. This is the beauty of the Sanskrit language, a language which Pujya Swamiji never tired oftalking about. Now we can explore the meaning a little further. *Dayā* is defined as, *duḥkhiṭeṣu bhūteṣu anumānā*. When somebody is sorrowful, when somebody is hurt, that compassion one has is called *dayā*. *para duḥkha asahanam*, when you cannot stand the *duḥkha* of others, when there is an empathy, when you cannot see another person in pain, that is *dayā*.

Another definition of *dayā* is *yatnādapi parakleśam hartum ya hrđi jāyate icchā sā dayā parikirtitā*. The desire which comes up in one's mind, that even with effort can I take away somebody's *duḥkha*, such an emotion is called *dayā*. *Dayā* is also described by the line *ātmaivat sarvabhūteṣu yo hitāya śubhāyā ca*. Just like in one's own case, with reference to one self, one who is committed to what is good with respect to all beings. *Hita* is *śreyas*, what is good and what is also auspicious, what is a blessing is kept in mind. That which causes one to behave in a manner that others always get *hita* and *śubha*, that emotion is called *dayā*.

All these definitions of *dayā* find expression in Pujya Swamiji. If somebody came to see Swamiji, irrespective of how tired or how busy he was, his thought was not "why did this person come now? What can I do to get rid of him?" No. It was "How can I help." That's Swamiji's *dayā*.

Dayā is a deeper expression of *ahiṃsā*. "*Ahiṃsā paramo dharmah*" – Pujya Swamiji has always maintained *ahiṃsā* is the basis for all *dharma*. Because *dharma* has to be based on universal values and a universal value for a human without being tutored is – I do not like to be hurt and other beings also do not like to be hurt. This basic fact that a human being knows "other beings don't like to be hurt" is what distinguishes a human being from any other being. Swamiji was a complete human being from this perspective, never losing sight of this basic *dharma*.

Pujya Swamiji was not other than *Īśvara*. He saw only *Īśvara*. The *dayā* of a person who sees only *Īśvara* is characterized by countless extra ounces of compassion. There is no judgment. It is an acceptance of you as you are. This was Pujya Swamiji's *dayā* – he gave all of himself to each one who sought his blessings. He gave a new dimension to the meaning of the word *Dayā*. What we see in Swamiji's *dayā*. Pujya Swamiji is *dayā*.

We have received a few inputs in response to our appeal. There are few responses from devotees of Pujya Swamiji in response to our earlier appeal. There are also more tributes and Shodasi talks which we are not able to accommodate in the November issue, because of paucity of space. We will publish them in the later issues.

.... **Editorial Team**