

CHARITY AND SACRIFICE WHY AND HOW

By undertaking pilgrimage to holy places and participating in Satsangas (congregations) one leads towards charity, individually, combined or by some other way which is very much desired for the needy and down-trodden for their upliftment. Pilgrimage without imbibing virtues will remain and mean only some distance covered and journey undertaken without purpose. No doubt holy places give refuge to the weary souls, make us humble and help in enhancing our spirituality. Charity is an act of great sacrifice, graciousness, piousness, nobleness, compassion, forgiveness and one of the virtuous qualities for absolving ones adversities. One who gives charity feels the pinch of problems of others as his/ her own. Happiness and grace multiplies by sharing with others. One should not accept charity from atheists and those having sense gratification for the purpose of maintaining sanctity. Some of these charities are compassion, land donation, material charity, charity of cow, charity of maiden, donation of limbs after death, education, charity for peace and charity for food which is the most pious service to the poor and needy. In fact charity given to a needy person for education is a permanent one as it removes ones ignorance. Knowledge and wealth are Gods gifts which must be shared with others to enjoy and fructify. Charity of education is given in secrecy as education and intellect cannot be stolen, being hidden treasures, and is helpful even when one does not possess money. An educated and learned person does not possess destitute qualities and he is not an encumber on earth. Some prefer secret charity without revealing their names, as they believe that their left hand should not know what the right one gives. Blood donation to save some ones life is also a supreme act in the service of mankind. For the infertile couple the donors of eggs and sperms can help in conceiving and giving new lease of life to the dismayed and emotionally shattered people. Those who have absolutely nothing to give can at least devote their precious time for the benefit of the needy. With charity of love which is instilled in us by the parents, saints and erudites by drenching us with nectar of love we can inculcate brotherhood and friendship towards all irrespective of caste, creed, colour, sex, religion and underprivileged etc. and reinstate them into the main stream of life otherwise they will be alienated from mankind and society. This also gives them emotional support. In short, charity is nothing but service to the needy. It is marvelous act and the donor is placed in heaven on this earth itself. We should contribute and share our possessions with others as the trees, rivers, seas and mountains do without discrimination. Charity is a trust, which should not be considered in terms of cash or kind in quantity. Even the road does service by leading us to our desired destination without expecting any reward. Unfortunately, we share our grief with others but not our comforts and possessions. God is Giver Who always fills our treasures with His bounties and marvels. His treasures are full upto the brim. He takes care even of the tiniest creature. By giving away in charity it dissipates and checkmates our craze for amassing unnecessary wealth and helps in preventing many discomforts and vices of our life. It also stops allurements of unworthy ambitions and wants. Learn that the whole life is giving, that nature will force you to give. So, give willingly. Sooner or later you will have to give up. Besides the attitude of giving leads to spiritual progress whereas those of taking to a great fall. It is believed that charity or donations sanctify the earnings of the donor. Thus one elevates ones soul and gets salvation. It is also said that God manifests in different forms before His arch devotee, like food for the famished and consolation for the helpless etc. Charity given with pomp and show stains its true purpose. The purity of hands is based on the charity given and shared through them with generosity. What we give to the poor, in fact we give back to Lord due to His grace. We are giving this gift of God to the weak, unhealthy, illiterate or broken-hearted, inferior and suppressed. We get satisfaction and Lords blessings only when it reaches the real needy otherwise its purpose is lost in case the receiver becomes dependent for ever and does not try to stand on his / her own feet. A renowned diplomat and author of Artha Shastra, Acharya Chanakya (Prime Minister of Chandra Gupta Maurya), had rightly said that we should remain within our limits even while giving charity otherwise our stocks will dwindle and we will be left with nothing except worries. It is proved beyond doubt that one who gives in charity without expecting anything in return is benefited in health and long life. Such persons remain free from blood pressure, heart disease etc. and get peace of mind due to Gods grace and blessings of the receivers and also due to their changed positive attitude towards life. The giver also gets contentment. Such a giver never tires in his virtuous actions and his treasures never exhaust but are always replenished by the Supreme Lord in a mysterious way. Also we should give as one lamp lights up many other lamps (for removing ignorance) without losing its own light. Charity is also like an intellect, the more we use the more it sharpens, strengthens and breeds. Charity is a penance for inner purification. It is the way to God realization.

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