

The Dasara celebrations in October during which Bhagavan revived the Vedapurusha Saptah Jnana Yajna after a break of three years, were made immensely significant for spiritual aspirants as well as Sai devotees in general by the series of discourses on the Upanishads which He gave for seven days.

In His own inimitable way, Bhagavan expounded the profound message of the Upanishads, with illustrations drawn from daily life. What is usually regarded as dry metaphysics became in Bhagavan's discourses an absorbing exposition of the Vedantic teachings.

Owing to the limitations of space, the discourses are given below in a condensed form. The inaugural discourse on October 18 and the valedictory discourse on October 24 have already appeared in our November and December issues.

In the course of His Discourses on October 19, Bhagavan said: One may study all the scriptures, perform all types of sacrifices, go on extensive pilgrimages, master the eight types of knowledge, but it is not easy to control the senses and the mind, direct one's vision inward and maintain equanimity of temper (Poem).

### **From the animal to the human**

In ancient times, the sages and seers maintained purity in thought, truth in words and righteousness in deeds. But in this Kali Age today, people have forgotten human values and exhibit animal qualities such as lust, anger, greed and hatred. Purity of heart and selflessness are the hall-marks of the human life which one gets after passing through several births. Foolishness, pride, covetousness and other such qualities are a hang-over from their previous lives as sheep, buffalo or cat. One who is in the habit of attacking and harming others out of hatred reveals the tendencies in his previous birth as a dog. One who lacks steadiness of mind and constantly jumps from one thing to another, reflects the quality of the monkey, which he has evolved. It is to get rid of such bad qualities that Yajnas (Sacrifices) are undertaken.

### **The altar of the mind**

In Treta Yuga, Vishwamitra took the help of Rama to ensure the conduct of the Yajna without hindrance from the demonic forces. His Ashram was called Siddhashrama. Actually the heart of every human being is a "Siddhashrama". The moment evil thoughts or bad feelings arise in man that is the beginning of all sins. When the heart is polluted with such sinful thoughts, one should seek the help of "Atma Rama", just as Vishwamitra sought the help of Rama to put an end to the ogress Thataka. If you think of God and pray to Him with sincere devotion, every deed done by you will be a Yajna. The mind is the altar of this Yajna. You must offer all the evil qualities at the altar of the mind. That is the ideal internal yajna to be performed by every person as distinct from the external Yajna done ritualistically.

### **The Ramayana as allegory**

stands for "Yajur Veda", as he was the embodiment of Dharma. Lakshmana esteemed Rama's words as law and followed him. He was always chanting the name of Rama. He represents Rig Veda. Bharata represents Sama Veda, as he was always singing the glory of Rama. Shatrughna represents Atharva Veda. Thus the four sons of Emperor Dasaratha of Ayodhya represent the four Vedas. Dasaratha's capital, Ayodhya, symbolises a place where no enemy can enter. Dasaratha symbolises the five organs of action (Karmindriyas) and the five organs of cognition (Jnanindriyas). The three queens of Dasaratha, Kaushalya, Sumitra and Kaikeyi, represent the Satwic, Rajasic and Tamasic Gunas. If the inner significance of the Ramayana is properly understood, it will serve as a manual of ideal living for all mankind.

### **Significance of yajna**

If the principle underlying the Yajna is understood, it will be realised that the Divinity pervading everywhere is within you too (Antharbahishcha thath sarvam vyapya Narayana-sthithaha). Through the conduct of a Yajna one can understand the immutable permanent Reality in a fast changing world.

Fire has an important role in the Yajna. Fire for the Yajna is created by churning two wooden sticks placed together. The top stick is the mother and the bottom piece is the father of Agni (Fire). Immediately after birth, Agni devours both father and mother. Fire is the presiding priest or Brahma (for the Yajna). He takes the offerings and acts as a courier to convey them to the Gods. Yajna has, moreover, many significant inner meanings. Those who do not know them make fun of it or deride it.

Since people have forgotten the real significance of such holy rituals performed for promoting the welfare of mankind, humanity is suffering from all sorts of tribulations and miseries. In the ethical, physical, scientific and all other fields today man has given up his "Swabhava" (true nature) and is keen only to gain prabhava (fame). Fame is like a passing cloud. Today one may be a Prime Minister, full of fame and power. But when he steps down from that post no one will care for him.

### **Man and atma**

What is the true nature of man? A term for man in Sanskrit is "Nara". "Nara" means Atma (or the self). The five elements have come from Atma. They are called "Naramu". The term Narayana has come from this. "Nara" does not refer to the physical form of a human being: He is the Atma and should behave in keeping with his reality. A man without human qualities is like a flower without smell, a fruit without juice and a cow that cannot give milk.

The Upanishads explain this truth. They stress the importance of man knowing his own Reality, transcending the body, the senses, the mind and the intellect. They proclaim that the real nature of man is love, compassion and selflessness. But people have forgotten their original nature and are nourishing unnatural qualities. How can Dharma be sustained in such circumstances? People are mainly engaged in selfish pursuits. They use their sense organs in wrong directions, instead of seeing good, hearing good, speaking good and doing good, which is

expect purity of heart?

### **Power of the Divine**

Yajnas with sacrifice as the basis provide the royal road to self-realisation as opposed to the perilous path of self-destruction, in which people are engaging themselves now. Yajnas are designed to invoke the power of the Divine for the welfare of mankind. Divine power is limitless and beyond the comprehension of the limited intellect of man, who is labouring under the delusion that he is all-powerful and can achieve anything. Even the great saint musician and composer Thyagaraja once doubted the power of God when he was subject to great misery and suffering, but recovered his faith immediately after he recollected how, without the power of the Divine, a monkey could cross the ocean (Hanuman) or Lakshmana do service at Rama's feet or Bharata worship His sandals or Lakshmi, the Goddess of wealth, serve at His Lotus Feet. He blamed himself for doubting the power of the Lord and regretted the lapse in his devotion.

The significance of the offerings made in the holy fire of, a Yajna is that whatever' is offered is converted into Amrita (Divine Ambrosia) and conveyed to the gods. When man sacrifices his bad qualities, he is transformed into the Divine. With this in view, the Upanishads declare: "Lead me from untruth to Truth, from ignorance to Knowledge, from death to Immortality". Thus the Yajna helps man to progress to the summit of eternal bliss.

### **Cosmic energy in mantras**

The Yajna is not for passing time. The cosmic energy issuing from the Mantras will go up in the fire from the Yajna hearth and spread all over the world and purify the atmosphere. Some agnostics may criticise this as wasting food, ghee and other valuable articles by throwing them into the fire. This is as foolish as the criticism of an ignorant person that a farmer wastes good quality seeds by casting them on his farm. He does not realise that one small measure of the seed will yield several bags of grain as harvest. The Yajna is done not for selfish purposes but for the welfare of the entire world. It reflects the noble ideal of service and sacrifice before self.

### **The quest for happiness**

Bhagavan, in the course of His discourse on the 20th said: There is no penance other than stillness of the mind (Santhi). It is the ornament adorned by saints and it is what every one yearns for in his heart. Saint Thyagaraja sang that there is no comfort or happiness without peace (Santhamu leka soukhyamu ledhu).

Sukham or the state of enjoyment of happiness is like heaven. The pleasures derived by the senses from worldly objects are transient, while real happiness lies in experiencing the bliss from the Inner Self. People are unhappy because of "Trishna", or the insatiable thirst for worldly pleasures. Desires are always multiplying endlessly. The only way to overcome misery or grief is to put a curb on desires.

with their fellow-beings: Man is deluded by the trivial pleasures from mundane things and is filled with greed and lust. This is the main obstacle in the spiritual path.

### **Ekatmabhava**

The Vedas deal with rituals and worship, which imply a dualism between the worshipper and the object worshipped. Vedanta spells out the principle of non-duality (Advaita). It is interpreted in different ways, but the real basis of the Advaitic principle is "Ekatma bhava", that is, the feeling that there is only one Atma pervading everywhere and none else.

"Advaita Darsanam Jnanam" Wisdom lies in the perception of oneness. The Upanishads preach this oneness, based on the concept of unity in diversity. "Upa" means "near" "ni" represents "nishtha" and "shad" means "sit". Upanishad means that one should sit near the preceptor to acquire the Supreme Spiritual Wisdom.

The Upanishads originated during different periods of time. That is why we find that the teachings of the different Upanishads are not based on the circumstances obtaining at one particular time, but they are applicable universally at all times as they teach only what is vital for the welfare of humanity.

### **The Isopanishad**

"Isavasyam Idam Sarvam" says the Isopanishad. There is no place in the universe where God is not present. Just as air is everywhere even though we cannot see it with our eyes, Divinity is all-pervasive. But for this Divinity, the Sun and the Moon cannot shine, rivers will not flow, crops will not grow. The Divine governs the whole universe. All things in creation are for the use of the entire world. No one can claim exclusive right over these gifts of Nature.

The Isavasya Upanishad teaches man how to enjoy the world with an attitude of sacrifice (Bhoga with Tyaga). One imbued with the feelings of Tyaga (sacrifice) will not revel in mundane pleasures. Sacrifice and sensual pleasures cannot co-exist just as water and fire cannot co-exist. What, then, is the inner significance of this directive that man should enjoy Bhoga (pleasurable experiences) with Tyaga (Renunciation)?

It means that though one is not interested in mundane things, he has to do his duty: He cannot escape doing Karma. He should shed his ego while doing his work and should not consider himself as the doer. He should do his duty without any desire for the fruits thereof. Because man is filled with ego and is not interested in experiencing the real bliss, he suffers from "Roga" or disease. When work is done with a selfless attitude there is no difference between "bhoga" and "Tyaga". We find today in the world only "rogis" (persons afflicted with disease) and not "bhogis" or "tyagis". You should give up attachment to worldly things and direct your attachment to the Divine only. Sage Yagnavalkya taught his wife Maitreyi this principle of oneness. The same Parabrahman (Supreme Self) is present in everyone in the form of Awareness.

The Isavasya Upanishad teaches that this Truth (Sathyam) is changeless. It is the basis of the Sanathana Dharma that has been followed in Bharat. Man cannot live without action (Karma). But he should do it without the feeling of ego and desire for reward. When the seed is sown, the tree will grow and yield fruit whether you like it or not. The desire for fruit is the cause of misery. The Upanishads teach the way of getting rid of the ego.

Prakriti is like a mirror which reflects whatever object is placed before it. When you look into the mirror, yourself, the mirror and the reflection are there—three entities. But if you remove the mirror, there is only one left and that is 'you' the reflection is gone. Because of worldly feelings, you look at the reflection. Remove the worldly feelings, you see your Inner Self which is the Reality. When you get rid of the feelings of 'I' and 'Mine', everything becomes one.

The Upanishads taught the difference between pleasure and pain. If you shed your ego and experience Divinity you will get rid of your pain and enjoy lasting bliss. The Upanishads teach through stories the subtlest truths: You should understand their inner significance and taste the, nectarine sweetness. This is possible only when there is inner purity (Bhava-Shuddhi). Purity of heart leads to "Siddhi"—Self Realisation.

It is unnatural for man to behave like animals with selfishness, anger and jealousy. A compassionate heart is Nature's gift to man. It is a pity that man does not make any effort to realise that the: Divine is closer to him than his own parents. One should search within and not in the external for God.

### **Human qualities**

Love, Compassion, Self-Confidence and Sacrifice are the real human qualities. You are "Amritaputra", "Son of Immortality". Purity in thought, word and deed is a basic requisite for man. Under any circumstance, man should not allow this threefold purity to be affected. Patience is another ideal quality one should develop. Whatever troubles or obstacles one may meet with while doing his proper duty, he should bear with them. One should not get depressed when others blame or abuse him but should stick to the path of truth. The third quality is perseverance which is indeed a prime need for any one in any field but more so in the spiritual path.

Once you have taken up a vow to do a good thing, you should not go back on it under any circumstance. You should fulfill it even at the cost of your life. This is the hallmark of a true devotee. In ancient times, people had this determination and became good souls. The Pandavas had to spend their lives in forests feeding on leaves and fruits. Still they never gave up their adherence to the plighted word. In the Kali Yuga devotees have to face a lot of trials and challenges, but they should not waver even a wee bit in their devotion to God. Just as gold has to be heated, hammered and subjected to many processes before it can be made into a jewel, devotees have to pass through ordeals ordained by the Divine.

With Premabhava (feeling of pure love) you can realise your oneness with the world. Every object has five attributes, namely, Asti, Bhaati, priyam, Name and Form. The first three—Existence, Cognisability and Utility are permanent and changeless, while Name and Form are subject to change. Human beings, with different names and forms are just like waves on the ocean of Sat-chit-ananda. They are also the same Sat-chit-ananda. The essence is the same in all names and forms. The realisation of this truth is spirituality. This is the message of the Upanishads. It does not matter if you cannot understand every word of the Upanishads. It is enough if you realise the truth that you are embodiments of the Divine.

When you get some troubles, you cry in a state of despair and even blame God. There is no need for you to feel aggrieved at all. All troubles are passing clouds. The clouds cannot hide for long the effulgence of the Sun which is permanent. Similarly the Atma cannot be affected by anything. If you identify yourself with this Reality you will have no cause for grief at all as you will be embodiments of bliss.

### **Descent of the Divine**

Bhagavan began His discourses on October 21 with a poem in which he declared: "The same Supreme Being who saved Prahlada by appearing, from the pillar and punishing his demonic father, the same Supreme Being who came to the, rescue of Kuchela; the same Being who descended from Vaikuntha to save Gajendra, the Lord of the elephants, has now come to the world as Sat-chit-ananda-murti, presiding over the hearts of all as Puttaparthi Chakravarthi".

Bhagavan said: "You should realise that I have come to remind you of your Reality, that in fact, everyone of you is an embodiment of Sat-chit-ananda."

### **Unity in diversity**

In the course of His discourse on October 22, Bhagavan said: Though the Upanishads are termed as Vedanta (the end of the Vedas) they are actually the "Siras" or head of the Vedas. The Isavasya Upanishad emphasises that man is bound by action and purity of heart is the basis for right action. "Chittasya Suddhaye Dharmaha" Right action has to be done for achieving purity of heart. When you get rid of bad feelings, evil thoughts and evil deeds, you can experience your Inner Self.

As long as one is puffed up with the pride of education, wealth, status and position one cannot comprehend the Atma. You must turn your mind away from all these transient mundane pursuits and redirect it towards the Inner Self to realise the Atmabhava, which is eternal and changeless. This is the basis for all the changing phenomena of the mundane world. (At this stage, Bhagavan materialised a gold chain by a wave of His hand and went on to explain that the basis for all gold jewellery is gold). The gold chain can be melted and turned into solid gold from which other ornaments can be made bearing different names and forms. Similarly, the basis for all the different forms and names of beings in the world is Divine. The Isavasya Upanishad stresses the unity in diversity. It teaches that the mind and the body will change but the Atma is

objects as true and does not look into the common basis which is changeless.

### **Man and the Divine**

Bhagavan, in His discourse on October 23, said: The Vedic invocation says: "Poornamadah Poornamidam" meaning, "That is whole and this is whole". This implies that Divinity and humanity are not different. The same constituents are there in both. In fact there is only one Supreme Power: which manifests itself in multitudes of forms.

If you take the Gayatri Mantra, it starts with "Bhur Bhuvah Suvaha", in which 'Bhur' is the Bhooloka (this world where we live), "Bhuvah" is the other world and "Suvaha" is the world of Radiation. All the worlds are within every human being. Man is an embodiment of the three phases of time (past, present and future) and the three powers of creation, preservation and dissolution. He is thus the embodiment of the 'Prajna' principle of the Supreme Consciousness.

### **Nada, bindu and kala**

The five vital airs, Prana, Apana, Udana, Samana and Vyana are the constituent elements of Nada (the primordial sound). 'Bindu' represents steadiness of our body, mind and intellect. "Kala" represents the Atma. The Isavasya Upanishad deals with the different aspects of Nada, Bindu and Kala. It says that these three are like a triangle with the Self as the apex and the body and mind as the two points at the base. The body is gross, while the Self is subtle and the mind is a combination of the two. Just as "Nada", Bindu" and "Kala" are everywhere, the mind is also all-pervasive as stated in the Isavasya, Upanishad. The mind is the cause of pain and pleasure, happiness and misery, bondage and liberation. It should be properly directed towards Prajna (Awareness). The body is inert matter and cannot function without the Prajna principle which is Radiation. Prana (vibration) animates the whole body. All the three are constituents of Sat-Chit-Ananda. Man experiences "Ananda" in the Sushupti state (Swapna-Avastha) and perceives worldly things in the Jagrata-Avastha (waking state).

### **The body and the atma**

The Upanishads point out that there are three entities, the Kshara, Akshara, and Ksharakshara (Immovable, movable and movable-immovable). The movable body houses the immovable Atma. One who understands this principle of Akshara will have nothing to do with the world. The body is, given only for knowing the Atma principle, but man is using it for other purposes and thus abusing it.

The human body consists of eyes, ears, nose, tongue etc. These are but instruments that help one to make the journey of life. There are three elements in all actions. The 'Karthā' (doer), 'Karma' the action, and 'Karana', the purpose of the action. The Upanishads declare that if all the three are in harmony one will achieve success. All the limbs and sense organs in a man can function only when the life force is there. That is "Chaithanya Sakthi". It comes from the Self, which is Prajna, Atma Sakthi or Radiation. Even scientists are aware that matter cannot move on its own. without energy. But they, are not able to recognise the. Atma-sakthi which was

considered to be free from the bondage of the phenomenal world.

Socrates told his disciples that the Universe is governed by truth, goodness and beauty. These are the same as "Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram", the terms used by the Bharatiyas to describe Divinity from time immemorial. The truth that transcends the categories of time is the Real Truth. Man is an embodiment of this Truth. But people have forgotten this today. People relish only untruth. Truth is not palatable to them, while untruth seems sweet, though it is poisonous. "Speak, the truth. Do righteous acts" is the motto of Bharat, as declared in the Vedas. But people today kill truth and jettison Dharma. How then can they have peace?

The, Kenopanisad proclaims that the basis of every action should be Truth which is Divine. The Rishis did not compile the Upanishads as a pastime. They gave this valuable treasure for the welfare of mankind.

### **The devotees' failure**

Several persons, holding high positions come here to get Swami's blessings for achieving higher positions or for other personal benefits. Big businessmen and traders come here to take Swami's blessings and return. Those in the teaching, legal and other professions come here. Theists come here, participate in Bhajans etc. and go away. All of them come to Swami to get their desires fulfilled. No one comes to know what Swami wants. How many strive for "Swami's sake? Everyone comes only with selfish motives. I want to point out that enjoying benefits and failing to show gratitude is grievously wrong. In ancient days the devotees of the Lord sacrificed their lives by engaging themselves in selfless activities. You should develop this divine quality of selflessness. It is only by sacrifice you can achieve immortality. You should love all without distinction and serve society.

### **Sacrifice and sharing**

Sacrifice and share Divinity with every one is the message of the Upanishads. You should not bother about your close relations alone, as these relationships are only temporary. You should develop Vishwa Prema or Universal Love.

You may wonder why I am telling this repeatedly. Though I have been telling you all this for several years no one seems to change for the better. So I have to emphasise the need for your getting rid of too much attachment to our kith and kin. Love your children but do not get excessively attached to them. You must make use of your body for doing your duty, but do not get too much attached to it.

### **Play your role**

Every person has to play his role in life. How this should be done is illustrated by a story. Once an actor went to the court of Bhoja Raja to exhibit his talents and get a reward. First he went in the role of a renunciant wearing saffron robes. When the king offered him some gold he declined to accept it. When questioned whether what he gave was not enough, the actor replied he would come again the next day. That day he came in the guise of a dancing girl and gave a



the king; the actor said what was offered was not enough. When the king questioned him as to why he had refused to take anything on the previous day, but was asking for more that day, the actor replied that he had to behave in a manner befitting the role he took. The previous day he had come as a renunciant and had to decline the gold offered to him. But on that day he was in the role of a dancing girl and so could demand more money. The moral of the story is: Students should behave as students and devotees as devotees only. Every person in any field has to uphold certain values appropriate to the role he has taken up. When I say devotees should do selfless service to humanity as a way of serving God, it is only in your interest and for your spiritual uplift. Discriminate between what is permanent and what is temporary and pursue the path leading to permanent bliss. Do not hanker after trivial transient pleasures. Speaking the truth do your duty. This is the message of all the Upanishads.

(Swami concluded his Discourse with the Bhajan "*Sathyam, Jnanam, Anantam Brahma*".)

*AVATAR VANI*

*CHRISTMAS MESSAGE*

### **Let Love Prevail**

*Whom the Mohammedans adore as Allah.  
The Christians as Jehovah,  
The Vaishnavites as the Lotus-eyed Lord,  
The Saivites as Shambhu,  
That God, who confers on all  
Long life, health and prosperity,  
Is one only-have this conviction.  
The Lord is all love;  
Love is His Divine form;  
That love is the redeeming Mantra  
For all beings in this world.  
Without experiencing a fragment  
Of that Love how can you experience  
The Divine, Oh man.*

#### *Embodiments of Divine Love!*

If one object has to combine with another, or one individual has to associate with another, love is the basis for the affinity. The entire world is filled with love. The world is Love and Love is the world.

In every human being love is present as an effulgence which shines in his feelings. Love is life and life is love. Even as the power to burn is natural for fire, and the power to cool is natural for water, love is a natural trait for man. Without it he ceases to be human.

### **Love and life**

Love is an inborn quality in man. It is his life-breath. We nourish a sapling with great love. When the sapling grows and later becomes a dry plant, we cast it away without any concern. How much love did we lavish on the sapling? We cherished it as long as it had life. After it became dry and lifeless, we had no love for it. From infancy we bear love for the mother who has borne us and reared us. But when she passes away, the dead body is burnt without any attachment. What is it that was loved earlier? The living being was loved. Hence life and love are mutually inter-related.

Men today tend to forget the love life relationship. Love today is mingled with self-interest. In the tree of every man's life there is the fruit of love. To enjoy this fruit, the rind that covers it has to be removed at the outset. The seeds in the fruit have also to be removed. The sweet juice in the fruit can be enjoyed only after the rind and the seeds have been removed. In the fruit of the tree of life, the rind is "Ahamkara", egoism. The seeds in that fruit are the selfish interests of man. Only when the ego and selfishness are eliminated, the sweet juice of love can be experienced. The Upanishads described this love as "the sweet juice that is nectarine (amritam) and the Supreme (Brahman)" This means that the juice (of love) is nectar itself, is verily the Divine (Brahman). It is life itself. It is the Divine Effulgence (Tejas).

This juice of love is equal to Brahman. It confers immortality on man and fills him with Divine bliss. Men today are unable to grasp the meaning of this Love Principle. It is essentially Divine in its nature. Hence, "Love is God; live in love."

Most people, however, in their fascination for sensuous pleasures and worldly objects, are deeming the attachments to these as love. Immersed in selfish pursuits and interests, men seek everything for only selfish reasons and have no regard for the transcendental. Everything is desired for self-enjoyment and not out of love for the sake of love. We should love for the sake of the Divine, to realise the eternal. Love should be for experiencing the effulgence of wisdom (Jnana).

### **The Martyrdom of Jesus**

Love is thus, an amalgam of sweetness, effulgence and wisdom. Compassion is the reflection of love. Jesus is the embodiment of compassion. He looked with compassion at the poor and the miserable and gave them succour. In those days, people used to treat birds and animals without pity in the temple in Jerusalem. Jesus sought to put an end to these cruel practices.

From those times to the present, those who care for the well-being of all living beings and humanity were subjected to many trials and tribulations. Good people are always pursued by difficulties and troubles. The messiahs, the prophets, saints and God-men have always suffered from troubles and ordeals of various kinds. You should not bother about them. Have faith in God. When you live up to the truths you believe in, you will be indifferent to what others think.

Moreover, whatever attempts may be made to suppress good people, their goodness cannot be extinguished. "A fine diamond even if it is in a heap of garbage will not lose its brilliance or its value. A pumpkin, even if it is grown beside a hedge, will not lose its sweetness. A peahen's egg, even if it is hatched in a crow's nest, will not lose its colours (Poem). Likewise, the glory and greatness of good men will suffer no diminution in whatever circumstances or situation they may be placed. Such Divine effulgence is shining in every human being. Love is an expression of this effulgence. To manifest this love, men must be prepared to bear every kind of suffering. "Can the sweet juice of the-sugar be had for making sugar without the cane being crushed?" (Poem). The human body is like the sugarcane filled with the -juice of love. It is only when the body is subjected to hardship that the divine, sweet juice of love can flow from it. Without trouble to the body, pains to the mind, and control of the feelings, how can you expect to experience the Divine? Men today aspire for liberation without suffering from their part. God's love is not to be secured so easily. The precious gem of love can be got only in the bazaar of Tyaga (Sacrifice). It is valued only in the Kingdom of Love. How can it be got in the market of cheap wares?

### **Devotion and Selfishness**

Man's devotion these days suffused with selfishness. Everything he does stems from self-interest. The first requisite is the giving up of selfishness. There must be a curb on egoistic conceit and possessiveness. The mind must be submerged in pure love.

You may have heard about the life of St. Paul. In the beginning he was bitterly opposed to Jesus. He was ceaselessly criticising Jesus. One day Jesus appeared in his dream and said: Saul, are you not a human being? Is it proper for you to revile one who has done you no harm, has entertained no evil thoughts about you and has not led you to wrong ways? What harm have I done to you? Why are you abusing me? This is sheer folly. You are thereby demeaning yourself. Beware, beware! After uttering this warning, Jesus vanished. On waking up in the morning Saul (as Paul was known before his transformation) lamented that he had been false to this human nature by deriding and condemning fellow beings. He felt that Jesus was doing many good deeds. He was one who could not bear the sight of others' sufferings. He was showering love on every one. Saul felt that it was a sin to revile such a person. From that date Saul became a devotee of Jesus and came to be known as St. Paul.

In this manner, in the lives of many Avatars one finds that despite all the love and blessings they receive and the benefits they derive from the Avatars, some devotees turn against the Divine when their selfish desires are not fulfilled.

### **Traducers of God**

There are three types of traducers, of God. In the first category are those who have no belief in God and always indulge in abuse of God. Without faith, how can there be any devotion? And without devotion, how can there be love? Without love, how can he be termed human? The words of such a person are worthless.

deride God when their wishes are not satisfied. They imagine that they have a right to receive favours from God. Such petty-minded persons revile God. Their desires are sky-high. But their deserts are minimal. Their spiritual efforts are insignificant. Nevertheless, they criticise God when their insatiable desires are not satisfied.

The third category of persons are those who turn against God out of jealousy. They cannot bear the prosperity or position of others (towards whom they think, God is partial). There is a remedy for almost every malady, but none at all for the disease of Jealousy. The envious indulge in calumny against God.

### **Securing divine love**

It is because of the ubiquitous presence of these three categories of anti-God men that spirituality and the divine feeling of love have become rare commodities today.

### **Oneness with God**

There is a Vedic saying: "The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman himself". You are aware of the Godly man, Moses, described in the Bible. He was one who was ceaselessly praying to the Lord. He was a fervent lover of God. His intense devotion and love ultimately transformed his face and filled it with a divine radiance.

Likewise, the Gopikas, through their intense devotion to Krishna, became the living images of Krishna. Ratnakara, who was a highwayman in his early years, acquired the radiance of Rama by continually chanting the name of Rama.

Whatever the God you worship, adore him with a sense of oneness ("Thadatmabhava"). Bodies may be two; but the heart is one. This is the feeling with which God should be worshipped. Only then you reach the state when you can declare: "You and I are one."

How this state is to be realised is illustrated by a biblical episode. Once St. John, while walking along, saw an angel reading a book. He asked who she was and what she was reading. She replied that she was an angel and that she was reading a book dealing with the doctrine of love. He asked for the book and the angel gave it to him, but said: "You must eat this book: When you are consuming the book; its taste will be bitter: But after you have eaten and digested it, it will become very sweet". "Eating the book" means absorbing the contents of the book, practising them and experiencing the bliss derived therefrom.

While reading and digesting "the book" the experience was bitter as declared by the angel. But, in due course, there was great transformation in St. John. His speech acquired a unique sweetness. His looks were sweet. Everything about him became sweet. What does this mean? It signifies the truth that you should completely identify yourself with the Divine love, which you seek from God. This love is not a purchasable commodity.

this is not right. The devotees should feel: "Everything is Thine". It is only when there is such a feeling of total surrender that the nature of Divine love can be comprehended.

### **Messengers of Sathya Sai**

There is nothing more easy in the world, than the spiritual path. It has to be followed in the form of loving service (Seva). To demonstrate to the world the beauty the sweetness and the glory of selfless and loving service, the association called Messengers of Sathya Sai was formed (from among the old students of the Sathya Sai College for women at Anantapur). These girls, regardless of the families into which they got married and the countries where they had to live, pledged themselves to carry on their service activities. What this vow means should be properly understood. Men have greater freedom to act as they please. Married women have less freedom. They come under the sway of their husbands and in-laws. Despite these constraints, these former students have not only carried on their service activities but also interested their husbands in them.

The service activities of the "Messengers of Sathya Sai" are beyond praise. There are boy students amongst us. Of, what use are they? They enjoy freedom, but are making no good use of it. They take no part in service activities. They are self-centered. But the girl students are not like that. They are not concerned about publicising themselves. To mention some of their service activities: In many small hamlets, these girls are building the roofs for the villagers' houses, working like men. They go to the foreign countries where their husbands are employed. The annual report of the Messengers of Sathya Sai mentions that their members are rendering service in different countries like Kuwait, Australia, and New Zealand. Their varied service activities are highly commendable. I am confident that very soon their activities will cover the entire world and promote the welfare of every country (Cheers). Whatever work they take up, they carry it out with firm resolve. For instance there are numerous primary schools in which men and women teachers work. But men teachers do not work with the same zeal and earnestness as women teachers. For one thing, women are by nature accustomed to rearing and teaching the young. The record of performance of the students is much better in schools taught by women teachers than in schools with male teachers.

### **Follow the women's example**

For the past sixteen years, these ex-students of the Women's college have been rendering great service. For the past one week the old students present in Prasanthi Nilayam have been eager to train themselves for security duties in the, Nilayam. Male students have shown no such eagerness. It is unbecoming of men students to be indifferent to service activities. It is a pity that they have not been impelled to action although they have been listening to the reports of the services of the girls year after year.

There was an officer by name Rammohan Rao. He used to sport an impressive moustache. One day when he was going to his office, he passed by a man who was lying on the road, injured in an accident. He went on without rendering any help to the injured man, while some women rushed to his aid. In the office he reflected over his conduct and felt ashamed that he had failed

behaved in an unmanly way, he removed his moustache. When he went to the officers' club the next day, the members noticed the change in his face and asked him what accounted for it. He confessed that he had failed to act as a true human being and had forfeited the right to call himself a man. From that day, he dedicated his life to social service.

All those who are in high positions will acquit themselves as true human beings only when they render selfless service to their fellow-men. Plunge yourselves in society and take part in service activities. When women are doing such splendid services, why should men lag behind? If men and women together render service, Bharat will be a gloriously prosperous nation. Not in Bharat alone, but in every country men and women should render service to those in need. Many overseas devotees here are found eating and strolling about without doing any useful work. They should shed their laziness and take part in some worthwhile activity.

### **Service and sacrifice**

Service should be your watchword. The spirit of sacrifice is essential. To speak about devotion without a spirit of sacrifice is meaningless.

Many of the women carry on their service activities inspite of the troubles which they face from their husbands. This shows their spirit of sacrifice. The Messengers of Sathya Sai are doing signal service. They need not confine themselves to their own members. They should try to draw other women into service activities and strive to improve the living conditions of the poor people in rural areas.

### **Follow Sai teachings**

If the name of Jesus is glorified all over the world today, it is because of His boundless love. He served the lowly and the lost, and in the end, offered his life itself as a sacrifice. How many of those, who call themselves devotees of Jesus, are following His teachings? Those who claim to worship Rama, how far are they following His example? How many professed devotees of Krishna are living up to His teachings? There are many who claim to be Sai devotees. How many of them are following the message of Sai? If everyone seeks the answer within himself, he will see that it is a zero. Anyone who claims to be a Sai devotee should dedicate his life to Sai ideals. That is true devotion and real penance. That is the hall-mark of humanness. It will be reflected in love, which will find expression in compassion that generates real joy (Ananda).

The greatest quality in every man is love. When love is absent, evil qualities like hatred and jealousy rear their heads. Make love the breath of your life.

Bhagavan concluded his discourse with the bhajan, "*Prema muditha manase kaho! Rama! Rama! Ram!*" The entire audience joined in the bhajan with enthusiasm.

**(From Bhagavan's discourse in the Poornachandra Auditorium on 25-12-93)**

## The Advent of Sai

Beloved one Oh! Sai! Did you want a change from your blissful Heaven,  
Where the devout adore, worship and sing hallelujah's to your glory?

Did you come to see how we have marred and tarnished your beautiful world;  
Where the once lovely woods and enchanting gardens are turned to rubble and stone?  
And instead grotesque buildings tower menacingly like monsters in concrete.  
Where homes are cold without the warmth of the hearth  
And the heart is stunted by warping dangerous vices;  
Where children disregard and discard their venerable parents;  
How parents care not to tend their own children;  
Where brothers are tearing at each other's throats;  
Where man massacres man for a piece of land,  
And sheds the blood of his brother in cold cruelty;  
Where tender sentiment is replaced by the craving of the flesh,

A world Oh! God! That has forgotten you and flaunts is spurious supremacy  
Does it hurt you, my God, to see how ugly we have made your marvellous world?  
Yet your sweet smile, gentle mercy and a rare masterfulness,  
Seem as if you are above the dross and grossness of this world.  
If there was only one Judas for gentle Jesus,  
Now, we have the many Judases lurking in every nook and corner.

Have you come Oh! Saviour! To seek us out and shower your love on us.  
So that the alchemy of your forgiveness and mercy  
May transform the dirt of our impurities into pure gold?

I have wondered, always wondered, at your imperious aloofness,  
And yet your personal care and concern for us the erring.  
In awe and reverence, I have seen you, Lord,  
Initiating a child into the secrets of knowledge,  
Performing the traditional custom of feeding the growing infant;  
Upanayanams, marriages galore are performed with deep significance  
Relieving the anxious parents of their onerous responsibility.

Schools, colleges, universities come up like exhalations;  
To teach the values that are eternal and timeless  
The sick and disabled are tended and cared for, in magnificent-mansions,  
Where, I'm afraid, even the angels may fear to tread.

Performed in sweeping opulence, synthesising the material world with the world of the Spirit,

Then comes the enlightening dawn, which opens up with the gleaming vistas of truth  
That you have come Oh! Sai, to assuage and heal, raise and uplift,  
To transform every contrite Judas to kiss the dust under *your* feet  
And sound the glorious Trumpet that will resound in the Timeless;  
That you have come to teach: the priceless lesson;  
To forgive, to understand, to care and, above all, to love

*Dr. Jayalakshmi Gopinath, Anantapur*

### **Jesus and Baba Convey the Sane Message**

**Jesus said:** Ask, and you will receive; seek, and you will find; knock; and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks will receive; and everyone who seeks will find, and the door will be opened to him who knocks.

**Baba say's:** Ask me, when you need any help. Extend your hand only for Grace from God. Ask Grace as of right, not in a grovelling style. Ask, as the child asks the father; feel that God is nearest and dearest. You are the reflections, the images; I am the Bimba, the Object so reflected. Can there be any question of difference between the object and its images? You are all I. I am all you. I know I am the Atma; you believe you are the body! You are sugar dolls; I am the sugar. Revere any Name; the reverence reaches me, for I answer to all Names. Denigrate any individual; it affects me; for all individuals are expressions of My will.

Grace is showered on those who seek. Knock, and the door shall be opened; ask, and food will be served; search, and the treasure, will be yours. You may complain: Yes! Swami! We have been knocking, asking, and searching since years but, the door is yet unopened, the food is still not forthcoming, the treasure is still beyond our reach!

But, let me tell you this. You have been asking the devil not the deity, knocking at the devil's door and digging for the treasure at the devil's realm. The devil's realm is the objective world, outer nature (Prakriti). She is a clever enchantress! You have been propitiating her, believing that she can confer peace and Ananda! She tantalises you and leads you from one disappointment to another. She enhances your ego and sense of achievement, until you collapse from swollen head! You are knocking at the wrong door—the door of hell, which is ever open! You are searching for paltry pleasure, not permanent treasure!

Like a lighted lamp, God's Grace spreads all round on all, who approach Him and love to be near him; but if you interpose a shade which shuts out the light from you, you have only



shine through and disinfect the vices therein and illumine its corners. You must initiate that little effort, at least. The sun will not open the doors and enter. To get the programme right and pleasantly, you have to switch on and tune in the receiver: That is an inescapable effort.

Individual effort and Divine Grace are both interdependent; without effort; there will be no conferment of Grace; without Grace, there can be no taste in the effort. To win that Grace, you need only have faith and virtue.

*(From "Words of Jesus and Sathya Sai Baba")*

*Bharat has been blessed with many saints and sages and with many manifestations of Divinity in Human Form. A doubt may arise why such appearances take place in Bharat, more than in any other place, when the world is so big and we have humanity everywhere to be saved and guided. There is a reason for this, believe Me Well; why should, in all India, Kolar alone have gold? Where there is a gold mine, there is the need for mining engineers and chemists who will extract it, separate it, purify it and distribute it to the various places where gold is in demand, is it not? So also, it is here in India that there is a mine of spiritual wisdom and spiritual treasure: the Darshanas, Upanishads and the Gita and the Vedas. This has to be distributed, pure and unsullied, guaranteed in value and quality, to eager aspirants everywhere and so, we have here a succession of sages and saints. On account of the teachings and the lives of these people, there is a vast field of spiritual virtue in this land, which needs only a little care to yield a rich harvest.*

**Baba**

## **A Glorious Christmas in Prasanthi Nilayam**

Christmas in Prasanthi Nilayam is much more than a Christian festival. It is a unique global holy day in which thousands participate, transcending sectarian, ethnic, national and linguistic divisions, paying their homage to the Divine child that was born in Bethlehem 1993 years ago. Over the years the numbers coming to Prasanthi Nilayam for Christmas have been growing by quantum leaps.

This year it was an unprecedented gathering from nearly 60 countries who took an enthusiastic part in the celebrations, starting from the singing of carols on Christmas-eve, to the staging of a beautiful play by over 150 children depicting the Messengers of God from Moses to Christ, and culminating in the glorious advent of the Avatar of our times.

On December 24th, the overseas devotees presented a programme of Christmas songs and Bhajans in the Prasanthi Mandir, in the presence of Bhagavan. The choir was led by a young

is among the miracles related by Howard Murphet in his book on Baba).

On Christmas morning, it was thrilling to witness thousands of children, women and men assembling near the Vighneshwara temple for a glorious candle-light procession to the Prasanthi Mandir, singing carols all the way. The gleaming faces of the children and other devotees as they wended their way slowly to the Mandir testified to their devotion to the Lord. Starting at 5 a.m. the procession reached the Mandir compound before 6 a.m., singing "Hallelujahs" The tail end of the procession had hardly reached the Mandir compound when Bhagavan, dressed in a shining white robe, came out of the silver doors opening into the balcony, to give a blissful and benedictory darshan to the vast gathering of devotees. Bhagavan raised His hands in benediction and turned in every direction to enable the vast concourse of devotees to have good darshan of Swami on that memorable and sacred day. Bhagavan returned to His sanctum after the offer of Arati.

The gathering dispersed to meet again at 7 a.m. when a special music programme was presented by the Institute students with narration of incidents from the life of Jesus in between.

The Poornachandra Auditorium was filled to overflowing in the afternoon, when the devotees assembled again to listen to Bhagavan's Christmas message and witness the play specially got up for the day.

The stage of the Auditorium was tastefully decorated by the Messengers of Sathya, Sai—The Association of former students of the Sathya Sai Women's College at Anantapur, who were holding their annual meeting on the same day. The afternoon's proceedings began with two speeches by members of "Messengers of Sathya Sai" and a review of the service activities of the Messengers by Kumari Rajeswari Patel, Professor of English in the Anantapur College. The report mentioned the varied services rendered by the old students in various parts of the world.

Thereafter, Dr. Hollcoat, from Australia, spoke on how overseas devotees should conduct themselves during their stay in Prasanthi Nilayam so that they may derive the greatest benefit from their coming to the Lotus feet of Bhagavan.

Bhagavan then delivered His Christmas message (details of the message are published elsewhere).

After the discourse, the overseas devotees presented a play on the Sarva Dharma theme.

The play opened with a scene in which a large book, called "God's play", was shown at one end of the stage: As the pages turned, an unseen narrator described the human story from the time of creation to the present, highlighting the appearance of various messiahs and prophets. As the respective personages passed on the stage, their message was spelt out by the narrator. At the same time, the well-conducted choir gave appropriate songs. In the last scene, a young "Baba" came out of the blue, as it were, and delighted the audience by the verisimilitude of his costume,

evening for all the devotees. The next morning Bhagavan distributed ice cream to all the children from overseas in the Mandir compound and allowed them to go and enjoy the company of Sai Gita.

## **The Grandeur of God**

*As we come to the end of this century, we realise that this is very important. What is going to happen at the end of this century? Many people have the sense of portent, not necessarily fear, but of hope and intense excitement. Once we get this point that there is no death, then we are all on a great, creative exploration into an expanding consciousness. The whole impulse behind our whole movement, which is represented by a gathering such as this, is waking up the human being to their immortal nature. The world is charged with the grandeur of God.*

*(From "Sai Reflections" U.K.)*

## **Exploring and Expanding Consciousness**

Addressing a large gathering of Sai devotees in the: United Kingdom on Gurupoomnima day last year, Sir George Trevelyan observed: "Our century is the century in which an understanding of the spiritual world really, develops". In the course of his illuminating address, Sir George said:

### **Love transform**

This is an age, where we can take a step into conscious loving. You can begin to learn to watch yourself, look at yourself Try to recognise the deed, the thought that was contrary to love: this is a fascinating thing to do. Watch through the day. We can stand, so to speak, outside ourselves, to view how we are doing. You find that you have lost your temper, you swore, etc. We begin to see in our time, ever increasingly, that this creative process of self and soul development is perhaps the great art of our time. We know the first and absolute thing there is no death. This is a huge step. There is loss of a body, but the body is certainly not immortal: That which has evolved in it the droplet of divinity, working back towards the father creatively. In other words, the entity is learning to take over, so that it, can go back again to God, knowing that there is no death. The time will come when we do not need to come back again, to compensate for the things we did. That is the way it is all working the whole time. All our relationships are being so subtly, moulded and shaped.

## **Devotees Greet the New Year in Bhagavan's Presence**

Nilayam to participate in the New Year celebrations. The presence of thousands of overseas devotees was particularly conspicuous. For all of them, Bhagavan's New Year Message was an inspiration and beacon.

Bhagavan, in his New Year Message, advised the people to bid farewell to their bad qualities and greet the New Year by developing the qualities of love, forgiveness, sacrifice and service (prema, kshama, tyaga and seva).

The entire Mandir compound and surrounding areas were filled with devotees eager to have Darshan and blessings of Bhagavan at the commencement of the New Year in the early hours of the morning on 1st January.

Bhagavan Baba came to the Mandir premises precisely at 7.00 a.m. and went round the vast congregation of men and women who were visibly overjoyed to have the glimpse of their beloved Bhagavan on this first day of the New Year. While Bhagavan's Darshan was a blissful experience for all, the programme of devotional songs presented by the students of the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, to the accompaniment of their own orchestra, filled the air with divine vibrations.

This was followed by Bhajans by the students. Bhagavan arranged for distribution of sweet prasadam to all the thousands who had assembled both inside and outside the Mandir premises. The morning programme concluded with the eagerly awaited announcement that Bhagavan—would bless the devotees with His Divine Message at 4.00 p.m.

In the afternoon, devotees started proceeding to the Poornachandra Auditorium even from 2.00 p.m. and the Auditorium was filled to capacity well before 4 p.m.

Bhagavan arrived at the Auditorium at 3.45 p.m. along with the Hon. Sri. Shivraj Patil, Speaker of the Lok Sabha, who had come, to Prasanthi Nilayam to have darshan of Bhagavan on New Year's Day.

### **Sri Shivraj Patil's Homage**

Sri Shivraj Patil, addressing the gathering said: I offer my humble pranams at Baba's Lotus Feet on my behalf and on behalf of all of you assembled here. We are here to hear Baba's advice which is like nectar. You are all eager to hear His Divine words. I am commanded by Swami to speak a few words and so I stand before you. What can I say? As the Speaker of the Lok Sabha I don't speak. I only hear. Now I am asked to speak in the Divine presence of the Lord. It is difficult to speak in, his presence. The language of silence and mute prayer alone will be effective in the Divine Presence. Loud words can only carry our feelings to others.

I am here in submission to Baba's words. We are all attracted to Him as children to their mother. We cannot resist our eagerness to have a glimpse of Baba, hear words of Wisdom

here have the Darshan more frequently and are ever pervaded by His Divinity.

We come here to have a glimpse of the Divine and purify ourselves, to strengthen our resolve to do our duty well, to become as comprehensive as humanity could be and as pervading as the Cosmos, become part of a period which transcends time and mitigate evil and keep doing good to all.

**"See Baba in all"**

Baba is love. He is truth: He is Space. He is Time: Baba Is Divinity personified: To be present here on the first day of the ensuing year is significant. It is invaluable to be present in the vicinity of the Divine. We can look back and take account of our performance and correct our errors of omission and commission in the past year and look forward to the New Year ahead and plan to do our duty better. We must be aware of our shortcomings and failures in the past year. If we have conquered anger, greed, lust and jealousy, we can continue to do that. If we have fallen a prey to weaknesses and acted in a narrow-minded manner, insensitive to the sufferings of fellow-beings, we should resolve to overcome these weaknesses in the year ahead. The year gone by was a little difficult year. The year was bad for the whole world. We can do good and overcome our weaknesses. The words, of Baba are significant in this context. Loving one and all, seeing Baba in all and all in Baba, following the principle of Unity; we should ensure harmony among humanity at all times.

May Baba give us the knowledge and strength to fulfill His real purpose, to achieve unity and develop love and energy to do good to all by His Power.

Two students of the Sai Secondary School spoke next stressing the importance of self-introspection on New Year's Day about their behaviour in the past year and making resolutions for improvement and transformation in the coming year. They also emphasised the necessity to adhere to the New Year resolutions and act up to them. They shared their experience of the motherly love of Bhagavan by recalling personal instances and exhorted the students to show their gratitude to Bhagavan by strictly adhering to the valuable gems of advice so lovingly given by Bhagavan.

Sri. V. K. Narasimhan, then spoke, briefly explaining how they were all singularly fortunate to be in the Divine presence of Bhagavan on the holy day of commencement of the New Year. He said that we should share our love with others and do unto others what we would wish them to do unto us. The key to enduring happiness was, as pointed out by Bhagavan, to be found in dedicated selfless service and sacrifice.

Bhagavan, in the course of His Divine discourse, said: (Prema) Love is Life (Prana) and a life spent without sharing this love with others is a life wasted. The love of kith and kin is also based on selfish motives. The essential feature of love is forgiveness (Kshama). Love makes one give and forgive; selfishness makes one get and forget. The divine quality, of forgiveness is now absent in the world and that is the reason for the turmoil and hatred that is rampant everywhere.

Bhagavan exhorted the people to give up their bad qualities and develop good qualities just as they were bidding farewell to the past year and welcoming the New Year. The bad qualities may be surrendered to the Lord, who will gladly accept them and shower His Grace to develop the good qualities of love, forgiveness, service and sacrifice, just as soiled and tattered currency notes, which are not accepted by anyone, but accepted only by the Reserve Bank which issues good notes in return.

Bhagavan quoted the example of the Kauravas in the Mahabharata who brought utter ruin on themselves by their evil qualities. He advised people to develop the sacred attitude of brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God, to ensure unity and peace in the world. Most of the miseries and woes of the world were due to the absence of the feelings of love, sacrifice and forgiveness. He advised the people to make their minds bloom with pure love so that the New Year will prove to be a better year despite the likelihood of some troubles and fire accidents during the year.

The New Year celebrations came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan (Details of Bhagavan's discourse will appear in our next issue). —**K.S.S.**

## **God's Greatest Gift**

God has given us the greatest gift—our children. We are entrusted with the duty of nurturing these innocent, curious young beings, with love and tenderness, and teaching them to live in the world as decent human beings. How can we do it?

Swami has said, "The character of children must be made strong and pure. Give them all the confidence and courage they need to become good, honest and self-reliant children. It is not enough that they learn something for which they can make a living. The manner of living is more important than the standard of living. The children must also have reverence towards their religion, their culture, their educational attainments and their country. They must learn their mother tongue, so that they can appreciate the great poetical works and epics written by the Seers of their land. This will give them valuable guidance in the stormy days ahead." How do we bring up our children in a materialistic world, according to Swami's guidelines?

We strive and work hard to send our children to the best schools, so that they can achieve their best in academic qualifications. Swami encourages this, by telling His students that their duty is to study and do the best that they can. But He also tells them that "Your future does not depend completely on your examination grades. It depends more on character, will power and the grace of God." Parents play a vital role in developing these qualities. By giving encouragement, support and by instilling the love of God at an early age, parents can set their children on the right path for their best future.

### **Spiritual education**

Swami developed the Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) programme in order to help parents achieve this goal. It was a programme of education that was designed to, develop and expand a child's personality, so that life would be happy, useful and fruitful, both for itself and for the community. This is achieved by inculcating spiritual, ethical and cultural values within the growing child; with the imbibing of fundamental principles such as Truth, Love, Peace, Non-Violence and Right Conduct.

The SSE programme is a nine-year course, starting with children who are six years of age. The children are taught daily prayers, which inspire them with faith and devotion to God. Silent sitting helps the child to concentrate and brings them peace. Group devotional singing helps to spread Divine love and joy among others. Listening to stories of great men and women, from all over the world, directs them to follow the path of righteous living. Group activities train them to share and care for others and encourages teamwork, which will help them in community work later in their lives. It is a true joy to see these bright young girls and boys begin their classes with eagerness, and blossom into young men and women whose thoughts, words and deeds shine with the knowledge that the Lord is within them.

Swami has said that "Teachers mould the students and students build the nation, sound and strong. Teachers must uplift pupils. Only a great teacher can mould a great student." Many SSE teachers are parents or devotees who have gained so much from Swami's message that they want to impart their knowledge to the children. They must realise the great responsibility and privilege that they have been given-to mould these impressionable young souls, to change their lives for the better.

### **Discipline with love**

Bhagavan also tells us that "Teachers of SSE should cultivate love for their students. They should treat the children as their own, but they should be cautious not to be too lenient. Discipline should be enforced with love and understanding. Unless the student has respect for the teacher, he/she will not take to the teachings seriously and earnestly. The teacher should be loving but firm with the children. Swami also urges us to practise what we preach. He says, "The teacher teaches not merely by his words or through books, but more by his attitudes and aptitudes, his prejudices and preferences; the means and methods he employs, and his conduct and habits." So, with, love, discipline, example and gentle guidance, we can help to shape the future of our children.

### **Parents' example**

Bhagavan has said that, for the SSE course, the family is the unit and not merely the child. Since children spend 85% of their time in the home and in the community, the parents carry a big responsibility for their children's development. The atmosphere in the home should be such that it should nourish and develop the values inculcated in the child during SSE classes. Parental co-operation and encouragement are vital for the programme to be effective. So, often you can see the difference in a child whose parent is actively involved with the programme. This interest

very early stages, and using their skills to further enhance the children's potential. Children learn a great deal by observing and copying what their parents do. Thus it makes it imperative for parents to plant the right ideals in the minds of their children, by the example of their own conduct.

Parents can also learn from their children. If the children are taught beautiful things like silent sitting, prayers and bhajans in the class, the parents should also learn and practise them at home with their children. The effect will benefit both.

Bhagavan says that "Ninety percent of the blame for spoiling the behaviour and character of children, go to the parents. They show too unintelligent affection and give too indiscriminate a freedom to them. To instill in the minds of the young the values of prayer and of humility and loving service to others, the homes where they grow have to be the first schools. The parents have to be imbued with faith in the basic truths of this Universal Religion. They must be seen worshiping at the family altar, meditating in silence, forgiving the lapses of others, sympathising with pain and grief; they should not be seen by the children to be worried, helpless, discontented and distressed, as if they have no God to lean upon, no inner reserves of strength and courage to fall back upon."

God has given us His greatest gift, our children. He has also given us the Sai Spiritual Education programme to nurture and develop this gift. It is up to each and every one of us to decide to use it and to remember that the actions of our children will affect the future destiny of the community, nation, and the world.

—Mrs. Karunes Ratnasingham  
(From "Sai Reflections" U.K.)

*All religions teach one basic discipline; the removal from the mind of the blemish of egoism, of running after little joys. Every religion teaches man to fill his being with the glory of God and evict the pettiness of conceit. Foster love, live in love, spread love that is the spiritual exercise which will yield the maximum benefit. God has a million names; sages and saints have seen Him in a million forms, they have seen Him with eyes closed and eyes open.*

*The human body, so filled with skills, so capable of great adventure is a gift from God to each of you. It has to be used as a raft on which you can cross this never calm sea of change that lies between birth and death, bondage and liberation. Pursue nobler ends; have grander ideals; sensory pleasures are trinkets, trivialities.*

*In homes and schools, training of the minds of the young on these lines has to be taken up earnestly by teachers and parents; of course, they must equip themselves for this work by steady practice of meditation and recitation of the name of God. Parents and children must join in singing the glory of God.*

—Baba



## **Annual Sports & Cultural Meet of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning**

The annual sports and cultural meet of the three campuses of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning and the Higher Secondary and Primary Schools was inaugurated by Bhagavan Baba on 11th January 1994. Thousands of eager spectators packed all the available spaces in the galleries of Hill View Stadium which was decorated with festoons and flags and colour umbrellas from Kerala.

Bhagavan arrived at 7.15 a.m. and came in procession in the decorated chariot accompanied by the Vice-Chancellor and Sports authorities of the Institute. Sai Geeta, the gaily caparisoned elephant headed the procession, followed by students of the school marching with vigorous Garbha and Bhangra dances and the Institute Band playing catchy tunes. The flag bearers of the Institute provided a guard of honour to Bhagavan. Two boys in colourful uniforms presented to Bhagavan the programme and school flag. Bhagavan lighted the lamps marking the start of the Meet. An impressive "March Past" of the students of different campuses and the Higher Secondary School and Primary School followed. The students, dressed in colourful uniforms distinguishing the different houses of the campuses, marched smartly, saluting the Chancellor as they passed the Central stage. Bhagavan descended from the dais to receive the huge Institute Flag carried by a team of participating athletes and hoisted it a top the Flag mast. The leaders of Groups took the pledge of participation with true sportsmanship spirit and uphold the honour of the country and Bhagavan Baba. The Olympic torch was lit by the Divine Hands of Bhagavan and was carried to the top of the hill where the (Olympic) flame was lit by the torch. The imposing 65 Ft. tall Hanuman Statue close by which has been brilliantly painted recently, attracted the attention of one and all, being in a commanding position.

The opening event of the meet was the self-propelled vehicle, driven by solar energy, which was designed and built by the Solar Energy wing of the Institute. It was christened "Surya Hamsa", and speeding effortlessly around the grounds it was greeted with tremendous all-round applause.

The Brindavan campus students opened their presentation with a pair of massive globes rolling on their own and confronted by a pair of clowns who were chased and knocked down by these globes, providing fun for the thousands of children. The next was an exposition of Chinese Lion-fighting programme in which two students wearing the masks of lions worked hard to exhibit dancing and fighting. This was followed by exhibition of Chinese Martial Arts including Karate in which tiles and bricks were broken with bare hands. There was a demonstration of walking on rolling drums and elbow-crawling under barbed wire coils. They also demonstrated handball game played by students mounted on tall stilts, which called for careful balancing. They also demonstrated skipping and aerobic exercises and display of rhythm and skill jumping through fire rings. Their presentation was done under the banner of "Life is a game; play it" and "Life is a dream: realise it". The Prasanthi Nilayam Campus students gave a demonstration of the 15,000 year old Australian game of 'Boomerang'.

The women students of Anantapur Campus opened their programme with a huge globe with pictures of Baba on all four sides explaining the advent of the Avatar as mentioned in the

Gita and Christian and Islamic Scriptures. They depicted the Advent of Sai Avatar as proclaimed by Aurobindo that 24th November, 1926 was Victory Day, for Lord Krishna had re-appeared:

This was followed by a presentation of Natya and Abhinaya when hundreds of the women students exhibited harmony, rhythm and symmetry in their dance movements depicting graceful Bharat Natya and Yogasana postures. They followed this with a massive demonstration of floor exercises and a Cycle Rally with two women standing on a cycle, while one was riding; a pair of cyclists carrying a flag and moving in unison with those on the ground holding another edge of the flag, cyclists parading with umbrellas which they dipped while marching in front of Bhagavan. They demonstrated skill in balancing on basketball and walking on the rolling ball. Then the women students exhibited great skill in the art of self-defence in Karate, wielding of lathi, breaking tiles with bare hands, by elbow and by head. The exhibition of a palanquin made up by formation of girl students moving in harmony was exciting. They concluded their programme with display of jumping through rings of blazing fire. The morning session came to a close at 11 a.m.

The afternoon programme commenced with girls of Secondary School holding balloons and placards dressed in colourful costumes. They let off clusters of balloons floating in the air and delighted the entire crowd with letting some balloons burst, emitting smoke of varied colours, filling the air. This was followed by mass drill by boys and girls of Primary School. The tape dance, with one girl holding one end of a bunch of tapes while the other ends of the tapes were held by a number of girls dancing around her with colourful umbrellas, presented a grand spectacle. Kavadi dance by boys was performed in striking unison followed by drum dance. Aerobic exercises and acrobatics by boys in white and red elicited the applause of the huge gathering. Girls from the Secondary School demonstrated their skill in ground exercises and performed snake dance with deft perfection.

There was a torch display by hundreds of tiny girls and boys, with some girls carrying lamps on their heads. Balancing feat was displayed by boys in formation of human ladder. The concluding item of their programme was an impressive group dance display in which 200 girls participated with groups of ten dancing diverging and converging in circles and finally coming together in perfect rhythm.

The Prasanthi Nilayam Campus and Secondary School Students and Staff then presented a creative pageant of light and sound on "Pranava" with the aspects of Nada, Bindu and Kala dotted with features of Avatars and depicting the inner meaning as taught in Kathopanishad expounded by Bhagavan during November. The memorable day-long programme came to conclusion with Arati to Bhagavan.

*Bhakti does not consist in wearing ochre robes, the organization of uthsavas (religious festivals), the performance of yajnas, the shaving or matting of hair, carrying of kamandala (bowl) or danda (stick), etc. A pure heart, uninterrupted contemplation of God, feeling that everything is the Lord's creation and therefore One, unattachment to sense objects, embracing all in equal love, dedication to true speech-these are, indeed, the characteristics of bhakti.*

## **Bhagavan's Valedictory Address**

### *Eminent doctors!*

Though axed and maimed by man, trees selflessly serve him by providing him with fruits and shade. Rivers carry water to quench man's thirst and cleanse his body. The cow also selflessly serves man by providing milk. Man should in the first place realize the truth that he has been endowed with the human body not for seeking his selfish ends but for serving others. The wealth one possesses, the scientific skill one acquires, and the medical knowledge one obtains, are all secured from society. Since man has gained his wealth, knowledge and expertise from society, he has to discharge his debt to society by doing some good in return to it.

The ideal of gratitude has been handed down the ages as a heritage in India. A man without this supreme virtue of gratitude is worse than a cruel animal. Having received his wealth, education and skills from society, if he does not serve the cause of society, his wealth, education and skills are a sheer waste. It is only by serving society that these acquire splendour and significance.

The relationship that should exist between wealth and deeds can be likened to the relationship between rainwater and the Ocean. Water from the sea, vaporized by the sun, forms clouds in the sky which in turn come down as rain on earth. The rainwater flows as streams which in due course form mighty rivers and merge in the ocean. Similarly, actions should spring up as clouds from the ocean of righteousness and confer the raindrops of love. The drops of love gather into rivers and merge in the ocean, which is the source.

Tremendous advances have been made in the field of medicine and surgery. The invention of the heart-lung machine marked a notable break-through in the field of surgery. The heart lung machine is like a mother. It performs the functions of the heart and the lung without being aware of it. It does not know in the least that it is pumping, purifying and circulating blood. Like the mother, it is innocent and pure. The mother is unaware that she is sustaining the baby in her womb by nourishing it with substance from her own body.

### **Team-work**

It is a wonder how the different organs of the body discharge their different functions. The heart performs its functions with utmost regularity and rhythm. It pumps the blood at the right time in the right direction. The lungs and digestive system in the body perform their functions perfectly. In this marvellous creation of God, the functioning of the body is the most wondrous. Doctors are aware of this wonderful mystery called the body. Endowed with this knowledge of the human system, doctors perform their services. They should have the awareness that the service which they render to others is nothing but service done unto themselves.

Doctors today have access to the latest techniques and most sophisticated instruments, unknown to their ancestors. At one time, by-pass surgery was breathtaking, but now it has

become a familiar exercise. Doctors will come out with techniques far better than by-pass surgery in the years to come. The valves in the human heart perform most intricate and complex activities. All the organs in the body perform their functions with the finest co-ordination, displaying most astonishing unity, harmony and adjustment.

The body and the mind work in perfect unison in the human system. Man should first understand the impact of the mind and the body on human life. The mind exercises supreme influence not only on the health of the body but on the universe too. Man is not merely a human being, he is the embodiment of Divinity. All acts of service done to others are to be treated as service rendered to God.

Every physician should try to trace the cause of diseases. Doctors should make earnest efforts to educate the people in health and hygiene and impress on patients how food habits and lifestyles affect life and cause diseases. No treatment ensures permanent cure. All treatments enable people to prolong their lives. But realizing the impermanence of life, every person should strive to sanctify his life. All techniques like by-pass surgery are only artificial means of extending the life span of man. They bear testimony to the doctor's skills. It must be remembered that the heart is the creation of God while art is the creation of man. There is, however, close connection between God's creation and man's creation.

It is the duty of the doctors to use their knowledge in the service of mankind. Take for example, Dr. Bhan. As he has been conducting operations sincerely in our hospital, he has improved his surgical skill and has become a senior doctor. Acquisition of skill and perfection in one's work delights one's self. Education gains significance only when it is tested on the touch-stone of practice. One must continuously work. It is activity that confers authority. A doctor gains happiness in proportion to the work he puts in. The genuine doctor is one who delights in work.. For example, Dr. Venugopal performs ten to twelve operations even without taking coffee. When I ask him to take coffee or take rest he says, "No, Swami. This work is a source of happiness to me". It is his dedication to work and continuous application which have made him a master of his job. It is the application of his knowledge that lends joy to him.

Our hospital is an infant of two years. Within a short span of time it has become one of the best hospitals. It owes its magnificent success to the coordinated efforts of doctors, nurses, technicians and volunteers. The group from Hyderabad led by Dr. Somaraju also does tremendous work. The team from Delhi does invaluable work. Unity is strength. The doctors in our hospital perform their work with all love and sincerity. They work without any publicity. The other day Dr. Somaraju performed an intricate operation by making use of balloon technique. Our doctors are making an earnest effort to cure heart ailments without resorting to operation. One single flower cannot make a garland. Many flowers are needed to make a garland. It requires a thread also. All these doctors are like the fragrant flowers and Bhagavan is the invisible thread which binds them together into a beautiful garland. Since all the doctors and staff work together, this hospital has earned great name and fame. The love of doctors and love of Swami have contributed to its tremendous success. .

Without faith in God, we cannot perform any action. It is Divinity which pervades everywhere and works nonstop. All these doctors have been working as instruments. It is the

infectious joy of doctors and patients which makes the hospital unique. Dr. Rajiv Mahajan, though not a doctor, exerts himself for the sake of the hospital. He comes three days in a month to check the requirements of the hospital. It is his love which prompts him to do all this for the hospital. Though we ourselves sometimes do not bother about the hospital, he himself comes and does the needful. This hospital owes its progress to the sacrifice and service of many. But the most important of all is the will of God. Dr. Neelam Desai said, "The wings with you and the bodies with us". All these doctors work with the feeling that they are instruments in the hands of the Divine.

Many of you, while glorifying this hospital say, "Your Hospital". This hospital belongs to all of us. It is "Our Hospital"! You are always welcome to this Hospital!

From Bhagavan's Discourse at the Valedictory function on 23-1-94 at the Institute Auditorium

AVATAR VANI

NEW YEAR MESSAGE

## **Cultivate Forgiveness and Love**

*Charity is the ornament for the hand  
Truth is the adornment for the tongue  
The scriptures are the ornament for the ears,  
Of what avail are other ornaments?*

*Embodiments of love:*

Brahman is full of love and, in fact, is the embodiment of love. Your love should merge with this love. It is the only one and there is no second. It is the non-dual state. The essential nature of love is sacrifice. Under any circumstance it does not give room for hatred. It is love that brings even a person far away closer and more intimate to you. It is love that drives away the feeling of separateness and promotes the feeling of oneness. Love also raises a person from the animal to the human. Love (Prema) is the Life Force (Prana) of man and the Life Force itself is Love. One without love is like a lifeless corpse. Love is shown only to persons who are alive. No one will love a corpse. Love and life are therefore inter-related and intimately connected.

### **Three angles of love constitute prapati**

In this worldly life love is manifesting in several forms such as the love between mother and son, husband and wife, and between relatives. This love based on physical relationships arises out of selfish motives and self-interest.

But the love of the Divine is devoid of any trace of self-interest. It is love for the sake of love alone. This is called Bhakti or devotion. One characteristic of this love is to give and not to receive. Secondly, love knows no fear. Thirdly it is only for love's sake and not for selfish motive. All these three angles of love jointly connote PRAPATI or surrender. When one revels in this attitude of surrender (Prapati) one experiences the bliss of the Divine. For this, the prime requisite is 'Kshama'.

**Kshama, (forgiveness) is the greatest virtue**

Only a person who has this Kshama (attitude of forgiveness) can be considered to be endowed with sacred love. This cannot be learned from textbooks. Nor can it be acquired from preceptors nor from any one else. It is to be cultivated by oneself in times of difficulties, trials and tribulations that one is forced to meet. Only when we face problems and difficulties that cause grief and misery this quality of forbearance and forgiveness has the scope for taking root. When you are confronted with problems and difficulties you should not get upset, and become victims of depression which is a sign of weakness. In such situation, you should bring tolerance and an attitude of forgiveness into play and should not get agitated giving rise to anger, hatred and revengeful attitude. You are embodiments of strength and not weakness. Therefore, in times of despair, you should be filled with feeling of forbearance and be ready to forgive and forget. This quality of Kshama or forgiveness is the greatest power for a human being. If one loses this quality, he becomes demonic.

*Kshama is Sathyam (Truth)  
Kshama is Dharmam (Righteousness),  
Kshama is Ahimsa (Non-injury),  
Kshama is Yajna (Sacrifice),  
Kshama is Santosha (Pleasure),  
Kshama is Daya (Compassion).  
Kshama is everything in the world  
(Poem)*

The moment one is giving up this great quality, the evil qualities of anger, hatred and jealousy creep in, making him lose his human nature itself, driving him to indulge in wicked deeds of demonic nature and even to descend to animal nature. Human being should shine with human quality. Today we find jealousy and hatred dancing like devils all over the world. People with jealousy and hatred are pursuing the wicked path and bringing ruin on themselves. The best example for this is the Kauravas in Mahabharata. The brothers Duryodhana and Dussasana were the embodiments of the twin evils of hatred and jealousy. Krishna told Dharmaraja, the eldest of the Pandavas, that the Kauravas who were surcharged with these evil qualities could never improve and imbibe human qualities. Kama who was embodiment of ego joined their company with Shakuni as the evil adviser adding fuel to the fire. Though Duryodhana and Dussasana, were born in a notable royal family, they discarded the human qualities due to jealousy and hatred and brought ruin to the family and the clan. Krishna added that jealousy is a dangerous canker that eats at the root of the tree of life, while, hatred is a pest that attacks the trunk of the tree. Thus the tree of life is completely destroyed by both these pests. The Kauravas were victims of these two pests and sought their own ruin.

**Harmony in sense organs**

One may raise the question as to how to get over these dangerous pests of jealousy and hatred. This is possible when you make all the sense organs function in unison. If you look at the functions of the sense organs you may notice that even if one organ stops functioning in harmony, life will be limping. When mind conceives a thought, all the organs are co-ordinating to get the thought executed. If senses do not follow thoughts, life will become miserable. When

there is forbearance, all organs co-ordinate harmoniously and work in unison. Once the organs of the body like eyes, ears, limbs became jealous of the tongue, saying that they make all efforts for securing food, but the tongue enjoys this. They struck work and never sent any food. Tongue is the one that tastes the food and passes only palatable items of food inside which is converted by the internal organs into energy giving blood. The tongue does not retain it. But for this vital part played by the tongue, the other organs would not be able to function at all. When the other organs became jealous of the tongue and stopped sending food with a view to harm it, they spelt their own ruin by such action, as they could not function when there was no food and consequently no supply of energy for these organs to function. Similarly jealousy on the part of a person ultimately results in his own ruin.

### **Jealousy spells self destruction**

Students must have studied the Drama of Shakespeare in which a character was always filled with jealousy and finally met with his own end as his own jealousy made him very weak and forlorn. Basmasura got a boon from Lord Siva after doing severe penance that the person on whose head he keeps his hand will be reduced to ashes. Finally, he himself brought his end by keeping his hand on his own head. Buddha was once confronted by a woman who was full of jealousy against Buddha because of his great popularity. When Buddha came towards her she expressed her wish to attack him with a knife and kill him, but Buddha smilingly told her "I love you too demoness." This surprised the demoness who thought no body would love her and changed her heart instantly; she became a dove and surrendered at His Feet. Anger begets anger and jealousy begets jealousy. The only way to conquer this is the sense of unity and love.

Happiness and sorrow have to be experienced in the worldly life as they are inevitable like the sunset and sunrise. You think New Year will give better experiences. It is not correct. It is the mind that is responsible for pleasure and pain. If your mind is good you will find anything good. You are embodiments of the Divine which is nothing but bliss. While being so, is it not a folly on your part to say that you are suffering from pain and grieve over this?

When Bhaktas pray to Bhagavan sincerely making all their actions as offering to God, they will certainly receive appropriate grace from the Divine. There are nine types of devotion: Shravanam, Kirtanam, Vishnusmaranam, Padasevanam, Vandanam, Archanam, Dasyam, Sneham and Atmanivedanam. In whichever way you offer worship, God responds in the same way. Man conveniently forgets what he gets. Without God's Grace living itself will be impossible for mankind. Even the troubles you may experience are the gifts of the Divine. When you surrender all your actions, you will surely receive His Grace. This is the purport of the Gita Sloka "Sarvadharmaan Parityajya Mamekam Saranam Vraja".

Some people want to have uninterrupted happiness. When you eat at 10 a.m. you do not go on eating every hour thereafter without break. You have to give a break for the food to be digested. So also when you experience pleasure it has to be digested before you meet with another bout of such experience. Just as you have to do some exercise for helping the food to digest, you have to go through the exercise of confrontation of pain after experiencing pleasure. Therefore, you must take what ever is given by God as good for you.

The mother gets the pleasure of seeing her baby after going through severe pain. If you sit in an air-conditioned room throughout the 24 hours of a day you cannot feel the pleasure of it. Only when you come in after being away in the hot sun, you will enjoy the coolness of the Air-conditioned room. After the Mahabharata war was over, Krishna asked Kunti the mother of Pandavas what she wanted. She requested that she should be blessed with troubles always as only then she would be constantly remembering God as they did when they were in the forest for 12 years. She said she was not thinking of God when she was enjoying the palace life as a queen earlier.

### **Joy and sorrow go together**

You enjoy the sweetness of chanting the Lord's name only when you are in distress. The life is a mixture of sorrow and joy just as day and night. If there is night one cannot take the well deserved rest after the day's hard toil. There is sweet juice inside the orange fruit. But it is covered by the-bitter outer rind. It is the bitter rind that protects the juice inside. So we should put up with the bitter difficulties in order to enjoy real pleasure. Man is embodiment of the quality of "Kshama" or forgiveness. There is nothing in this world that you cannot achieve with this quality.

We are now bidding farewell to the year 1993 and welcoming 1994. There is an Intimate relationship between the two. We give send off to one while we welcome the other one. In the same way, we should bid farewell to bad qualities and welcome good divine qualities. You may offer all your bad qualities to God. There is nothing wrong in this. It is only God that can take them and bestow His grace on you to foster good qualities. For example, suppose you have a soiled, torn and mutilated hundred-rupee currency note, no one will accept it. But, if the number is intact, the Reserve Bank will accept it and give a good note of same value in return. Similarly God only will accept the bad qualities provided they are offered with sincere devotion and repentance and shower His Grace on you. Basing on this principle the worshippers chant the Mantra "Papoham, Prapakarmoham Papaathmaahard" etc., surrendering the sins committed by one to the Lord and praying for His pardon and Grace. Even the Christians follow this principle of surrendering to God saying, "I confess my sin and pray for redemption". Thus people offer all the bad qualities to God and receive good from Him.

We have "Upavasa" living in proximity and "Upasana" sitting near God, in our customs. People generally believe that Upavasa means only curtailing usual food and taking some tiffin like Chapattis, Idli's etc. This is not correct. When you live near God, you will never feel hungry just as you get away from heat and enjoy the coolness when you sit near an air-conditioned. When you sit near God, your bad qualities are kept off and good thoughts and divine qualities will come to you. This is the significance of Upasana". People interpret it with distorted meanings.

The year 1993 was really an eventful one with lot of dreadful happenings all over the world and naturally the people are afraid what would happen in 1994 and whether it would be a better year. It is not the particular year that is of consequence. Cultivate good thoughts, speak good words and do good deeds with the broad view that everyone in the world should be happy. Give up your evil thoughts, and evil qualities as they are the cause for all sufferings in the world. The New Year has set in at the right moment, for today it is Savithi (fourth day of the lunar fortnight) It may cause people some suffering akin to the suffering of a child under the step-mother. But in



the wider perspective, moonshine is on the increase indicating the blossoming of the mind in a better way since moon is ruling the mind. Based on the thithi, we may expect this year to be better than the past year. There may be fire accidents in larger number, and certain conflicts may be there in the world. But we can hope that gradually human quality will be coming up and it will be a matter for delight, when there is transformation of mind to think that all are children of God. Such an attitude has to be developed to believe in the brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God. The bodies may be different but the soul is one. It cannot be fragmented.

### **Take God as guide**

One moon is reflected in hundreds of thousands of pots. "Ekoham Bahusyam" and "Ekam Eva adwitheeyam". There is only one Brahman which is reflected in the millions and billions of beings. There is no second. You place one before zero, the zero gets value. World is zero, Sun is Zero, Moon is Zero. Actually they are all round-shaped like zero only. All these get value because of the one God behind them. God is the only Hero and all else are Zeroes.

Keeping God as your guide and saviour, whatever work you may do will yield sure success. God is your only true friend. All other friends may be with you as long as you have wealth, but the moment you lose everything, the friends will desert you. God is the only friend who will be ever with you. He is always with you, in you and beside you. Therefore, the only way for prosperity is to develop friendship with the Lord. Being a human, you should make others happy. This is love. Your heart is full of love. You should share it with others. When you have some edible dish you have to eat it and serve to others. Otherwise, it will get spoiled. You must share your love with at least five persons per day. You should practice, experience and share with others this divine love.

On this New Year day, you should make resolve that you will start every day with love, spend the day with love, fill the day with love, and end the day with love. There should be no difference of caste, creed, colour, religion or nationality. Love knows no distinction of any kind. You must wish everyone to be happy. Fill the heart with love. The country will prosper and the world will prosper and everyone will be happy.

Bhagavan concluded with the Bhajan "*Prema Mudhita Manase Kaho Rama Rama Ram*"

*From Divine Discourses in Poornachandra Auditorium on 1.1.94*

AVATAR VANI

2<sup>ND</sup> INTERNATIONAL CARDIAC SYMPOSIUM

## **Food, the Heart and the Mind**

*Embodiments of divine atma!*

It is essential to observe the principle of moderation in food habits, work and sleep. The Buddha preached the same principle of moderation to his disciples. "Be always moderate, never indulge in excess" proclaimed the Buddha. In fact, moderation is the royal road to happiness.

The modern man, who flouts the principle of moderation in every aspect of life, endangers his health and well-being. The food consumed by man should be proper, pure and wholesome. But nowadays people eat whatever they get and wherever they get it, and thereby spoil their health. Food plays a major role in the preservation of health. Care should be taken to see that the food consumed does not have much fat content, for the fats consumed in large quantity are detrimental not only to one's physical health but also to one's mental health. Meat and alcoholic drinks take a heavy toll on man's health, causing many a disease in him.

This international symposium has for its theme "The Heart and its ailments". Also on the agenda are discussions about the preventive aspects of diseases as well as the treatment and cure of heart diseases. Questions are raised about the efficacy of Cardiac Surgery and its related effects. The heart is a special organ in the human system. It is pulsating ceaselessly unlike the other organs. Heart surgery is a highly complex operation, as the surgery has to be performed without arresting the heartbeat. At the same time the functioning of the lungs has also to be kept up. Medical men of genius invented the heart lung machine in 1956 to carry on the activities of the heart as well as the lung during cardiac operations. The machine takes upon itself the function of the heart and the lung ensuring purification of the blood and keeping up circulation of the blood. The details of the functioning of this heart-lung machine are well known to the doctors. The tube which is fitted connecting the heart and the machine should be airtight and should be fixed with great care, for, any lapse in the fitting of the tube may cause air bubbles which will endanger the patient's life. Unfailing power supply is most crucial for the success of the operation, as any interruption in power supply will stall the operation. Therefore we have to depend on generators for ensuring uninterrupted power supply during the course of the operation.

### **Prevention better than cure**

Questions are posed whether heart surgery ensures a permanent cure. Cardiac surgery is helpful in so far as it enables the patient to carry on his daily activities and lead a normal life. But, it is wrong to conclude that surgery is the only way of curing heart diseases. Some of the diseases can be cured even by medicine. In my opinion, it is the primary responsibility of every individual to prevent becoming a victim of heart disease by regulating his food and other habits. Prevention is better than cure. There will be little room for cardiac ailments if one's food habits are properly controlled and regulated.

Research has revealed that non-vegetarian and alcoholic addicts are more prone to heart ailments than vegetarians. If the vegetarian food that is consumed should be balanced and wholesome, it should contain liberal doses of vitamin C and vitamin E, which are available in vegetables like carrots. The presence of these vitamins prevents heart ailments in a large measure. Every effort should be made to keep the human body healthy. Health is wealth. Wealth cannot be enjoyed by a person with poor health. Health is more important because it gives physical and mental strength to a person.

Birds and beasts do not suffer from cardiac and digestive ailments to which man is prone. The cause can be traced to the natural food which the animals consume, unlike human beings who consume all sorts of fried and cooked items of food being slaves to the palate. Modern man consumes many artificial foodstuffs and a variety of alcoholic drinks, which are injurious to health. Birds and beasts lead natural lives, while the artificial life styles of man today takes a

heavy toll of his health. When man observes moderation in diet he can be saved from most diseases. In the entire range of God's creation man alone is endowed with the faculty of discrimination. It is this faculty which sets him apart from animals. Man should exercise his discretion and discrimination in regard to food habits.

The progress of the universe is bound up with the progress of man. Any amount of development in the areas of scientific, economic and social spheres will not be of much use without mental transformation. How can we bring about this transformation? It is by restraining passions and emotions. Since mental tension is most detrimental to man's health, man should learn the art of controlling his passions and emotions, which cause stresses and strains. It is also essential to keep our mind serene and peaceful while eating food. We should not indulge in discussions of topics which will cause agitation and excitement and disturb our mental peace while we are taking food. Mental tension is responsible for ill health. We should also avoid viewing TV, video, etc. while eating food, as they may cause mental disturbances.

### **All-round pollution**

Today there is pollution in everything such as the air we breathe, the water we drink, the sounds that are jarring to the ears and the food we consume. Because of this all round pollution, man's health is affected. Apart from this, man's mind is also polluted making him susceptible to diseases. Man should make an earnest endeavour to lead a serene and pure life. He should realise the truth that troubles and turmoils are temporary, like passing clouds. There is no scope for agitations to arise if one realises this truth. One who realises this truth will not allow his mind to be swayed by the passions of anger, cruelty, etc. Passions yield only temporary satisfaction but cause serious emotional disturbances. Hence, it is imperative on the part of man not to yield to any unbecoming passions while taking food. The observance of the three 'p's, namely, purity, patience, and perseverance, vouchsafes permanent happiness and good health free from diseases.

It is not only unbridled passion which damages the health of man. Living on ill-gotten money also causes ill-health to some extent. Living on earnings got by unjust means causes many unknown diseases to take root in us. It is said,

*As is the food, so is the mind;  
As is the mind, so are the thoughts;  
As are the thoughts, so is the conduct;  
As is the conduct, so is the health.*

Man today is a victim of worry. What is the cause of this worry? Lack of contentment is the cause. The rich man is not contented in spite of the accumulation of wealth. Worry causes hurry and both together bring about ill health. So, Worry, Hurry and Curry (fatty foods) are the root cause of cardiac ailments.

The consumption of large quantities of fat is the cause of Cardio-vascular diseases. Doctors advise against the consumption of fatty food-stuffs which cause increase in weight resulting in susceptibility to cardiac diseases. The presence of toxins also inflicts equal damage. So one

should eat in moderate quantity the right type of food and avoid intoxicating drinks to safeguard his health.

The intake of food should be gradually reduced after crossing 50 years. Some people consume food indiscriminately unmindful of the calorie content of the food taken. For example, people eat pappads fried in oil (thin circular flour preparations) which have high calorie content. People also consume ghee which is also a high calorie food. A single pappad has 100-150 calories of energy. A single spoon of ghee has 100 calories of energy. Even when the quantity of food intake is reduced, reductions in the calorie content is not ensured.

### **Doctors and patients**

There are some doctors who advise their patients against smoking and addiction to alcohol, but they themselves smoke and drink! This gap between percept and practice raises doubts in the minds of patients about the value of the medical advice given by them. Such doctors, who do not observe harmony in speech and practice, mislead the patients.

Embodiments of Love! You have high degrees such as MD, FRCS, MRCP, etc., as a result of your sincere striving. But it is a mistake to think that these degrees are yours. In fact these degrees have been conferred on you for your study, skill, memory power and knowledge. These degrees will truly belong to you on the day you apply this knowledge in practice. Unfortunately, in this modern age all activities and professions are tainted by a commercial outlook and greed for earning money. Even the sacred profession of a doctor has degenerated into a business. A doctor should reflect the triple qualities of sacrifice, love and compassion in treating his patients. But some doctors do not have these virtues at all! They misuse their divine and sacred knowledge for the sake of money. Money is important, but we must exercise discretion in this regard. You can charge the correct fees from the wealthy, but be kind and considerate while dealing with the poor. Try to give free treatment to the poor. You should not treat a millionaire and a pauper alike! It is said, "Vaidyo Narayano Harihi". (The doctor is equal to God). As the Lord has love and compassion, doctors too should have these divine virtues of the Lord. A doctor devoid of these virtues is not a doctor at all!

Doctors should win the hearts of the patients by talking to them with compassion and concern. Diseases are half cured when the doctors talk to the patients with love and consideration. The sick and the diseased respond favourably to your treatment once you start talking to them with love and with a smiling face. But, if you wear a grim expression, the patient loses heart. Doctors should administer the injection of courage and encouragement as calcium administered to the weak. It is essential that doctors should have the sterling virtues of love and compassion. Compassion is more important than money.

### **Swami's example**

How to lead a healthy life? Let me tell you about my own health. I am sixty-eight years old, and believe it or not, my weight since my 14th year of age has been constant at 108 pounds only. It never went up to 109 pounds nor came down to 107. You can lead a healthy life once you achieve this kind of balance and moderation. I never eat even a little bit excess. I observe the principle of moderation whether I am invited for food by a millionaire or a pauper. Even though I am sixty-eight years, my body is in perfect trim! I do not suffer from aches and my heart is as

sound as a rock. There is none who can work like me and exert himself as much as I do! The secret of my sound health is my regulated food habits. This is how one has to achieve the unity and harmony of food, head and God.

### **Spirit of sacrifice**

The foremost quality of a doctor is the spirit of sacrifice. We have organized this Symposium to explore ways and means of rendering help to the sick and the diseased. We have in India some doctors who lead lives of sacrifice like Dr. Venugopal, Dr. Bhan, and Dr. Sampath from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences. These doctors, who are committed to the cause of service, come to our hospital without even charging the travelling expenses. Their sacrifice contributes to the sanctity of this Institute of Higher Medical Sciences. There is an atmosphere of infective joy and good cheer which pervades our hospital. Everybody is in smiles, the patients, their relatives the nurses, the doctors, everyone! They are all like flowers in full bloom. It is not the same with most other hospitals.

The essential mark of a hospital is its cleanliness. Clean toilets are an index of the cleanliness of a hospital. Our hospital is as clean as a mirror, as it is kept always clean by the team of dedicated seva dal volunteers who relentlessly work hard with a spirit of service and sacrifice. It is not the service of one, but the service of many which has contributed to the rapid development of our hospital! A single flower cannot make a garland. All the people-the patients, doctors, workers, work in a spirit of harmony and unity. It is this sense of unity which contributes to purity and this purity of heart secures divinity. This hospital is a direct proof of the presence of purity, unity and divinity. It is our fond hope that such purity, unity and divinity should prevail in other hospitals as well! Unity is most essential in all fields of activity-moral, scientific and spiritual. Purity vanishes in the absence of unity. Divinity will be absent when there is no purity and unity. Humanity will be healthier if doctors resolve to offer two days of free treatment every week.

Some doctors wonder how we are able to give free treatment, free operations and free meals to our patients. To be frank, there should not be any room for wonder in this regard. You can work wonders with purity of heart. Any work which is started with purity of heart is bound to succeed. Money flows if your work is suffused with love and sacrifice. People will provide munificent funds to support any noble endeavour. The land of Bharat (India) has been a Punya Bhumi, (Land of sanctity), Tyaga Bhumi (Land of Sacrifice), Yoga Bhumi (Land of spiritual austerities) and Karma Bhumi (Land of righteous action). In fact, there is no dearth of money in India.

Doctors should first and foremost have faith in spirituality. Faith in spirituality alone can bring about transformation of humanity. Spirituality is not the celebration of festivals, nor even performance of rituals. True spirituality calls for earnest endeavour to eradicate all animal qualities. Today humanity has descended to such a degrading level that men see evil in good, without trying to see good in evil.

Doctors who are eminent experts in their fields have come to participate in the symposium here. Sincere efforts should be made to put your great talents and skill to good use. The climes

and countries from which you have come may be different. But all of you have one thing in common: noble feelings. These noble feelings are God's gift to man and come by Divine grace.

Treat the patients as your own kith and kin. The help which you extend in good faith to your patients will be rewarded in course of time. It is my wish and blessing that you will have useful discussions and come out with ways and means of helping mankind to be free from heart ailments.

**From Bhagavan's discourse at the inaugural session of the Second International Symposium on Cardiovascular Diseases held in the Sathya Sai Institute Auditorium on January 21, 1994.**

## *2<sup>ND</sup> INTERNATIONAL CARDIAC SYMPOSIUM*

### **President's Call to Doctors for Preventive Care**

The Sathya Sai Institute of Higher of Medical Sciences has done it again—thanks to the inspiration and grace of Bhagavan Baba. Within less than twelve months of the holding of the first International Symposium on Cardiac diseases, the Second Symposium was held in January this year, with a large attendance of overseas specialists and a very large number of doctors from all over India actively participating in the Symposium.

The Symposium was held in the Auditorium of the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, which had been specially decorated for the occasion with a colourful backdrop presenting the picture of la beautiful garden.

Many leading surgeons from U.S.A., U.K., France, Spain, Israel, Italy, Australia, Singapore, Japan and Indonesia, together with those from all over India (including the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences) presented papers of very high standard. All of them fully acknowledged Bhagavan Baba as the motivator and driving force behind the stupendous achievements of the Institute and the Super Speciality Hospital.

The Symposium was inaugurated by Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, President of India. The ceremony began with Bhagavan Baba lighting the sacred lamp on the stage followed by a welcome address by Dr. A. N. Safaya, the Director of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences. Dr. Safaya described the record of the Super-Speciality Hospital since its inception in 1991. The completion of the hospital building in six months, the installation of the latest equipment in record time and the Hospital gaining international recognition in two years are examples of how Bhagavan's Divine Will translates thoughts into deeds. Since its inception in November 1991, the Cardiac Unit has performed 2019 heart operations including 1300 open heart operations, for a wide variety of congenital deformities as well as valvular and schemic heart diseases. The Cath Lab has performed 1500 Catherisations including 120 interventions. In the past twelve months alone, 20,693 patients attended Cardiology clinics with 3214 admissions. The mortality and infection rates are astonishingly low at the Sai Institute in comparison with

leading international Centres. All the services in the Hospital are rendered free of charge. Computed at the average commercial rates, the Cardiac unit alone would have contributed surgical services costing over Rs. 30 crores (\$ 10 million) to the rural poor. Among these 2196 are housewives and 4296 are children. They comprise the most vulnerable groups.

The Kidney centre has treated 6367 patients (of whom 805 needed surgery) since its inception in November 1992. Six renal transplants have been done since the unit was opened two months ago. Dr. Safaya also envisaged future plans for post-graduate teaching and research in addition to opening other speciality units. He referred to the Institute as a "Temple of Healing". With the boundless Divine Grace of Bhagavan Baba, it represents a unique blend of Science and Spirituality.

### **President's Address**

Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma then delivered his inaugural address, in the course of which he said: "I am aware of the invaluable service rendered by this Institute to suffering humanity, especially of the poorer section, without any distinction of caste, creed or status, which reflects the motto of Bhagavan, 'Love all: Serve all'. Though, the basis of all religions in the world is 'Service to man is service to God' it is not being practised. Rantideva, a great sage and devotee prayed to the Lord saying: 'I am not after a Kingdom. I do not want Heaven. I do not want even salvation. But, Oh God! Grant me the strength to relieve the pain of suffering humanity'. Inspired by the unique persuasive guidance of Baba, this noble example is followed here.

Dr. Safaya said that not only is surgery done free but also medicines are supplied free. Though the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences (Delhi) provides free service of doctors, the other costs to the patients amount to several thousands of rupees, which are beyond the capacity of even middle class people. We have to do something in this connection to make medical relief accessible to the poor. Doctors must come together to do service to humanity.

### **Service to villagers**

Tracing the Improvements achieved in the field of treatment of heart diseases during the past three decades, the President said: "When it was not possible to cure heart diseases in India, patients had to go to America for treatment, which only a few could afford. But, now several major hospitals in our country have this facility and by-pass surgeries are being done as successfully as in other advanced countries. As these centres are mostly in urban areas, people in villages find them out of reach. It is a great boon to the villagers that this Super Speciality Hospital attached to the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences is established in a village in the backward district of Anantapur by the grace of Bhagavan Baba. It has already given a new lease of life to thousands of poor people. In providing such facilities to the common man, the international community must also help so that much more can be done to relieve the suffering of the poor.

Conferences of this type are necessary to enable the specialist doctors from different countries to come together and take stock of the latest developments in the field. We find that every six months a new theory comes up and new methods are discovered to treat the heart ailments more efficiently and ensure quicker relief. I hope this symposium will be of great benefit as eminent specialists from all over the world have gathered here to discuss the issue of

advanced techniques in the treatment of cardiac ailments and exchange information for the benefit of others to ensure the well being of the human heart."

The President urged major hospitals in the country to organise such symposia to catch up with the latest developments in the techniques of treatment. He commended the Super Speciality Hospital in Prasanthi Nilayam as a model which can be followed by the entire world.

### **Need for preventive care**

Stressing on the need for preventive care, the President quoted Charak, the father of Ayurvedic medicine, who had emphasised the importance of the heart for the survival of the body. He did not remain content with a description of the role of the heart. He divided food into three categories, namely, Satwic, Rajasic and Tamasic, and stressed that a simple diet of fruits and vegetables free from salt is the satwic one which will prevent heart ailments, while Rajasic food, rich in salt and spices, and tamasic food, consisting of meat, fat and intoxicants, will ruin the health. Even now Cardiologists prescribe only salt-free diet, vegetables and fruits for saving many patients from cardiac disorders.

Dr. Sharma added: "It is imperative to educate the people about the proper type of food to be taken and avoidance of stress and tension. As we are in Prasanthi Nilayam, the abode of peace, we should also know how meditation aids mental peace. One industrialist imposed the condition that every worker should meditate for 45 minutes daily. After some weeks he found that the output of the workers had considerably improved.

The Vedas chanted here have ensured peace in the environment. This is our heritage for over 6000 years. The Vedas talk of peace on earth, peace on the ocean etc. Today there is pollution in all fields. We should fight this with all our might. We should take steps to promote preventive measures besides seeking cures for diseases. The Ayurvedic system offers more enduring remedy for the ailments both of the body and the mind. The mind has to play a significant role. We have to provide clean drinking water, pollution-free air for the people. Public health centres must play a leading role in this respect.

I wish the conference success and hope it will pay more attention to discussing ways and means of preventive care. I conclude by expressing my gratitude to Baba for having given me the opportunity to visit this Institute, where selfless service is being done by all the staff under His Divine guidance and inspiration."

Bhagavan Baba in the course of His discourse stressed the importance of a holistic approach and eventual prevention of heart diseases through a proper and balanced life-style and diet. (The Divine message is published separately).

Dr. S. Subramaniam, a veteran surgeon from Florida, U.S.A., then gave the oration. He compared the human heart to Henry Ford's automobile engine with four chambers and four valves. He said that children with congenital defects are born for no fault of theirs and they need surgical treatment. He stressed that adult heart diseases are caused by wrong food and lifestyle, echoing what Bhagavan had stressed earlier. With the aid of series of slides he gave a graphic account of the work done by pioneers of heart-lung machines and how this device has now become so efficient and simple for use.



Bhagavan was present throughout his talk and presented him a silver memento.

The scientific sessions that followed during the rest of the seminar were varied and papers presented were of the highest international standards. Dr. W. J. Brawn from the U.K. gave his keynote address on the "Current Status of Surgery for congenital heart diseases". Dr. Bernardo A. Vidne (Israel), Dr S. Subramanian (U.S.A.), Dr. Carlo Marcelletti (Italy) and Drs. Balakrishna, Rajesh Sharma, TS. Mahant, Anil Bhan, Ganesh Mani and Balaram Airan, all from India, presented papers on various types of congenital heart operations. Papers on Cardiac Myoplasty were presented by Dr. Juan C. Chachques (France) and Dr. Valluvan Jeevanandam (Philadelphia) who gave a scintillating talk on Heart Transplantation. He literally took the audience on a visit to new frontiers of science.

Dr. Sanjay Parikh and Dr. L. Mohana Krishna of Sathya Sai Institute reviewed "The spectrum of Heart Disease" and "Spectrum of Surgical Lesion" respectively based on the experiences of Sathya Sai Institute.

The first day's sessions concluded with a play by the Prasanthi campus students, "Krishna Chaitanya".

The second day began with a keynote address by Dr. N. Gopinath, one of the pioneer heart surgeons of India, on "New Horizons in Indian Coronary Artery disease". Smoking, obesity, hypertension and hereditary factors, he said, were among the leading causes. He pointed out that contrary to popular belief, the rural population smoked more than their urban counterparts, and consumed more calories and less fat. He stressed that two-thirds of the fat we eat are already "hidden" in Indian food and warned against excessive indulgence in fried food.

Dr. Lawrence Bonchek, a leading American heart surgeon visiting Puttaparthi for the second time, spoke on "Frontiers in Coronary Artery Bypass Surgery", followed by Dr. Hisayoshi Suma (Japan) Dr. Tarmizi Hakim (Indonesia) and Dr. M.R. Girinath, S.K. Bhattacharya, Naresh Trehan and Anil Bhan (India). Dr. Carlos Duran (Saudi Arabia) spoke on "Aortic and Mitral valve repair", followed by Dr. L. Bonchek, Dr. Nemish Shah (India) and Dr. Bruce Davis (Australia) on various aspects of Redo Coronary Artery Surgery.

The afternoon session was devoted to Intervention Cardiology and the speakers were: Dr. Michael Tynan (U.K.), Dr. Zoltan Turi (U.S.A.). Drs. M. Khalilullah, Dr. (Ms) Savitri Srivastava (India) and Dr. B. Soma Raju (SSIHMS/NIMS). This was followed by a discussion on "Medical Advances in Coronary Artery Diseases" in which Dr. Roger White (USA) and Drs. Wasir, Gambhir and Kaul (India) took part.

Papers on irregularities of the heart were presented by Dr. V. K. Saini (U.S.A.) on pacemakers and Dr. Talwar on Diagnosis and Medical Management. (India).

Dr. Kasliwal (India) spoke on the current status and the future of Echocardiography, while Anil Singh (SSIHMS) mentioned that the Sai Institute had done 26,000 such procedures in just one year.

Dr. Meera Rajani (India) opened the window into the future of Cardiac imaging. The day's programme concluded with "Bhakta Prahlada", a dance drama by the Bal Vikas children of Madras.

On the final day, Dr. Donald Ross, from U.K., gave his keynote address on biological valves and Dr. H. S. Saw (Singapore) and Dr. Carlos Mestres (Spain) presented papers on their series. Drs. Mrs. Ratna Magotra and Anil Bhan (India) presented their papers on prosthetic valves. At the conclusion of each day, Bhagavan graciously presented silver salvers to all the speakers. The symposium concluded with a valedictory function presided over by Bhagavan himself. Dr. Lawrence Boncheck expressed gratitude to Swami for His peace, love and compassion. With humility he continued, "As the island of knowledge expands so too do the shores of ignorance". He foreshadowed a Psycho-Neuro-Cardiologic" approach in future and stressed the importance of compassion. He also said: "Open your Heart to open your Arteries" and quoted Tagore: "He who waits to do good knocks at the gates; He who loves finds the gates open". Then he emphasised the importance of relaxation, meditation, peace and joy in countering heart diseases. Dr. Donald Ross of U.K. commended the great achievement of the Institute and its gigantic contribution to the poor. Dr. Berrado Vidne of Israel said that having come from a country where peace was foreign, he was moved by the peace and love which permeated the atmosphere and most notably radiating from Swami. He prayed to Swami to help his homeland achieve peace. Dr. Carlos Marcelletti from the Vatican Hospital in Rome was so touched by the love and compassion of Swami and having experienced deep inner feeling of unity and sharing, he prayed to Swami that one day he would be having the opportunity to use his hands in serving Swami at this Institute. Some members of the staff of this Institute also spoke before Swami gave His valedictory discourse. Swami assured all visitors that the institute was not his or theirs but everybody's.

Swami's love and hospitality saw no bounds. He was always concerned about the welfare of others, and in particular, the visitors from abroad. Swami visited the dining room and personally spoke with everyone present after the inauguration on the first day and the valedictory session on the third day.

There is no doubt, Prasanthi Nilayam with the medical Institute once again showed its glory for all the world to see.

—Dr. Pavan (Australia)

AVATAR VANI

SANKRANTI SANDESH

### **Spiritual Significance of Festivals**

*Like the oil latent in the til seed,  
Like ghee latent in milk,  
Like the fragrance latent in a flower,  
Like the juice latent in a fruit,*

*Like the fire latent in a faggot,  
The Divine is immanent in every human being.*

*Just as the power of sight is present in the eye, the power of hearing in the ear, the sense of taste in the tongue, Divinity is present in a subtle form as consciousness (Chaitanya). Remaining invisible in the visible phenomenal world, the consciousness that shines in the cosmos is the form of the Supreme Self (Atma), which sustains everything, like the thread in a garland of gems.*  
(Poem)

*Embodiments of divine love!*

Man engages himself in many exercises in his self-interest and spends his life. No single achievement satisfies man or society. Man constantly strives to accomplish more things. Today men seem to revel in dissatisfaction.

Youth today do not appear to be seriously concerned about how to face a rapidly changing world. The preparedness to sacrifice everything for achieving a noble objective is hardly present among the young.

Success in life consists in recognising the truth of one's being. But youth today do not make any effort to find the Truth that is the Eternal Reality. They are prepared to go through any amount of trouble to acquire knowledge that is related to the physical and the transient. They do not make the slightest effort to comprehend the Divine that is all pervading, that will confer enduring bliss and make one's life meaningful and worthwhile.

Festivals in Bharat have been designed to promote 'awareness of this truth. Their inner significance as well as their scientific basis have to be understood.

### **Transits of the sun**

Every month the Sun moves into a new "house" in the Zodiac. This movement is called "Sankramana". In a year the Sun transits twelve houses of the Zodiac. Of these movements four are important. "Makara Sankramana" is the first one. It relates to the entry of the Sun into Capricorn (Makara) from Sagittarius (Dhanus). The second one is "Tula Sankramana" the entry of the Sun into the zodiacal sign Libra (Tula). The third is "Mesha Sankramana"—moving into the sign Aries (Mesha). The fourth one is, "Sasi Sankramana"—entry into the moon sign (Cancer). Of the four, the most important and sacred is "Makara Sankramana". This marks the apparent movement of the Sun from the south to the north. The northward movement of the Sun is considered highly significant, both spiritually and scientifically. It has immense spiritual meaning. The inner meaning of the Sun's northward journey has to be properly understood. The north is represented by "Himachala". "Hima" means snow. It is pure, untainted and extremely cool. All these endow it with the quality of perfect peace ("Prasanthi"). "Achala" means that which is steady and unshakeable. "Himachala" does not refer to the physical Himalayan region. It represents that which is cool, peaceful and steady. From today the Sun is said to move towards such a state. The Sun symbolises the vision of man. The northward movement of the Sun is a call to human beings to turn their vision towards that which is cool, peaceful and unchanging. This means that men should direct their vision inwards. This is the lesson taught by the Sun.

### **The inward vision**

Man's vision should not be confined solely to the external objects and worldly things which are transient and perishable. Man has been given this vision so that he may see the pure, sacred Divine consciousness abiding in his heart. The northward motion of the Sun—"Uttarayana"—is the appropriate occasion for developing this inward vision. This is the royal road for the spiritual aspirant to realise the Supreme.

It is not enough, therefore, merely to recognise the northward movement of the Sun in this period. Every effort should be made to direct the vision inwards towards the pure, sacred Indwelling Self. This is the period for cherishing sacred thoughts and performing holy deeds.

The sages and seers of ancient times used to wait for the arrival of the Uttarayana to embark on their sacred tasks. The great warrior, Bhishma, lay on a bed of arrows for 56 days on the battlefield, awaiting the arrival of Uttarayana as the right time for giving up the ghost. The scriptures have declared that those who pass on during the Uttarayana have no rebirth. This does not mean that one should hang himself in Uttarayana in the hope of securing freedom from rebirth! The right way to give up one's life is to fill one's mind with holy thoughts and let the end come in the natural course.

(Bhagavan related the story relating to the composition of hundred crore verses on the Ramayana by Sage Valmiki, which he wished to distribute to the denizens of the three worlds in equal measure. After this was done, only two letters remained, which were offered to people in all the worlds for recitation. The two letters spell the names of Rama, Krishna, Hari, Isa and Sai.)

### **Man and the creator**

This illustrates how Bharatiyas attempted to sanctify every holy festival by dedicating themselves to the chanting of God's name and to other spiritual activities. Youths today should realise that festivals in Bharat are not intended for feasting and pompous celebration but for concentration on devotional activities.

For mankind, the Sun is the most important entity in creation. When the Sun himself is proceeding northwards, why should not humanity direct its vision godward? Men today are a prey to many troubles because their vision is diverted towards ungodly objects. Man should abide by the laws of the Creator. Otherwise humanity is doomed. Religious festivals are observed all over the world for the purpose of raising humanity to a higher level of consciousness and conduct.

### **A season of joy**

From this day, the Sun wears a peaceful and pleasing aspect. The nights get longer and the days become shorter. The day marks the beginning of the harvest season. As the crops are brought home, the granaries are full and joy reigns everywhere. A cool breeze blows all the time. Farmers sing, with full-throated joy from their fields in the moonlight. The cold dewdrops on the fields shine like garlands of gems. The chrysanthemums are in full bloom, (Swami explained in His discourse the poem with which he had begun it, hailing the advent of the Sankranti festival).

This month, known as Pushyamasa (according to the Hindu almanac) is noted for the peacefulness, prosperity and joy which it brings with it. Hence it is regarded with special distinction. Unless men give up their bad thoughts and actions, the month, however great in itself, will be of no avail. The observance of Uttarayana should be marked by spiritual transformation of the people and not by lavish feasting and revelry.

In connection with Sankranti, many auspicious functions are arranged. Newly wedded bridegrooms are invited to the brides' houses. Sacred bulls are taken from house to house by traditional performers who relate the Ramayana story with the bulls playing their own role in it. In this way, with songs, plays and discourses, they celebrate the festival. The songs and plays had a sacred role in the celebrations. Unfortunately today music and sports have been commercialised. There is a price for every game, whether it is cricket or football or any other game. The sacred character of the games and dramas of the past has been tainted by the money nexus.

### **The commercial spirit**

It is clear that originally sports were promoted in the interests of health and strength. People took part in games for the improvement of their physique and to provide entertainment to the public. There was a time when a musician, if invited to sing songs at a wedding in his locality, would readily oblige. But today the musician will ask, "How much will you give me for my performance?" Singers have become sinners. Their music does not confer joy on the listeners because they sing, not out of the fullness of their heart, but for the sake of money and name.

This was not the case in olden days. The performers with the sacred "Gangi" bulls used to gather in the centre of the village and provide entertainment as the members of one large family. Little children used to join in the fun, singing songs to gather all the children to watch the performance of the bulls (Bhagavan sang an old folk song that used to be sung by children).

### **Sports and studies**

This month witnessed the annual sports meet of our students. I don't like to comment about students elsewhere, but I do wish to say something about the accomplishments of our students. Indeed, the students participated in the sports and games with great enthusiasm. Sports form an integral part of the scheme of studies in our institutions, along with various academic subjects like Physics and Chemistry. That being the case, why does not everyone take part in them? Not only should there be participation, but there should also be an awareness of the philosophy and principles governing the sports and games. The aim in sports should not be victory by any means, fair or foul. Whoever may win, others should greet it with fraternal feelings. The rules of the game should be strictly observed. Prizes do not matter. What is important is the sense of self-satisfaction derived from playing the game well.

### **Students' enthusiasm**

Looking forward to the sports meet, the students have been enthusiastically practising for nearly a month. In other universities, sports activities are supported by grants from the U.G.C. or other agencies. In the Sathya Sai Institute no request is made to any outside agency for funds to pay the teachers' salaries or to meet medical or other expenses. Education is provided free of

fees, from kindergarten to Post-graduate studies. No fees are collected for sports, library, or other amenities. Nor did the Central Trust or the College offer any funds for the sports programme. We do not desire to proclaim to the world the spirit of sacrifice and dedication of our students. We only express our own satisfaction with the performance of our students. In the preparations for the sports and cultural meet, all the expenses have been met by teachers and students out of their voluntary contributions. No one knows, not even the Registrar or the Vice-Chancellor, how this is done. It is rare to find students of such an exemplary nature, who cooperate with each other in a spirit of brotherhood. In all the three campuses—Brindavan, Anantapur and Prasanthi Nilayam—the dresses and other materials required for their programmes were got from their own resources.

### **Kudos to Primary School Children**

Special mention should be made of what the Primary School did. If we make an earnest and truthful enquiry into what is happening all over the world, we will find that where women are in charge of schools, everything is done well. The children are well taught. The teachers concentrate on their duties, without diversions of any kind. Consequently, whatever they do is pleasing to the eyes, the ears and the heart.

Look at the way the teachers look after little children in the primary school. You all know what trouble it is to look after a single child in the home. You can well imagine what an ordeal it is to look after eleven hundred young children. There are a large number of children between the ages of four and five. What discipline they displayed in their performances in sports! Their eating, dressing and other activities are regulated from a tender age. The world outside does not know what is being done here. Even many in Prasanthi Nilayam do not know the facts. The teachers, the warden and the principal are engaged in teaching work all during the day. They work all through the night, preparing the dresses for the sports events. All the dresses worn by the children were stitched at night by the teachers (cheers). My heart melts when I look at these teachers. Their eyes are swollen owing to sleepless work. When you see the children perform in their multi-coloured dresses, the scene looks like a glorious garden blooming with flowers of all kinds. When the children come out in formation for their mass drill, you cannot see who is directing them. Every movement of theirs is regulated by themselves in perfect co-ordination and harmony. Imagine what it costs to make these dresses. They are made from expensive material and each dress differs from another. All these are made by the teachers themselves. The children feel that Swami has given them free education and they must show their gratitude to Swami at least once a year by such activities, whatever sacrifice they may call for.

### **Home discipline declines**

This disciplined training which the children receive in the primary school sustains them till they go to the Higher Secondary School. There, the temperature (the degree of enthusiasm among them) goes down a little. What is the reason? The encouragement and inspiration they receive get reduced. But, even in the Secondary School the teachers work day and night. Thereby, they maintain the standards built up in the primary school. But by the time the students reach the Institute (University) level, the "temperature falls below normal". The discipline deteriorates. The reason is the failure of the Institute authorities to take sustained interest in the students. The teachers are mainly concerned with carrying out their teaching duties and are not concerned about the welfare of the students as a whole. They do not try to preserve what had been built up

earlier. Nevertheless, most students who have come from the primary school adhere to the discipline they have learnt and by and large, continue to observe it. It is association with students who have come from outside which erodes their discipline and spoils them. It is the duty of every Institute teacher to see that the discipline inculcated in the primary school is maintained in the Institute. (Bhagavan referred to the manner in which pay-scales were being laid down by the University Grants Commission and the manner in which dearness allowance was being fixed. This was contributing to the rise in prices. Employees in general should consider whether they are doing work commensurate with the emoluments they are receiving. There is more emphasis on rights than on responsibilities. If people in general discharged their duties properly, the country would make remarkable progress)

### **Students' devotion**

From this New Year people should develop a broad outlook and consider the interests of others as much as of their own. In our Institute the situation is very good. Our teachers and students mingle with each other in a friendly spirit and the teachers coach the lagging students outside their class hours. Whether you believe it or not, there is no University in India which maintains such discipline and educational standards as our Institute (Cheers). We do not publicise our performance. For instance, in the last all-India X standard examinations, our students got high ranks at the national level. The student who came first in the country received an award from the Centre. Swami asked him to go to Delhi to receive the award from the President. But the boy said: "I did not study for getting the President's or the Prime Minister's award. I studied to earn the approbation of Swami. Swami's satisfaction is enough for me. That is the biggest award". Such is the high-minded attitude of our students.

### **Knowledge and practice**

The children's hearts are pure, unsullied and sacred if these qualities are praised, it is not for proclaiming them to the public, but to infuse enthusiasm in the students and encourage them to do better. When some students came to Swami and exclaimed; "I have secured 'O' grade", Swami told them, "The 'O' grade has been given for your studies, not to you. It is only when you put into practice what you have studied that the 'O' grade or degree will belong to you". Many persons attach the degrees to their names. The degree will be really theirs, and not to the studies they made, when they act up to that knowledge represented by the degrees. One is a hero in learning and a zero in practice. What is required is the application of the knowledge acquired in daily life. Only then the degrees really become yours.

What service are you able to render to the rural population by your knowledge? You are concerned more about your careers and the earnings which may be got from your degrees. This should not be the main concern of students today. You must consider how far your knowledge is of benefit to society. You must ensure the peace and security of society. That should be the principal aim of the students.

Students! You have done well in your studies as well as in sports. What Swami wants from you is that you should conduct yourselves when you go out into the outside world in the same spirit of discipline and devotion, which you display here (Cheers). You must realise that it is only in our Institute that the students have the opportunity to have continuous contact with the

Chancellor Himself form day to day. You must make good use of it and hold yourselves forth as models for the world.

Students should realise that spiritual practice is as important as secular education. You should realise how much you owe to God for all the benefits you enjoy in life which are really gifts from God, including the air you breath and the water you drink. Should you not be grateful to God for all this? Without gratitude, life is meaningless. Be loving even towards those who hate you. Control your anger and other evil tendencies. (Bhagavan concluded His discourse with an advice to the Principals and Wardens of all the four campuses to co-ordinate their sports programmes in the coming years to avoid duplication of the same items. Swami called upon all teachers and the Vice-Chancellor and the Registrar to involve themselves in sports activities and encourage the students in every way.)

Referring to the uniqueness of the Sathya Sai Super-Speciality Hospital, Bhagavan said: There is no hospital like it anywhere in the world, giving totally free treatment. Nor are there doctors rendering free and dedicated service as in our hospital. Swami is spending crores on the hospital. The money is spent with scrupulous care. Not a naya paise is wasted. Many devotees, seeing the good work that is being done, are sending voluntary donations according to their capacity. All this money is being spent by the Sathya Sai Trust with unexcelled concern for economy and integrity. Unscrupulous and envious traducers are leveling charges of misuse of the funds by the Trust. This is a grievous sin. Swami examines every bill, minutely before making payment. The doctors for their part are looking after the patients in a spirit of dedication and team-work. This spirit of unity should prevail in all our Sai institutions and organisations. The character of their work reflects on Swami's name.

(Swami concluded His discourse expressing His benediction on all those who had participated in the sports. Bhagavan then led the gathering in the bhajan, "*Hari bhajan bina sukha santhi nahi*".

### **From Bhagavan's Discourse on January 14, in the Poornachandra Auditorium**

#### **The Avatar**

*The ancient and timeless one  
Father, Mother, Daughter, Son  
Assumes a role in Time's day  
Guides the pilgrim along the way*

*Others before He has sent,  
Examples of His intent,  
Here to warn, and help and guide  
With love, to encourage, to chide*

*Saints and sages were adored*



*Many martyred, some ignored.  
Life leads to dead-end questions  
God answers all pure intentions*

*Lord Sai reveals rules of His game  
Arms us with the invincible Name.  
His message of Love is strong and clear  
The time for practise now is here*

*Love is law, Righteousness protects  
Consequence is as act directs.  
No concern what others say or do  
Doing good is the road for you*

*Some, however high they be,  
Good only as their acts decree  
Honeyed words sweetly spoken  
Devoid of deeds leave seekers broken*

*They themselves must not stray  
Who profess to show the way  
Beware of egos who misinform  
Sai alone will guide and transform*

*Listen with care above the din  
Sai as Conscience speaks within  
From His one Word, has all begun;  
Sai is Love, Love is God, we are one.*

**—Hal Honig, New York**

## Start Propagation in Primary Schools

*Engaging oneself in arduous penance,  
Undertaking pilgrimages to sacred shrines,  
Dipping in holy waters, mastering the scriptures,  
Meditating on the Lord, and going in raptures,  
All these can seldom help a human  
To cross the ocean of life mundane  
Service to mankind is the only course of action  
which will help one to achieve liberation.*

*Embodiments of divine atma!*

It is the duty of everyone born as a human being to engage himself in service to mankind, which is the only sure way to cross the ocean of worldly life and attain liberation from the cycle of birth and death.

### **Body, mind and atma**

The human body is a prey to 386 types of diseases. These are caused by three main factors that are related to physical health. They are Vatha (Wind), Pitta (Bile) and Slesha (Phlegm). Wind is the cause of 80 diseases, while 84 diseases arise from bile disorders and 222 from phlegm. For the disease of fluorosis, which is the subject of this symposium, bile and phlegm are the causes. While there are curative medicines for several diseases, there are some diseases which are incurable. In this world, there are several types of people: those who are affluent, those who are virtuous, men of mighty strength and valour, persons of high literary attainments, eminent scientists. But persons engaging themselves in spiritual pursuits are very rare to come across. Such noble persons, who dwell in the realm of the spirit instead of the sphere of mundane affairs, will not be affected by any diseases of the body or the mind. They will be leading a noble and pure life. The body is a physical entity while the mind is subtle. There is another, which is invisible and eludes the grasp of the ordinary individual. That is the Atma. The attempt to comprehend the unknown and invisible Atma is called Atmanveshana. When one makes efforts to realise the sweetness of the Atma he is said to taste it (Atmapreethi). When he experiences the bliss of the Atma he is said to be an Atmajnani, a Realised Soul.

The body, the mind, the intellect and the senses are only your instruments. Then, the question arises, "Who are you?" The answer is: You are the master who makes use of these instruments. When you refer to "My mind, my body, my senses", do you enquire "Who am I"? Though you may go on saying, "This is my body, my mind, etc", which implies that you are different from these, yet you identify yourself with the body and become a slave of the senses instead of being their master. You are the Atma, the Supreme Master. You have the potential to realise this through the discriminating power of the intellect. Once you recognise this truth, you will also understand human nature, which is a combination of values like Truth, Righteousness,

realise the cause of diseases and the method of curing them.

### **Adharam and aharam**

The disease of fluorosis is caused by contamination in food, air and water. Earth, fire, and ether are the elements constituting the essential basis for human life. Water and air constitute the Life-Force (Prana Shakti). While ether earth and fire are the basis (moola), water and air are essential for life (Prana). Water and air provide the food for the sustenance of life. While the three elements, earth, fire and ether form the support (Adharam), the other two, water and air form the (Aharam) food. You get water and air from the earth (Bhumi). It is of the nature of Brahman and is all-powerful. The astronauts who travel in space-ships to explore space have to carry water and air with them from the earth for their survival. They have to take things from the earth while they travel to the moon to bring a few samples from the moon. Billions of dollars are spent on these exercises.

What we should attempt really is to explore the means of cultivation of human values and realising the divinity, within everyone.

The sun shines with intense heat and baffling effulgence. By the help of the sun's light, the moon shines. It cannot shine by itself, as it has no effulgence of its own. The relationship between the Buddhi (Intellect) and the mind is also similar to this.

The mind is made up of thoughts and fancies. It is dangerous to act as a slave of the mind. By following the mind, one becomes a 'Pashu' or an animal. By following the Buddhi, one becomes a "Pashupati", the Lord of animals.

### **Root cause of disease**

You have discussed in great detail the incidence of fluorosis and the application of technology to combat this evil Disease is a natural outcome of food and other habits. The main constituents of the body should be in proper balance. Any imbalance will affect the health and curtail the life span. The longevity of a person depends on regulation of food and other habits.

Affluent and educated people are able to have recourse to advanced methods of treatment for curing diseases. What about the poor and illiterate villagers? They suffer a lot owing to fluorosis which affects the movement of the joints and weakens the bones. In some cases, hands and legs are bent out of shape and the victims can hardly do their daily work.

A large percentage of people in Bharat are unable to work efficiently because of various physical disabilities. The greatest attention should be paid to the health of the young who have many years of life before them.

### **Concentrate first on children**

attacks by diseases such as fluorosis. You have to devise methods simple enough to be followed by them.

One simple method is to mix lime and sand in water in proper proportion and stir it up slowly taking 15 minutes for the process. Allow it to settle down for 5 to 6 hours. You will see the sand deposit at the bottom. If this is done before bed-time, the water will be clear by the next morning. The water thus purified can be used with good effect. You can make use of alum also for this purpose. It is very difficult to get pure alum today. Everything is adulterated: milk, oil and other edible products. If you can teach the primary school children now about cultivation of honesty and good habits, the future of the country and the world will be better as these children are going to be the leaders, pleaders and teachers of the future.

Regarding the treatment of Fluorosis, you should think of long-term solutions also along with temporary remedial measures. Yellow and black spots on the skins are signs of a person suffering from fluorosis. Doctors should concentrate on fluorosis affected children as they may grow weak because of the disease.

### **Ensure effective implementation**

This disease is prevalent in all countries, but in certain districts of some States of Bharat ;i: is rampant. The decisions you have taken at this conference should not be confined to the paper on which they are recorded. You should implement them and achieve results. What is needed is the will to work with a spirit of dedication in order to relieve the distress of the suffering masses.

The participants, who spoke earlier, expressed their gratitude for the hospitality and good food and comfortable accommodation provided for them here. We do have our share in looking after the welfare of society. We can be happy only when society is happy. You should go from village to village and take concrete steps to eradicate this disease of fluorosis, offer simple methods of treatment to those already affected and teach the villagers the preventive precautionary measures like regulation of diet and drinking only boiled water etc. Our Prime Minister and Chief Minister of A.P. are extending enthusiastic support for this programme. You should also act with full initiative and interest so that you can achieve the desired results. Having taken up a job you should not slacken your efforts in completing it, facing boldly any obstacles you may come across.

Work done for the welfare of the world is true penance (Tapas), while work done for selfish purpose is useless (Tamas).

Bharat is a sacred land (Punjabhumi.) It is a Yogabhumi (Land of sacrifice) and Karma Bhumi (Land of action). The present generation of people want to make it a Bhogabhumi (Land of material pleasure). That is why people suffer from diseases.

### **Secret of Swami's youthful radiance**

and is energetic. Really the reason for this is the imbibing of the three p's by me, namely, purity, patience, and perseverance. If you follow these three tenets you will not be afflicted by any disease. I am keeping myself active day in and day out for the sake of the welfare of the world and no disease has affected this body at any time during the past 68 years. My teeth are quite healthy and strong even at this age. I can masticate anything. My eyesight is very sharp. People get shortsighted or longsighted even at the age of forty and wear glasses. I take no medicine as no disease affects me. Even while I take on the diseases of others, I pretend as though I take the pill offered by doctors to satisfy them. But actually I throw it away and sip only water. I eat the barest minimum to sustain the body. I take just one small oil-free dry chapatti. I have never taken sweets even from my childhood. Doctors say you need vitamins and proteins for maintaining bodily health. I am always in bliss (Ananda) and that is vitamin and protein for me. Happiness lies in union with God. When you think of God you are bound to be happy.

### **Simple preventive steps**

You must tell people to think of God and chant prayers even while they take medicine for the disease. This must be taught mainly to schoolchildren so that they may grow up as good enlightened children. There was a professor in Kasi who used to do prayer and worship at the altar in his house. An atheist friend of his who visited him remarked that he was wasting so much time in prayer. The professor replied that the prayer to God will never go waste. He added: "I waste only one hour per day, even if according to you God does not exist. But if God exists, you are wasting your whole lifetime."

You have to educate the children to consume lime and tamarind in larger measure, explaining the reason for this, in order to prevent the affliction by the disease of fluorosis. Teach them by songs in popular tunes so that it will have an effective appeal. Even atheists who deny `god will be moved by music as human beings. When you pray to God too, it is more effective if you express the prayer in musical tunes as this will touch and move the heart. God loves music. He is termed as "Ganapriya and Ganalola" - one who loves music and revels in music. Inspire the children to sing Bhajans. They will attain happiness and satisfaction.

Swami concluded the discourse with the song, "*Bhajan Bina Sukha Saanthi nahi*", which the entire audience repeated with great enthusiasm.

***From the Discourse of Bhagavan at the valedictory function of the National Symposium on Fluorosis on 30.1.1994***

***Gurudev Vani***

### **“Imbibe Bharat’s Ideals”**

*Do not get conceited because of your studies,  
What is great about your learning?  
The hall-Mark of education is humility,*

*Shed your ignorance and pride, O witless one!  
Learn to be humble in pursuing knowledge.*

*Students! Teachers!*

Today men have invented many types, of machinery by their experiments and researches. Science has been pursued with relentless energy. But, being unable to experience peace or happiness, they have become strangers to both. Despite his acquiring the sacred human birth, man is immersed in the pursuit of transient worldly pleasures, forgetting his Divine destiny. Concentrating on scientific investigations, inventing all kinds of mechanical gadgets, man is content to lead a proud but purposeless life.

To understand the basic purpose of life, you do not have the right type of education' now. Mere worldly knowledge will not promote the cultivation of spiritual and moral values. This secular knowledge does not-serve to teach *you* the secret of human life. If one wishes to bring down a tree he must attack the roots and not the branches. For man to attain his real destination and secure endure peace and joy secular education is of no avail.

### **Greatness of Bharatiya Culture**

Bharatiyas in of ancient times lived a life of Morality and integrity and enjoyed peace and happiness. Students today, disregarding morality and their obligations to society, go astray and ruin their lives. Bharatiyas have forgotten the essentials of their culture, based on morality and integrity. They cast away their great scriptural texts as trash. Western nations took these, learnt the profound truths contained in them and developed their technical and military skills and sought to give them back to Bharatiyas. The weapons developed in Germany were based on the texts of the Atharvana Veda. Bharatiyas today are cultivating a passion for exotic things, ignoring what is good in their own heritage. Students should strive to understand what is great in their own Bharatiya culture and heritage. Ignoring their own cultural greatness, Bharatiyas are going abroad to earn money as an end in itself. No doubt money is necessary, but, is it necessary to go abroad for this purpose? This cannot be the true aim of education.

### **Love of Motherland**

Students should recognise the truth of the saying, "The mother and the Motherland are greater than Heaven itself." One who does not believe in this cannot be called a truly educated person. Making use of the education acquired by you, you should serve your country in such a way that it stands out as an example to the world. What perversity is it to neglect one's own house and try to beautify your neighbour's house?

Students today are losing their love for the Motherland. The man who cannot proclaim that "This is my native land, this is my mother tongue" is a living corpse. He is no human being at all. People are giving up love for the Motherland and fostering greed for money.

From ancient times, Bharat has held forth to the world great ideals. Spreading the message of spirituality to many countries, Bharat proclaimed the message: "May all people be

selfishness to prevail. Selfless unity was the message proclaimed in the Vedas: "Let us live together; let us grow together. Let us share our knowledge with others, let us live in harmony and friendliness." Today in Bharat there is no spirit of harmony.

In ancient India, students, together with secular knowledge, sought spiritual knowledge, regardless of the sacrifices involved, and led purposeful lives. They conducted many investigations to comprehend the mysteries of creation and the secret of human existence. All experiments today are based on mechanical devices (Yantras). But in the olden days, they conducted the enquiries with the help of Mantras. The truths which they discovered, they proclaimed to the world in strident terms.

### **Speech and silence**

It is the duty of Bharatiyas today to learn something about the great spiritual heritage of Bharat. The ancients practised economy in speech. Students today tend to be loquacious, Excessive speech harms the mind. "Less speech, more happiness."

The ancients practised three kinds of silent penance to control speech. One was silence of the tongue ("Vakmounam"), The second one was silence of the mind ("Manomounam"). The third was "Mahamounam" - Supreme Silence.

"Vakmounam" (Silence in speech) meant confining one's speech to the limit and the needs of the occasion. By this discipline, excessive talk was avoided. As a result, the power of their speech was conserved and enhanced. Discipline in speech also resulted in truthfulness. Truth speaking served to purify their thoughts. By this means they acquired "Siddhi", (Realisation of truth) and "Jnanasiddhi" (acquisition of the highest wisdom). Therefore purity in speech is vital. It has to be achieved by restraint in speech.

### **Mental silence**

Then, there is "Manomounam" (Silence of the mind). The mind is a bundle of thoughts and fancies. These thoughts have to be reduced gradually. When thoughts are reduced, the mind naturally comes under control, like a clock that is unwound. When the activity of the mind is reduced, the power of the Atma (Self) manifests itself. As a consequence the intellect (Buddhi) becomes more active than the senses.

When control of speech and control of the mind have been achieved, the state of "Mahamounam" (Supreme Silence) is easily realised. Students should strive to reach the third stage by the disciplines of the first two stages.

### **Divinising education**

I have often told you. "Talk less and study more." What is meant by "study"? Study (or education) is the process of divinising one's Self. This calls for the cultivation of values in education. This "Education (is) for life" "Life (is) for love." "Love for man." "Man for Service." "Service for Society", "Society for Nation", "Nation for world." "World for peace." (Cheers).

in Love. This love should be for all mankind. Today this love is absent. What passes for love is something artificial. Love should emanate from the heart.

What is the purpose of being a man? It is not for leading an animal existence. Man exists for service. Every man has to return to society by way of service what he has received from it. That service should be rendered selflessly in a spirit of sacrifice. Service is thereby converted to spirituality.

### **Triune peace**

Service is to society. Society exists for the nation. The nation is a limb of the world. The world should strive for peace. That is the meaning of the benediction: "Om Santhi! Santhi! Santhi!" Why is this "Santhi" (Peace) uttered three times and not more or less? This refers to peace in three aspects: Adibhoutic (Physical), Adhyatmic (mental) and Adidaivic (spiritual). Peace relating to the body, the mind and the Self are invoked by this benediction. Such profound meanings are implicit in the pronouncements of Bharat's sages.

### **Divine in human form**

All these are designed to remind us of God and make us seek God-realisation. People imagine that God is an entity far beyond human conception and grasp. That is not true. Divinity is nearer than anything else in the world. If you consider it remote, it will appear distant, but if you regard it as near it will be near. As long as man is conscious of the body, he cannot comprehend a formless Divinity. Hence, he must adore the Divine in human form. If, for instance, a buffalo or a fish thinks of God they can conceive of God only as a huge buffalo or a gigantic fish. Man also conceives the form of God only in terms of his own human form and attributes. As long as man is attached to the body, he cannot realise God. Only when he sheds his attachment, he can experience the Divine.

As long as he thinks of his body and his human form, man cannot think of something which transcends form and body. That is the reason why God incarnates in human form. To man He must appear as human. Only then relationships can be established between the Divine and human beings. If God comes in any other form, man cannot fix his thoughts on Him. Hence, you have to conceive of God in human form and worship Him.

Sri Rama, who was the embodiment of Dharma, incarnated in human form. Because the Avatars come in human form, human beings could have intimate relationships with them and adore them.

The Vedas declared that the Supreme Divine, with the effulgence of the sun, dwells beyond darkness ("Vedaahametham Purusham Mahaantham Aadithyavarnam thamasahparasthaath"). God is beyond "thamas" (darkness). He is not outside. He is within you. You are He. While he is himself the Divine, man seeks the Divine in a forest or through meditation. What folly is this? The Vedas deride man for failing to see God, even while seeing Him ("Pasyannapi na pasyanthi moodho" "The fool fails to see even while he is seeing").



When God comes in human form, moves freely amongst you, talks with you, jokes with you, eats with you and drinks with you, even then you fail to recognise God. You pursue your own types of devotion. This is not correct. You must worship the living Divinity, not the lifeless. Honour every human being who is in human form. See the Divine in every man.

The cosmos is a manifestation of the Divine Vishnuswaroopam God is with you, in you, and around you. He is not elsewhere. Develop this firm conviction. It is a piece of self-deception to imagine that God is somewhere away from you.

### **Atma vidya**

At the outset, you have to develop control of your senses. This control (in the form of mounam or silence) influences your speech. Jayadeva went into rapture over the power of the tongue to chant sweetly the name of the Lord. Sweetness in speech makes all the difference between one man and another. The supreme greatness of the Lord's name has been commended in the Age of Kali. It is an abuse of the tongue to make it recite anything other than God's name.

Students should realise the supremacy of Atma-Vidya the culture of the Self. It is the key to all knowledge. What is the use of all the secular knowledge which is concerned with acquiring a mess of pottage?

The great scientist, Einstein, regretted in his last years that his scientific findings had led to the production of the atom bomb. Sir Isaac Newton ended his life in a hospital with a mental affliction. True knowledge must secure mental peace and enduring joy. For this contemplation of God is essential.

Academic education has its uses. But it is not the summon-bonum of life. Adore the light of the Divine within you. Each student is like a petromax light. This light has to be kept burning by pumping (kerosene) from time to time. The soot has to be cleaned by a pin now and then. It needs kerosene. Only when all the three are present, the light will burn brightly. Your "Sraddha" (earnest devotion) is the kerosene. Your love is the pin. Your spirit of sacrifice is the pump. In addition, a wick is needed. That wick is the Lord's name. With the aid of the three accessories, when you chant the Lord's name, your devotion will shine effulgently. This effulgence is the light of the Divine within you. You proceed from peacelessness to the light divine in the heart (Paramjoti) through peace and an illumined mind. The heart of everyone is the seat of the Lord.

In this way students should cultivate the discriminating faculty through education, cherish humility and foster faith in the Divine. This is the royal road to realisation of oneness with the Divine.

Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the song, "*Bhajan bina Sukha Santhi nahi*", in which the entire gathering joined.

## Disease and Divinity

*You can reset a tree to make it grow straight.  
You can straighten even a granite stone.  
But you cannot easily set right the mind and rid of its vagaries.*

It is the mind that makes a man. The mind is a conglomeration of thoughts. Thoughts are reflected in actions. The consequences of actions are being experienced as pleasure and pain by man. Therefore, man should have noble thoughts, which will spur him to good and noble activity.

Each one should enquire for whose sake he or she is living. When any one poses this question to oneself, the answer is: "I am living for myself and not for others." He justifies his answer by saying: "I am eating to appease my own hunger. I am taking medicine to cure my illness. It cannot be cured by anyone else taking the medicine." When two persons are sleeping in the same cot, they do not get the same dreams but have different dreams. Basing on these facts man feels that he is living for himself. Later on, when he grows up he seeks a job on the ground that he has a family to look after and support and support. The same person, who once said he was living for himself, later on pleads that he is living for his family. When invited by a friend to accompany him to Bangalore for an interesting sports event, he says that he has to attend his office and cannot take leave and hence he is unable to accompany him. He thus cites his duty as a reason for his inability to enjoy the sports. But when his wife or child is sick and in a hospital he takes leave even on loss of pay and goes to attend on them. The same person, when he is hungry and just sits for taking his dinner, leaves the meal served on the table and rushes out when he hears that his son or daughter is involved in an accident. Even hunger is forgotten. The person, who was proclaiming that he was living for himself only, now starts caring for his wife and children. When the village is in the grip of an epidemic like cholera or plague, the same person comes forward to do his best to combat the spread of the disease, because this may affect his own family too as they are part and parcel of the village. Thus man is born in society and grows in society. It is the bounden duty of every one to feel that his own welfare is bound up with the welfare of all others in society.

### Preventive measures

Today we are faced with the menace of fluorosis. If you enquire into this, we come to know that the problem of fluorosis is not only prevalent in India but in many other countries of the world such as Indonesia, Germany, China, USA, Tanzania, Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Lybia.

evil effects of this disease to a great extent.

Many diseases are caused by drinking water that is polluted. If there is only one milligram (mg) of fluoride in a litre of water, it is safe. The presence of more than one mg in a litre may cause sickness. If there is 4 or 5 mg of fluoride in a litre, it affects the teeth and is positively injurious to health. In several States in India such as Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan this disease is widely prevalent. In Andhra Pradesh, it is rampant in Srikakulam, Guntur, Medak, Nalgonda and Mahboobnagar districts. Recently it has been found to be prevalent in Cuddapah, Kurnool, Anantapur and other places. It is found on investigation that the fluoride content in water varies from 1.5 mg to 10.5 mg in these areas.

The fluoride "that is contained in underground water sources varies from 1 mg to 300 mg per litre. In many areas they have established Aluminium factories. Fluoride is made use of to a large extent in these factories. This mixes with air and the polluted air affects the people. It enters the stronger portions of the body such as bones and teeth. A portion of this fluoride is excreted through urine. The ignorant villagers are not aware of the serious damage caused by this fluoride to their health. Fluorosis causes pain in the joints and affects the bones at the back etc. The affected persons suffer from severe pain in joints. Some germs such as bacteria also enter the system and cause a lot of damage to the human body. Viruses also cause diseases. Polluted food also accounts for the spread of these disease-carrying germs. Meat, fish, black and red salt, black coffee and tea also cause spread of fluorosis and aggravate it further. To the extent possible you should change your food habits. Chewing betel leaves also causes tooth decay. Certain drugs sold in the market also aggravate this disease. There are some types of antidotes that can be consumed with food to prevent fluorosis. You should take sour things like lime, orange and tamarind in greater quantity. You can also take more of tomatoes, potatoes and vegetables with Vitamin C. You should also take more of carrots to build the bones. Intake of such food items in a liberal measure will help to combat the incidence of fluorosis. Besides these, consuming of green leaves which contain a lot of calcium will also help in keeping off fluorosis. Food is the main factor in maintaining good health or causing diseases.

In these days, though there is plenty of milk, curd and other dairy products available with the villagers in their houses, they are in the habit of selling these products and buying some useless and harmful things that affect their health adversely. Consuming of curd will help one to a great extent to combat the onset of this disease. Modern youth take black tea and coffee (without milk though milk is available) thereby inviting the disease. Some take black and brownish salt which contains more fluoride. They should avoid this and take only white purified salt. It is only by propagating such practical preventive steps that Government can play its role in checking the spread of this disease.

### **Thought of Divine Essential**

Apart from the exercise of such care in the food consumed there should be also "Daiva chinthana", contemplation of the Divine. Because people don't think of God they are subjected to a lot of misery. Without divine thought, man is harbouring two bad qualities. One is he hides

others. Because of such evil qualities among human beings diseases are also on the increase. Only when human effort is there, with God's grace, good results will be attained. The sanskrit saying declares "Dharmaartha Kama Mokshanaam Arogyam Moolam Uthamam." For the attainment of the four Purusharthas, good health is essential. Even though one may have all the wealth in the world, if his health is impaired, he is miserable. Good health is the most important acquisition one should aspire for. Whether a villager or an urban dweller, good health is very essential for anyone leading a meaningful life.

To enjoy good health, one should have water, food and air free from pollution. Now all these three are polluted. Apart from these, man's mind is also polluted. To purify the mind, one should nurture noble and sacred thoughts of service to others. One who does not hurt anybody and has feelings of love and compassion to fellow beings is the greatest of men. That is why sage Vyasa gave the essence of the Eighteen Puranas he composed in the aphorism: "Help ever, hurt never."

You should make every effort to avoid harming others in any circumstance. You are only hurting yourself when you hurt others. You should not use harsh words. When you develop human values, you can be free from diseases and even enjoy good health with God's Grace.

### **Avoid evil pursuits**

Once a poet gave the reason for the lack of Dharma in this country in the form of a song. Because there are people who have bad thoughts, hear bad things through their ears, see bad things with their eyes, spread scandals through their tongue, there is no righteousness (Dharma) and no peace. Human beings are embodiments of Divinity. They should live up to their Divine nature and not descend to the level of animals.

### **Serve society**

We should see that by our action no harm is caused to society. The incidence of fluorosis is a threat to public health and affects society in general. But, there are easy methods to combat this menace by taking preventive steps. In our Institute, Venkateswara Rao has done detailed studies in this field and has found out methods of conducting numerous experiments to control this disease. This can be controlled to a great extent by using sour things such as tamarind, lime, oranges etc. in larger quantities in food. The villagers should consume lot of greens which contain a good amount of iron.

The Government has embarked upon measures to control the spread of this disease. The people, for their part, should co-operate with the government. Then the results will be good.

My opinion is that it is not good enough to provide for treatment for this disease. It is prevalent even in the affluent countries like U.S.A. With all their money power they are not able to eradicate the disease. So you should realise that God's grace is very essential. Along with medicine you need discipline and control in living.

Pure engineers, officers, scientists, have all gathered here. They must educate the people to avoid meat eating, which causes fluorosis. Water and other substances coming from underground have a lot of fluoride content. In some places there is as much as 8 to 10 mg of fluoride in one litre of water. Whether you believe it or not, in Prasanthi Nilayam, which is situated in Anantapur District, there is no trace of fluorosis. Here, there is a lot of Divine vibrations as all good and sacred things are being done. 'People of different religions and Nationalities are assembling here in thousands. But all are engaged in divine activities and constant remembrance of God. Here there is not more than 1 or 1.5 mg fluoride in a litre of water.

The Collector of Anantapur district is making a lot of effort to combat, this disease. It is necessary to combine divine activities along with the other steps to combat this disease.

**From Bhagavan's discourse at the inauguration of the National Symposium on methods to combat Fluorosis, held in the Sathya Sai Institute Auditorium on January 29, 1994**

### **Bhagavan's Presence in China**

The glory and majesty of the name of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is now becoming known far and wide and at greater speed than before. His love and compassion are lighting up the darkest corners of the earth. Readers will, therefore, not be surprised to know that our beloved Lord is gradually becoming known in different parts of the vast land of China, so that people are experiencing both healing and the transformation of heart and mind which come from that purifying contact with the divine Teacher of teachers. Although it is not known to the writer just how many channels there are at present through which His word is being transmitted, she can report from her own experience what is happening in one region of China.

After six years of teaching English in Chinese universities, it was necessary for her to leave Beijing for a time in 1989 and instead of returning to her native England, she went to Australia, where, in 1991, she received the great blessing of hearing about Sri Sathya Sai Baba for the first time. A brief visit was made to Puttaparthi in the autumn and then, after a wonderful stay of six months with Swami, when He made it clear she was to go back to China, she returned to the North-East region of China to teach not only English, but also to introduce, both to students and Chinese teachers, Baba's teaching and in particular Sai Education in Human Values. This was especially relevant as these students were all to become teachers in the future - mainly in poor mountain villages.

### **Power of Sai Message of Love**

At first she simply gave them a saying by "The Great World Teacher, Sathya Sai Baba", at each lesson, beginning with "Start the day with love..." never realising then what a deep impact the words were making on those who received them. After two months, that saying appeared on the big public notice board at the entrance to the building where she was teaching. Students

with Chinese teachers, and to write them on the front pages of their books. One teacher later said, "When I saw that first saying on the blackboard, I thought this was what I had wanted all my life." Already, some young teachers, who had heard her lecture, had been to her flat to find out more about Baba and had seen some videos in English and read some books in Chinese and in English. The only other foreign teacher, a Japanese, also came, as she had just heard of Baba in Japan. The Books and Publications department kindly sent her two books in Japanese, which were received with great joy. In Christmas week she gave a two-hour talk on Baba every day, for there were so many enquiries (6 days).

### **Videos and books in Chinese**

After the Chinese New Year holiday, the writer returned from Hong Kong with more books in Chinese and the video, "Aura of Divinity", also in very clear Chinese. This led to a steady flow of students, teachers, and others to her flat to see both that and other videos of Sai Baba, to ask questions, to borrow books, tapes of Bhajans, and to receive pictures and vibhuti. Before she left in July, the Chinese video had been shown 56 times, including three times elsewhere: Nanjing, Beijing and Dalian. (At the time of writing it has been shown 77 times.)

Soon she began to hear of the experiences these people were having, of the immediate response when they called to Swami in their heart. There seemed to be a growing number who were seriously trying to follow and practise Baba's teaching. So it seemed the time had come to introduce them to singing Bhajans together and to the idea of Seva and its importance. Holding a meeting in a room on the campus could have created some difficulties, but Swami led twenty-five of us to a park surrounding an ancient Buddhist Pagoda, at 6 am one Sunday. More would have liked to come but they were not free at that time.

### **Miraculous presence**

At that hour, there are plenty of people moving about in China. The meeting was held on the grass, where anyone and everyone could join in. After a short talk about the Organization, some bhajans were sung with Swami's recorded voice, and then a few in Chinese. It was an occasion of great happiness. A few photographs were taken and later it was found that, with His divine sweetness, our beloved Swami had assured us of His presence, by appearing in the background of one of the photographs. This picture has been a source of great wonder and joy. This took place on May 23, 1993, and as time passed by, events, quite beyond the imagination of the writer, happened which led her to be more convinced than ever that she was nothing but a humble witness to what was entirely the doing of the Lord. For example, doctors, nurses and patients in a local hospital came to know Baba, when a young teacher was admitted there for an appendectomy and His photograph attracted their attention. A discussion between the writer, that patient and the hospital staff was preserved on video. Furthermore, a senior teacher who wanted to make a copybook of italic handwriting for the students, asked the writer if she had any nice specimens. She had—they were nine sayings of Sai Baba and these were accepted. Yet another instance occurred because the writer had written songs to help the students with specific problems in English. The department undertook to duplicate hundreds of copies and as she had also been writing songs expressing some of Baba's teachings, she decided to include two of

Sai Baba on education and on character, which would reach future students and teachers.

### **Response to message**

At the farewell meeting with the President and six leaders of the institution, all of them declared that what they had begun to learn of the teachings of Sai Baba was wonderful. All of them received a copy of Dr. Hislop's book, "My Baba and I", together with other material on the organisation and on Sathya Sai E.H.V. in Chinese from Hong Kong.

### **Assignment in another region**

Since returning to China to teach in the South-West, after five more weeks in India, the writer has been receiving many letters from those followers in the North East, who are spreading the word still further and continuing the study of Baba's teachings—their "daily bread" as one put it. There was a report of a girl's peasant mother being healed instantaneously by application of Vibhuti on an area causing such pain that she had to leave her work in the fields.

Now teaching in another Teacher's University, the work continues. It is as if Baba has been speeding up progress, as people began to come very soon to have books, to see videos and to ask questions. As before, a fair number here who are of Buddhist background, recognise Sai Baba's divinity very quickly. He has made great changes in some atheists too.

### **Impact of E.H.V. on students**

Soon after arriving at her present university, the writer gave her class a large number of books about Britain to read in class. She happened to notice that two books were missing after the first week of their use. It was mentioned to the students that the books would be available on loan later on but that at present she would like the students to keep her informed before borrowing any books. No more was said, but she changed her programme of work and began immediately on the Human Values, getting students to write stories relating to various sub-values. After two weeks the books were returned with an apology. The Human Values teachings had had that effect on the conscience of the erring student.

Not only the Chinese, but also some foreigners here have come to know about Sai Baba. Two students from Azerbaijan came to ask about Him recently and spent more than three hours watching video and asking questions. Other foreign staff have been glad to know something about Baba and a teacher from Canada has given a few of His sayings to her classes too.

### **Interest among youth**

It was heartening to meet many young people and to feel that Swami is ever with them all, in every country, no matter who they are. They make this writer feel very humble when they voice much understanding of His teaching. They have brought along friends from other departments of the university, lent books to their teachers, and they tell their friends and family not only in this province but in other provinces too. The effect on quite large areas cannot be measured.

saw His picture in her room. On a visit to a Buddhist monastery here, where Dr. Hislop's book, pictures of Baba, Vibhuti and pendants were received by a monk, a woman standing by said she had heard of Baba on a recent TV programme. It was not possible to find out the details. The first Chinese ever known to the writer in Feb. 1983 visited her in Beijing ten years later and told her he had heard of Baba and wanted to know as much as possible. Two days later he was flying to India as a member of a group of scientists who were to take part in joint projects with Indian scientists. The channels are beyond imagination. Nothing can stand in the way of Divine Love nor form an obstacle to the Divine Will.

### **An Altar for Sai in Chinese Hotel**

Some Chinese staff at the Indian restaurant where Swami's two beautiful signed photographs are kept, have become devoted to Him. Recently a beautiful oil painting of Baba was done by a Chinese painter for the same restaurant. On the 9th floor of that building there is an altar for Sai Baba group and although there are very few people, they do some Seva, helping in orphanages, teaching English.

All that has been said here is but a small part of what could have been written. Only Baba knows when the time is right for the Chinese to set up their own centres. Now is the time for sowing the seeds.

**Deirdre West, China**

### **Love at Work in Buenos Aires**

This is the story of a path of Love and Hope. We want to share with you an experience that tells us about Baba's Love, which took place in one of the Argentine Sai, Organization working groups. A working group of a Sai Baba Center in Buenos Aires began to undertake a combination of service and educational tasks. The project started with street children. The children lived in the streets near the Sai Centre; the group got close to them and invited them to attend the Centre where they had a shower, their clothes were laundered, they were fed and taught reading and writing by a professional teacher, who was trained in techniques of Sathya Sai Human Values (E.H.V.) Education.

After a short period, the working group became aware of the circumstances that had negatively influenced these children living in the streets, since they basically lived from delinquency and robbery. So, the group tried to do something to take these children away from the streets and reform them totally, giving a definite solution to their problems and not to leave them alone. They worked with them in their re-adjustment to society, giving them a vocation and, specially, a new reason to lead their lives.



rented for the children, one of the women, a Sai devotee, asked one of the children to dig the earth in a flowerpot stand to sow some flowers. While doing so the child discovered a bulk, and when he opened it he saw that the bulk contained 12 Kgs of pure gold. He called one of his companions and the first idea in their minds was to escape with this fortune, but at that moment the results of the Human Values education began to appear and their conscience told them that they should not escape but, on the contrary, they should give the gold to the Sai Organization members who were working with them, and they did so.

The Sai Organization, complying with one of Sai Baba's precepts, which is to obey the country's laws, decided to announce this finding to the authorities and with a public notary they testified to the facts. They called lawyers and went to a judge, who declared that the country's laws laid down that the gold belonged to the person who found it. So, the gold was the property of the group which worked with the street children. This group, together with the Foundation, decided to proceed with the project of buying a house to consolidate the work with the children a house in better conditions than the one they were renting. They decided to submit this project to the Divine Lotus Feet for our beloved Sai's approval and blessing. The Foundation and Sai Organization member's travelled to India, together with one of the street children, whose devotion to Sai had greatly grown and who wanted from his very heart to see Swamiji. Then, the group decided that part of the gold should be used to defray the ticket for this child to be able to have Sai "darshan."

A few days after the arrival of the group in India, Baba gave them an interview and, with His infinite love, He told them that it was He who put the gold there, and He gave His approval for the purchase of the house.

And this is how this Love Circle is closed. Swami teaches us that if we take one step towards Him, He takes a hundred towards us. In fact, He is the one who fulfils our hopes, if we work with a pure heart, without any personal interest, trying to comply with His teachings. He shows us that He is always behind us, close to us, and helps us to achieve self-realization through Love. This is the path of Love, miracles and hope that the Lord offers us to redeem our lives.

**—Leonardo Gutter, Buenos Aires**

## **National Symposium on Combating Fluorosis**

Bhagavan Baba gave an enlightening discourse on the causes and effects of fluorides and preventive steps to be taken to control the spread of fluorosis disease, which is widely prevalent in several districts in Andhra Pradesh and also in other States in India.

whatever measures we may undertake to fight the disease, which is mainly caused by drinking water and consuming food with a high fluoride content.

Bhagavan spoke about the Prasanthi Technique evolved in Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Prasanthi Nilayam, to combat Fluorosis and commended its application all over the country.

The Symposium on "Combating Fluorosis Menace-Methodology to Formulate Model District Plan" was held on 29th and 30th January under the auspices of the Department of Panchayat Raj, Government of Andhra Pradesh. Mr. Tucker, Chairman, Integrated Fluorosis Control Project, and District Collector of Anantapur, organised the symposium, which was held in the auditorium of the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. It was attended by more than 300 delegates, consisting of secretaries, directors, UNICEF officials, collectors, engineers, doctors, scientists and representatives from voluntary organisations.

Bhagavan Baba inaugurated the Symposium by lighting the ceremonial lamp at 10.30 a.m. on January 29.

Sri S. P. Tucker welcomed the delegates and explained that the purpose of the symposium was to evolve an integrated approach to the control of Fluorosis. It was supposed to evaluate the existing technologies, devise methods to educate people on fluorosis, and evolve cost effective technology to control waterborne diseases and fluorosis. Sri P. V. Narasimha Rao, Prime Minister, and Sri K. Vijayabhaskara Reddy, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, had sent messages wishing success to the symposium and commending Prasanthi technique developed by the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Prasanthi Nilayam.

Dr. D. K. Samarasimha Reddy, Minister for Panchayat Raj and Rural Water Supply, Andhra Pradesh, in his inaugural address, high-lighted the various schemes of Government and non-government organisations aided by UNICEF and the Royal Dutch Government in controlling Fluorosis, and made reference to programmes in different states in general and Andhra Pradesh in particular. He traced the various sources of Fluorosis, such as drinking water, cosmetics, toothpastes and industrial waste. He added that the Government is making efforts to create an awareness among the people about the disease and enlist their active involvement in tackling this problem and assured that every effort would be made to supply safe drinking water in all places and invoked the blessings of Bhagavan Baba for success in their venture.

Bhagavan Baba then delivered His Divine message published separately.

Bhagavan also released a book on "Combating Fluorosis-Menace : Methodology to Formulate model District Plan", written by Dr. K. Venkateswara Rao, Department of Biosciences, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Prasanthi Nilayam. Sri A.V.S. Reddy, Principal Secretary, Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Department, Hyderabad, spoke on the role of the Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission in solving the Fluorosis problem

effective technology to prevent diseases, integrating conservative methods of the people with modern technology; and promoting participation of the entire community through growing awareness in controlling the diseases.

At the first session, Dr. Fanibanda of Bombay, explained that drinking water is not the only source for Fluoride intake. Excessive use of tea and aerated waters and use of aluminium vessels for cooking can result in arthritis, destruction of brain cells, resulting in loss of memory and upsetting enzyme systems.

Sri Kondala Rao, Engineer-in-Chief, Panchayat Raj, Dr. Y.S. Murthy, and Dr. Ruben spoke about the planning and control of Fluorosis and providing safe drinking water.

Sri Aungchin spoke on the role of UNICEF in combating the Fluorosis menace in the country and pleaded for an integrated approach and evolving a package programme consisting of safe water, sanitation, nutrition, and health education etc. He commended the good efforts made in this direction in Anantapur District.

Dr. K. Venkateswara Rao, Lecturer, Bio-Science Department, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, spoke on the field visit arranged on January 30 that would help the participants to study such models as they were working. The co-operation of the non Government Service organisations with the Government machinery was stressed by the speaker in combating the Fluorosis menace.

The Chairman, Mr. A.V.S. Reddy, wound up the discussions with a plea for adopting short term, medium term and long-term strategies to combat the Fluorosis menace.

At the post-lunch session, Dr. Deekshitulu, Director, National Remote Sensing Agency spoke on the good work done by remote sensing in identifying the gravity of the problem of aridity at the national level and the improvements made on the suggestions given.

Dr. R.S. Rao referred to the utility of remote sensing done in Andhra Pradesh and the identifying of drinking water resources in Anantapur District. Dr. C.P. Gupta, spoke on the ground water exploration and management.

Sri. Ananta Reddy, M.P. Anantapur, emphasised that the combating of Fluorosis called for an integrated programme.

The third session was devoted to a study of the magnitude of Fluorosis problem, social awareness about its effects and the remedial measures. Dr. (Mrs.) V.K. Desai of Govt. Medical College, Surat, who presided, expressed regret at the lack of awareness among the people regarding this crippling disease in its different variations as Dental Fluorosis, Skeletal Fluorosis, pain in joints, deformity, paralysis, blood cells and tissue damages, etc. She also touched upon cattle fluorosis.

Prof. N. Gnanasundaram, Madras Dental College, dealt with Dental Fluorosis. He explained that Fluorosis affects the teeth only at the developmental stage. Children alone are prone to this Fluorosis. More than water, food played an important role in Dental Fluorosis.

Dr. S.P.S. Teotia (Meerut) spoke on endemic skeletal Fluorosis and explained its causes as being toxic and metabolic. Calcium is the most potent antibody for skeletal fluorosis. Research findings show a positive co-relation between high fluoride and iodine incidence and Goiter. He maintained that there was zero incidence of kidney stones in such areas. The remedies discussed by the speaker included therapeutic approach, provision of drinking water by deep boring, defluoridation, improved calcium and vitamin D intake. Dr. K.A.R. Krishnamachary, from Hyderabad, discussed clinical fluorosis in children.

He emphasised that all concerned must work patiently for at least ten years to get the desired results because the effort being made at present cannot completely cure those who are already afflicted, it can only save the next generation.

Dr. Anusuya (Deputy Director) enumerated the causes of fluorosis as being not merely high Fluoride content in water but also malnutrition and environmental pollution.

The fourth session entitled "Appropriate Technology for Defluoridation of Drinking Water" was chaired by two outstanding professionals in the Field; Sri. S.M. Panchagutty, Engineer-in-Chief, PHED, Bangalore, and Dr. Arun Patil, Professor, REC. Gadag, Karnataka. Dr. Arun Patil reviewed the different technologies available at different costs for defluoridation of water.

Dr. K.R. Bulusu explained that the essence of defluoridation lies in water passing through a medium as fluoride is one of the most reactive components. When the scientists at Hyderabad were struggling with several minerals for ion-exchange process, Bhagavan's visit to Hyderabad at that time inspired them to come up with the Nalgonda Model to combat fluorosis. It made defluoridation viable with readily available materials. Dr. Patil described different methods of defluoridation.

Dr. K. Venkateswara Rao, Lecturer of the Sai Institute and inventor of the Prasanthi Technique for defluoridation of drinking water, presented his paper under three heads: (1) Survey of Water and food for fluoride content. (2) Technology for defluoridation of drinking water and (3) Extension work. He mentioned that in the experimental process 98 food items were tested wherein fluoride was believed to be present in high proportion, ranging from 0.02 to 11.0 mg per kg /per litre of water. The combined daily intake of fluoride from food and drinking water in the local population was found to range from 2.2 mg to 7.3 mg. Even school-going children were examined for dental fluorosis and community fluorosis index (CFI) was calculated in this regard. Radiological analysis of skeletal fluorosis was done for confirmation of the disease. He observed that no technology was absolutely perfect. It would have to be evaluated in the light of the local needs and constraints. With Bhagavan's grace the Prasanthi Technique was

been installed in about 32 villages in Andhra Pradesh. He examined the problems, issues, and constraints in technology development and implementation which he maintained could be overcome by systematic collaboration of government administrators, doctors, engineers, scientists and the people in the village.

On January 30, the participants of the symposium were taken on a field visit. They visited five villages, Mamillakunta, Rachavaripalli, Kotapalli, Iragarajupalli and Beedupalli.

Sri K. Chandra Mouli, Project Director, D.R.D.A., Anantapur, explained the strategy towards social change and community-based convergent services. Sri S. P. Tucker explained the role of NGOs in tackling the fluorosis problem in villages and gave guidelines for making model district plan:

Dr. K. Venkateswara Rao, explained the activated alumina process and the development of the Prasanthi Technique.

In the post lunch session there was a panel discussion with Sri. K. Kesava Rao of Rajiv Gandhi Technology mission for the Rural Poor, Hyderabad, in the chair, Sri. K. Kesava Rao, Sri. R. Kondala Rao, Sri. S.P. Tucker reviewed the Defluoridation techniques and suggested the preparation of a model District Plan to combat the fluorosis menace.

The valedictory session was held in the presence of Bhagavan Baba. Sri. K. Kondala Rao surveyed the various sessions of the symposium. Some of the Delegates, Dr. Deekshithulu, Director, NRSA, Hyderabad, Sri. S. M. Panchagutty, Bangalore, Dr. (Mrs) V. K. Desai, Surat, and Sri. Muralidharan, Collector, Prakasam District, expressed their thankfulness to Bhagavan Baba and Sri. Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning for hosting the symposium. They were happy about the arrangements made for the participants.

Sri. Kesava Rao, in his valedictory address, spoke on the necessity of a single package programme for community-based convergent services, as Fluorosis is only one problem of drinking water management. The village people and non-government organisations have a vital role to play in dealing with water, a scarce commodity. Though the Anantapur Plan would aim at catering to the needs of the District, the planners should take a holistic view and draw up a perspective plan for the entire country.

Bhagavan Baba gave his valedictory message (published separately).

Bhagavan desired that the decisions arrived at the symposium are translated into action. The officials should have push, patience and perseverance to achieve their goals.

Sri Thirupathaiah, Executive Director, S.C. Corporation, Anantapur, thanked all who made the symposium a success.

**- K..V.R.**

## **"Love is His Form"**

*Whether we wake or lie asleep  
In bliss so high or pain so deep,  
He is here - He's always near,  
Love's His form.*

*Whether we're close or far apart,  
In sorrowful minds or blissful heart,  
He's there, and He does care,  
Love's His form*

*Whatever the name, the caste, the race,  
When compassion glows from any face,  
He does abide deep inside,  
Love's His form.*

**- Joy Thomas  
(California)**

## **The Omnipresence**

Baba, in the eighties, wrote on a copy of the Quran of a Muslim devotee: "I AM IN YOU AND AROUND YOU—BE HAPPY." It was signed by Him. Under the signature there was no date. Sheer nescience at that moment made me attribute the "I" in the statement to the physical form wearing a glowing orange coloured robe. Experience of the years that followed made me realise the sacrilege of this foolish perception.

Since Baba had written the sentence, reluctantly at first, but later with an inexplicable and earnest zeal, I started studying the holy text. With the passing of time, there grew an immense attachment and love for the words of the Revelation. The reading became a comfort and a passion for me. In failure, disease, happiness and bliss I would turn to it. Indeed it became a Friend and a Guide.

However, it took me a decade and more to have a glimpse of the profound truth that Baba's sentence contained... It was then that I comprehended that Baba had expressed the Quranic truth in that statement and that both He and the Words manifested the same Reality. For brevity's sake only three of the meanings of Baba's expression are cited here.

which Divinity addresses itself in the Quran also. It is found in the Text in many places. There is, for example, the declaration:

"I am indeed close (to them), I listen to the prayer of every suppliant..." (II:186)

or,

"You have to return to Me and I will tell you of all that you did," (XXIX:8),

or,

"I say what is just and fitting." (XXXVIII:84)

Furthermore, the term "I" is used to express the most intimate relationship of God with the human soul, in both cases. In a different context this is described as a great bond: "We are nearer to man than his jugular vein." (L:16) Symbolically "I" finds its homonym in "Eye" and the Arabic equivalent "ay'n" which in Sufi exegesis stands for the Essence, Divine Centre in man, Divine "Spring", the Spirit.

Further, two more divine qualities emerge from Baba's sentence. The absence of date under the signature and the phrase, "in you and around you", are signs of Eternity and incomparable Infinity of which the Quran speaks in many places. To cite two examples, there are the verses

"On earth are the signs of those of assured faith and also in your own selves." (L1:20-21) and "Whithersoever you turn, there is the Presence of God." (II:116). With such understanding, I gave up associating Him with the limits of the outer form. May God forgive me for the sin.

The words "in you and around you" also falsify the notion of otherness. It affirms the pivotal significance of the Quran as related in the phrase, "there is no God but God" and the assertion of the Upanishad, "All this is Brahman alone, all this magnificent universe." (Manduka Upanishad II:12).

### **"Be happy"**

The third aspect of the Divine injunction "Be happy" sums up the blessing that the Avatar's life and Quranic Names confer. When man realizes his true identity he is no longer limited. The attributes of Compassionate and Merciful occurring in the opening line of the Quran indicate the possibility of this boon. They are two dimensions of God in the manifestation of the universe. Mercy (Rahim) embraces everything in the world and Grace (Rahman) indicates the Infinite immanence. Thus "Be happy" affirms these two dimensions, in the Avatar's life. With this He makes it also possible to suggest man's own divinity. Through adoration (Love), through knowledge (Jnana), through action (Karma) man can realize his lost position. In compassion, however, the Qura'n also points out: "But most of them understand not." (XXXI: 25)

*Zeba Bashiruddin*

*(All quotations in the article are from Abdullah Yousuf Ali's translation of the Holy Quran.)*

*It is enough if Prema is cultivated, the Prema that knows no distinction between oneself and another, because all are but limbs of One corpus of God Almighty. Through Love alone can the Embodiment of Love be gained. Here, no scholarship is needed; in fact, scholarship will be an impediment, for it caters to egoism and it breeds doubts and the desire for disputation and laurel of victory over others preening themselves as learned.*

—Baba

### **Thy Lotus Feet**

*When I was afraid and filled with fright,  
You were the way, the Guiding Light;  
When I was depressed and in the depths of despair,  
I called Your Name and You were there;  
All of a sudden I felt so warm,  
No words can describe You or Your everlasting form;  
You have a crown of hair and You wear an orange gown,  
You make me happy whenever I'm down;  
The halo behind Your hair is immensely bright,  
You can be found at anytime even at night;  
You are my Mother, Father, Friend and Teacher,  
You love all beings and every creature;  
So many Forms You have taken,  
To teach us humans to spiritually awaken;  
When You came as Rama You searched for Sita during night and day,  
When You came as Krishna enticing melodies on Your flute You would play;  
You are Brahma and you are Vishnu,  
You are Shiva you are my Guru;  
Why must one travel to Mecca, Israel or Shirdi,  
When God has come once more in Puttaparthi;  
Oh Lord Sai! I wait for your sign,  
You are like the sun, You luminously shine;  
I cannot bear the pangs of separation,  
Let me merge in You and attain liberation;  
I pray that I drown in Your love and never reach the shore,  
Then I'll be happy and We can be together once more;  
For You in my heart there is always a seat,  
I offer my salutations at Thy Lotus Feet.*

**By Vivek Bilgi (12 years),  
Edmonton, Canada**



# Sathya and Dharma: Bases of Life

*Truth is God.*

*Truth is the source of wealth and prosperity.*

*It is, again, Truth that sustains virtue in the world.*

Where there is Truth, there dwells Lakshmi, the goddess of Prosperity. Truth is changeless and eternal. It is vital to man's life. If, in the midst of misery and suffering in the world, there is goodness, it is because of Truth.

In ancient times, kings ruled over their kingdoms on the basis of Truth. They were ready to sacrifice everything, even their lives, for upholding truth. Harishchandra stands as the supreme example. He sacrificed his wife, son and the entire kingdom for the sake of truth. He even offered to perform the low task of a caretaker in a crematorium. Because of lack of Truth, there is no peace and security in the world. Truth always protects a nation.

Today we are not adhering to this Truth. Man is dallying with untruth forsaking the path of virtue. He is ruining his life immersed in falsehood and unrighteous actions. Man has lost respect for Truth today. Love is a forgotten value. People deem righteousness

as an irrelevance in the modern context. Everything that man does today, all his plans and projects are self-centered. Even spirituality is practised to gain social recognition, more ostentatious than genuine. All human activities are based on attachment and hatred. Selfishness and jealousy dominate the modern man. Human values have lost their hold and hence there is no peace and security.

## **Truth and right action**

There can be no peace when mankind forgets the base (adhara) and concentrates on the superstructure (adheya). Man is swayed by the delusion that life is meant only to enjoy, eat, drink and sleep. With this view, he acquires wealth and increases his possessions. He makes no attempt to understand the purpose for which he is born in this world. Though he attempts to pursue right action, he fails because of his greed, ambition, lust and other temptations. Truth is the foundation on which the character of man is built. When Truth is not respected, the mansion of life collapses like a building that has a weak foundation. Man does not realise this and pursues a life of sensuous pleasures, ignoring Truth which is the Life Force that sustains his entire being.

This is due to the delusion caused by Maya. Maya is a strange phenomenon that envelops man in spite of all his precautions. It is like a shadow that chases one wherever he may be. The shadow's size depends very much upon the direction of the light. When one moves towards the light and comes under it, the shadow disappears and there is no Maya-only Truth remains.

This is illustrated by the lives of Hiranyakasipu and Hiranyaksha in the Bhagavatam, of Kama and the Kauravas in the Mahabharata and of Ravana in the Ramayana.

It is doubtless essential to acquire skills of various kinds. But the purpose for which they are to be used should also be understood. They have to be used for the realisation of the four main goals of human life, described compendiously as the "Purusharthas" [The four goals are: Dharma, (Righteousness), Artha (Wealth), kama (desire) and Moksha (liberation)].

### **The Purusharthas**

First of all, the term 'Purusha' has to be properly understood. In common parlance, it is applied to a male person. But 'Purusha' refers to the Jiva, the Atma, Prana and the Brahman. It is the Chaitanya (awareness or consciousness) in every being, as distinct from Prakriti, which represents the body (and the phenomenal universe). Prakriti represents the feminine principle, while consciousness represents the male aspect. "Purusha", however, applies to both men and women.

Among the Purusharthas, Dharma comes first. Dharma is commonly understood as referring to activities like going on pilgrimages, offering charity and performing good acts. But these activities serve only to provide mental satisfaction. They do not lead to the Divine. Dharma is the very embodiment of Divinity. All efforts to achieve oneness with the Divine can alone be termed Dharma.

"Artha" is ordinarily understood as referring to wealth. But what is the wealth that one should really seek? It is the wealth of Jnana, the wealth of Divine Wisdom (Brahmajnana). Pursuit of this knowledge is the real quest for wealth, not the pursuit of money and possessions. It is "Jnana Aishwarya" that one must seek. Only that knowledge will lead man to the goal of human life.

"Kama" is not mere fulfillment of worldly desires, which are transient and momentary. The desire should be for "Moksha", which means liberation from attachment to all worldly object and. cultivating attachment to the Divine. Attachment, to the worldly objects is 'moha'. The renunciation of these attachments, which is "Kshaya", leads to "Moha-Kshaya" or "Moksha".

### **The holy vigil**

It is in order to rid oneself of evil tendencies that sacred days like Sivaratri are observed. Nights follow days and days succeed nights. This is an everyday occurrence. What is the speciality of Sivaratri? As this night precedes the New Moon day, it will be pitch dark everywhere outside, the heart will be filled with bright effulgence on this sacred night. Light represents auspiciousness (mangalam). That is why the day is observed as Sivaratri. When Hanuman set the entire city ablaze, the darkness of the night gave place to brilliant light. But at the same time the heart of Ravana was full of darkness. The significance of Sivaratri is that though the entire world is dark outside, if one keeps his heart filled with divine thoughts, he will

fortnight at midnight, when worldly objects concentrate on the Divine, they experience Divine feelings. This is associated with the Sivalingam that transforms the minds of the people. The significance or keeping awake on this night is that it should be spent in the awareness of the Divine. It is necessary to keep awake the whole night with the name of the Divine on one's tongue without stop. But people tend to give more importance to the aspect of merely keeping awake throughout the night in some form or another. They spend the night in witnessing cinema shows or indulging in other unholy activities such as playing cards. This is not the proper way of observing Sivaratri. It is also customary to observe fasting or 'upavasa' by giving up their usual food. The proper way to spend the night is by constant remembrance of "Atmatatwa" or the Inner-Self by chanting the Lord's name.

### **Rules for the journey of life**

To proceed on one's life's journey successfully is like driving a car safely. This requires right understanding of how to handle the switch, the steering wheel, the gears and the brakes. One should also follow the Vedic Maxim "Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara". It is an injunction to man to speak the Truth and practise right conduct. This will help him to be true to his conscience. Those who practise Dharma and speak the Truth always in course of time become Divine. They merge in the Divine like the river merging with the ocean.

Truth and Righteousness are at the root of human existence. No one should think it is difficult to adhere to truth. In fact it is easier to speak the truth while it needs a lot of cleverness to tell an untruth and sustain it.

Righteousness (Dharma) is the root of human life. Its importance is not realised just-as people looking at the fruit of a tree do not recognise the roots from which the tree and its fruits derive their sustenance. The tree has grown because of the water supplied at its root. People want to enjoy the fruits of life without watering the roots of Dharma which nourish the tree of life. The Bhagavad Gita speaks about 'Karmaphalatyaaga' (renouncing the fruits of one's action). Karma is the tree and the fruit you see in the tree is the result of your karma. What is it based upon? That is the 'marma' (the secret). It is the unseen. 'Dharma' that is the secret. It is the unseen root of the tree. The meaning of this marma or secret is that we should follow Dharma which determines the nature of the fruit borne by the tree.

To use another analogy, the mansion of life may be said to have four walls. These are Dharma, karma, marma and janma (birth). Brahma is based on these four walls. The Brahmatattwa (the Brahman principle) is within you. There is no need to search for it outside. All that is needed is to make an enquiry about the Self within.

### **How the Divine works**

Take for instance, your body. How many realise the miraculous working of innumerable organs within the body? Everyone must understand how organs like the heart function and see that no excessive strain is placed upon them. The heart and the lungs are discharging their functions ceaselessly and regularly with rhythmic precision. All the limbs are doing their

("you are entitled only to perform your duty"). They are carrying out their respective duties without any concern for their rewards. This is, indeed, the lesson to be learnt from the ways of Nature. It has been well said: Nature is the best teacher. Look at the way the heart functions; the impure blood comes through one channel, it is purified and is pumped to all parts of the body through another channel. This is the process by which the body is kept hale and healthy. This is how the Divine works. Whatever doctors may say, the wonderful activities going on within the body ceaselessly and automatically are manifestations of the power of the Divine.

Students today do not realise the inner meaning of some of the rituals practised by the ancients and preserved even today. They have been prescribed for specific purposes and are full of meaning. They are intended to achieve physical, mental and spiritual purity. (Swami referred in this context to an incident in which the grandson of an old gentleman watched the latter sipping a few drops of water from his palm after uttering a mantra. The lad, who was dipping his pen from time to time in an ink bottle to do his homework, asked his grandfather why he was drinking the water in small droplets instead of drinking it all in one gulp. The grandfather asked him why he was dipping his pen into the inkbottle frequently instead of pouring the ink on the paper! Just as the pen has to be dipped for writing a few words at a time the water has to be taken with the words of the mantra each time. The lad learnt a good lesson from the example of his own action.)

You must have full faith in God and should not let anyone disturb it. If an atheist asks you why you believe in God you should firmly tell him that it is none of his business to question the devotee's belief which is purely a personal matter between him and his God. No one has a right to question another man's belief.

### **Have firm faith**

God's ways may not be easy to comprehend. But whatever God does is only out of His boundless love to help the devotees. Some do not understand this and attribute partiality to God. This is due to ignorance. True devotees should not give room for such doubts and undermine their faith in God. They should always try to strive to seek the one Divine in the many.

Scientists employ all kinds of instruments (yantras) and declare that they have not found God anywhere. But the saints, seeing God with the inner vision, see Him everywhere. They use the power of Mantra to see God, they see God through the lens of Love.

When some people ask you, "Can you show God?" you should reply: "You are God; that is why you are able to talk and act." There is nothing in the world other than God! To know divinity you should know the sacredness within you. Keeping salt in your mouth, you can't taste anything that is sweet. Only when you cast off the salt and wash your mouth you can experience the taste of the sweet. Worldly desires are like salt. Discard them. Then you can realise Divinity. You must shed the evil qualities of jealousy, hatred and anger and divest yourself of the ego. If you rectify your defects and cleanse your heart, you can realise Sathya and Dharma as the basis of your life. This is the Life Principle and with this you can lead a purposeful life. Making use of

senses as horses, to the right destination.

### **Adhere to your dharma**

You must understand your Dharma without which you cannot act in the right manner. You are the master with the intellect and mind as instruments. The mind is compared to the moon and the intellect to the sun. When the sky is clouded in the rainy season, the moon is hidden from our view by dark clouds. Similarly, our minds may be clouded by bad thoughts. But when the discriminating intellect represented by the sun comes into play, you have the effulgence that dispels the darkness. Man is unlike animals whose vertebral column is horizontal. Man can stand erect on his two legs. Animals have instincts but no mind or intellect. Man has the power to discriminate between good and bad.

Embodiments of Love! Purify your minds. Shed jealousy and hatred: Chanting God's name will confer bliss on you. You are unable to understand the inner feelings of joy that the chanting of the Divine name will yield. You should identify yourself with the Divine vibrations which are like electric waves creating boundless energy.

### **"Be human"**

The word 'human' is full of significance:

'h' stands for "high human values"

'u' stands for "Understanding of human sanctity".

'm' stands for being "mindful of one's duty".

'a' stands for anandam (bliss)

'n' stands for the name of God.

So you should go on chanting the name of God repeatedly throughout this precious night.

Bhagavan concluded his discourse and inaugurated the night-long holy vigil with the song,  
*"Bhajana Binaa Sukha Saanthi nahi"*

**—From Bhagavan's discourse in the Poornachandra Auditorium on March 10, 1994**

AVATAR VANI

SIVARATRI SANDESH

## **God Realisation by Sense Control**

*Embodiments of love!*

Wherever the mind wanders, there the three worlds can be experienced. Where the mind is absent, there is a total void. The Bharatiya festivals have been designed to control the tendencies of the mind.

*It is not easy to correct the mind.  
"A tree can be made to grow straight,  
a stone can be shorn of its roughness,  
but can one straighten the mind?" (Poem)*

Everyone should understand the rationale of every sacred festival. Today is the holy day of Sivaratri. Based on the science of numerology, every letter of the alphabet has a specific numerical value. "Si" bears the value 4. "Va" has the value of 5, "Ra", a value of 2. When the values of the three are combined, you have a total of 11. This eleven represents the eleven Rudras.

### **Role of Rudras**

What are the functions of these Rudras? The Rudras, in association with the Buddhi (the Intellect), enter the minds of people and cause them various types of difficulties and worries.) Of these difficulties, three types are predominant in the world. They are Adibhoutic Adhyatmic and Adidaivic.

"Adibhoutic" refers to difficulties caused by the five elements (ether, air, fire, water and earth) and the five sheaths (relating to food, life, mind, awareness and bliss). These sufferings are caused by human beings, animals, insects or other creatures.

"Adhyatmic" refers to sufferings caused by wind, bile and phlegm (Vata, Pitta and Kapha).

"Adidaivic" refers to the calamities caused to man by floods and drought, storms and earthquakes and similar natural disasters.

Of all the sufferings endured by human beings, those coming under these three categories are most prominent. All other calamities are encompassed by these three.

For all these sufferings the eleven Rudras are the cause. The whole world is permeated by the Rudras. Only "Adidaivic" has an element of security.

Whatever emanates from Rudra is fraught with fear. The name itself testifies to the dangerous power implicit in it. "Rudram" means that which induces fear. The eleven Rudras are dreadful in form. These dreadful entities enter the minds of human beings and subject them to all kinds of afflictions.

### **Rudras and sense control**

This Mahasivaratri festival has been designed to subdue these eleven Rudras. This means that by the control of the senses the Rudras can be controlled. Control of the senses (Indriyani-graha) is not that easy. Even if evil impulses coming from external sources are controlled, those arising from within cannot be easily controlled. But if, at least on one night out of 365 days in a year, the senses are brought under control, then peace may be experienced and the quest for

one's mind, speech and senses all get centered on God. This is itself a form of sense control. At least on one day in a year all our thoughts and words should be centered on God. When this is done, people can realise the Supreme as described in the terms, "Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram". (Socrates' disciple, Plato, used the terms, Truth, Goodness and Beauty to describe this state of Self-Realisation.) In the experience of oneness with the Divine, there is peace (Santhi), Awareness (Chit) and Bliss (Ananda).

### **Sat-Chit-Ananda**

The Lord is experienced as "Sat-Chit-Ananda". What is "Sat"? "Sat" is Being, that which is eternally present. This means that even when an object is not there, its qualities are present. In Vedantic parlance, these qualities are described as "Asti", "Bhaati", and "Priyam". "Asti" means "Existence" (the quality of permanence). This may be likened, say, to sugar. In whatever manner sugar may be used, by dissolving it in water or mixing it with flour, its quality of sweetness remains. It is "Sat" in the sense that it has the unchanging quality of sweetness.

"Chit" is awareness (or consciousness). "Chit" is like water. When "Sat" (as sugar) is combined with "Chit" (as water) you have neither sugar nor water, but syrup. The combination of "Sat" and "Chit" results in "Ananda" (Bliss). When the unchanging, eternal Divinity unites with the changing and inert Prakriti (Nature), you have Ananda. The significance of Mahasivaratri is that it is an auspicious occasion when Sat-Chit-Ananda can be experienced.

While the Rudras are inflicting sufferings on mankind in various ways, by the control of the senses, if humans turn their minds towards God and devote themselves to Godly pursuits, they will find their path to liberation (Moksha). "Moksha" means getting rid of "Moha" (the delusions relating to the physical).

In this manner every one has to understand the true significance of sacred festivals like Sivaratri.

### **Importance of Sivaratri**

Among these festival days, Mahasivaratri is of exceptional importance. Today God is in close proximity to man. At midnight (on Sivaratri), Divine vibrations are close to every human heart. At such a time, when people are engaged in holy tasks, they get suffused with the Divine vibrations.

People should realise that there is nothing closer to them than the Divine. Even one's mother may occasionally be remote from the child, but the Divine is never far from anyone at any time. This means that every one is Divine. But each one must strive to recognise this indwelling Divinity that is the eternal Reality. Most people waste their lives in the observance of external rituals and forms of worship. Together with external observances, people should also try to achieve internal purity. How long should one waste his life in external forms? All knowledge and skills are of superficial value and effect no internal change.

Embodiments of the Divine Atma! Time is passing. You are forgetting your obligations. Your life has been given to you to fulfill your Divine duties. Do your duty. For years you have been listening to Swami's teachings. You are meeting many noble persons. You are performing various kinds of Sadhana (spiritual exercises). What is the bliss you have derived from all these? When you put this question, there is no answer. Are you going forward at least in any one aspect (of spirituality)? Are you able to concentrate your mind on a single sacred act? What is it you have accomplished? What are you seeking? What is the inner significance of the fruits you seek? There is no meaning in your quest. You seek the fruits of good actions, but you indulge in bad acts. If one seeks the fruits of good deeds, he must do good deeds. Bad actions can only yield bad results. There is a Sanskrit saying, "Man desires the fruits of meritorious deeds, but performs no meritorious acts. Man wants to avoid the fruits of sin, but indulges in sinful deeds."

What kind of results can one have if from dawn to dusk he engages himself in untruthful, unrighteous and evil actions? To the extent possible, one should try to practise at least a few sacred teachings. Otherwise, one will be overtaken by death with the passing of time and the wastage of the body. All your achievements amount to nothing, it is your primary duty to practise one or two of the sacred teachings.

### **Duty of devotees**

You have been in the Ashram for many years. You have listened to many discourses. But you have derived little benefit from all this. You must ponder over this seriously. Then only you will reap the benefit of participation in sacred festivals.

On this sacred occasion, you must strive to eradicate the evil tendencies in you. When your conscience tells you that something is wrong, you should refrain from doing it. You betray your true humanness when you fail to act up to the dictates of your conscience.

When one's words are in accord with one's thoughts, they become truth. When the spoken word is translated into action, it becomes Dharma (right action). The basis for both Truth and Right Action is the Conscience (Antaratma) the Indwelling Spirit. The thoughts that emanate from the Indwelling Spirit should find expression in speech. If the inner feelings are different from what is spoken, can the words be treated as truth or untruth? Clearly, it is untruth. When one's action is not in accordance with his words, it is unrighteous (Adharma) action. Truth and Righteousness are expressions of the promptings from the depths of one's Conscience. Today people are prone to disregard the voice of conscience.

### **Bhishma and Vibhishana**

I have had frequent occasions to refer to the lessons to be learnt from the great epics. In the Mahabharata, we have the heroic figure of Bhishma. He was a great sage, a man of supreme wisdom (Jnani) and a person of unshakable determination. He stood foremost in honouring his plighted word. Such a person knew quite well that what he was allowing the Kauravas to do was manifestly wrong. He knew that the Kauravas were indulging in evil deeds. He was aware that they were following unrighteous and untruthful ways. Nevertheless he was too weak to correct



Commander-in-Chief of the Kaurava armies. This was a blemish in his character. He was unable to act up to the dictates of his conscience (Antarvani). Therein lay his weakness.

Compare Bhishma's failure with the conduct of Vibhishana. He was of demonic lineage and lived and moved among Rakshasas. He was aware that what his elder brother (Ravana) had done (by kidnapping Sita) was wrong. Knowing this, he warned Ravana in various ways. He repeatedly told Ravana: "This is wrong. You should not do this. It is not good for you". Vibhishana felt that it was his duty to warn Ravana (against his evil ways). Ultimately, failing to convince Ravana, he chose to give up his brother and seek asylum with Rama.

When we compare the attitudes of the two, we find that Vibhishana is greater than Bhishma. Despite his knowing the wicked ways of the Kauravas, Bhishma was unable to intervene. Vibhishana, on the contrary, chided Ravana. He turned away from the wicked and found refuge in God. Thus, in the practice of sacred actions, Vibhishana emerges as a greater figure than Bhishma. This is the lesson taught by the epics.

Are you giving any thought to such sacred lessons? You read books, but do not care to practise their teachings. You listen to discourses but do not live up to them. You have to put into practice the teachings which you learn.

What, then, is the meaning of spirituality? It is not the reading of scriptures or the performance of rituals. It is to live up to the truth one has learnt. Unfortunately today, because of the influence of Kali, this does not happen.

### **Sacrifice the senses**

At least on this auspicious day, people should concentrate their minds on God with purity and devotion. The control of the senses is itself a form of sacrifice (Thyaga) which leads to Immortality. Sacrifice of wealth or possessions is no sacrifice at all. It is the sacrifice of the senses (the desires caused by them) which is the highest sacrifice.

The Vedas refer to the sacrifice of "Tana, Mana, Dhana" "Tana" refers to the body, "Mana" refers to the mind. What is "Dhana"? It is the wealth of the senses (with which man is endowed). It is the senses that have to be sacrificed, not the body, which is made up of the five elements and contains all kinds of refuse. It is the attachment to the body that has to be given up. The hold of the senses has to be reduced. What is the value of all the pleasures you profess to enjoy? If you cannot sacrifice these trivial and transient pleasures, how can you experience the Bliss of the Eternal? If people cannot give up petty addictions to coffee or betel leaves, how can they acquire control over the senses? This can be done only by spiritual Sadhana.

In Swami's view, giving up is easier than holding on to things. (Swami showed that it is easier to give up a handkerchief than to hold it in the hand). Examine the sacrifices you are making in everyday life. You breathe in and breathe out. The exhalation is essential for purifying the lungs. Part of the food consumed is discharged as excreta. Without this

acquisition. Our well-being is related to sacrifice (Tyaga). It should be recognised that festivals are intended to promote the spirit of sacrifice and not for indulgence in revelry, which leads to illness. Sacrifice promotes Yoga (communion with God). God looks for your devotion and not for your abilities. He looks into your mind (Chit) rather than at your wealth (Viththa). He judges you by your virtues and not by your caste. He is concerned about what you think than about the religion you profess. He is intent on attracting your heart and not your wealth. But, today, people imagine that God can be propitiated by the offer of money. This is due to the devotee's ignorance.

However, money has a useful role to play in the service of worthy causes. God has no part to play in this. People try to influence the Divine by some kind of "force". God cannot be secured by "force". He is amenable only to the "Inner source".

Many good deeds are being done all over the world. People should participate in such good activities, render help to others and regard them as spiritual exercises.

As I am always in a state of bliss, I make no distinction between a happy and auspicious event and one that is unhappy or inauspicious. These distinctions are made by persons attached to the body-mind complex.

### **A donation from New York**

Last night I received a communication from New York to the following effect: "The welfare activities carried on by Swami, the service programmes launched by Swami, the uniqueness of the Hospital established by Swami, have been hailed by people all over the world. Bharatiyas have not fully appreciated their value. In appreciation of the unique services rendered by Swami, without any kind of publicity or propaganda, we wish to make our humble contribution to this cause and our offering, as the first installment, this token remittance." The donors, who wished to remain anonymous, have sent Rs. 100 crores (Cheers). Out of this amount, Rs. 50 crores are to be kept in fixed deposit, from the interest on which the recurring expenses of the Super-Speciality Hospital will be met. Rs. 25 crores are offered to the Institute of Higher Learning for the promotion of human values in education. The balance of Rs. 25 crores has been offered to the Sathya Sai Central Trust for whatever incidental expenses it may have to meet in carrying on its activities.

This amount has been described as "the first installment". The donors have declared that they consider it as their good fortune to have been allowed to make this donation.

This is true sacrifice. Many who make petty gifts advertise their donations in loud terms. The New York donors desired to remain anonymous. "Name is not important. Service alone matters. And even here, what Bhagavan is doing is sacred service." This is their declaration.

### **Response to selfless service**

response to our selfless service. Hence, engage yourselves in selfless service. The reward for it will come of its own accord. Do not have any doubts on this score. Whatever you undertake to do, do it with all your heart and to your full satisfaction. That satisfaction will give you all the reward and recompense. It will confer all strength. This is the quality you have to cultivate. Acquire this true wealth. Without goodness, all other riches are of no avail.

### **Steady faith needed**

Embodiments of Love! Many sacred events like this are happening all over the world. The glory of Sathya Sai has spread to every part of the world. Unfortunately, Bharatiyas alone appear to live under the shadow of a lamp, as it were. The entire world is enjoying the light going out from here. For this, the faith of the people outside is mainly responsible. Here, the faith comes and goes. Faith here swings like a pendulum. This is not good. You should have a steady mind. Every one should develop this kind of faith. Only when there is faith, love will sprout.

*Where there is confidence, there is love.*

*Where there is love, there is peace.*

*Where there is peace, there is truth.*

*Where there is truth, there is bliss.*

*Where there is bliss, there is God.*

Hence, if there is no confidence, how can there be love? When you see some miracle, devotion arises. But, the next moment, there is a change. This is not the right kind of faith. Faith should be unaffected by ups and downs. It should not be like passing clouds. Today many lack steadiness. People should have a rock-like faith that remains unshaken, whatever may happen. Take the example of Harishchandra. His adherence to truth remained firm, despite all the troubles to which he was subjected, including the loss of his kingdom, his wife and son. He was reduced to the position of a watchman in a burning-ghat. But he remained steadfast.

It is in this spirit that you should enter on any task. Harishchandra did not worry about the sacrifices he had to make for the sake of truth. Accept whatever the Lord gives as a benediction. Esteem it as a gracious gift from God. Because of his firm faith, Harishchandra ultimately got back his wife, son and kingdom. Therefore, you should have a faith that is unwavering and unshakable. Lead a life of firm faith.

The holy night of Mahasivaratri is intended to serve as a sacred occasion for turning the mind firmly towards God. You are surrounded by Rudras and all your happiness and sorrow are caused by them. When you bring them under your control, your life becomes secure. You will be successful in every endeavour.

### **Do your duty: realise God**

Men are wasting their precious lives in the pursuit of fleeting and petty pleasures. Make the best use of the opportunity you have now got. That is true devotion. You alone are responsible for your condition because of the way your mind works. Do your duty, recognise the truth of

experience the Divine. You may have desires, aspirations and yearning for happiness. But there is nothing equal to the bliss of experiencing the Divine and you will secure this bliss, wherever God may be.

*Life is one long series of worries from birth to death.  
But all worries can be overcome by the love of God.  
Cultivate this love at least from now onwards. (Poem)*

Turn your minds towards God. Limit your worldly desires. Why waste all your life in the endless pursuit of wealth?

### **Swami's sankalpa**

The communication which I received yesterday made me ask why so much money had been sent. Swami decided that it should be spent on projects of permanent value. Swami's will is adamant. No one can alter it. Swami's glory, fame and sacredness have not been achieved by publicity. They are the results of Swami's actions. I have no concern with publicity. Action alone counts. What is achieved by publicity, will disappear through publicity.

Sai will not be affected by propaganda (Cheers). The world may be affected one way or the other by propaganda. Sai will not be affected at all. Conduct is most important. All Sai institutions must conduct themselves properly. Propaganda by practice is what matters. At least in future, set an example to others by your actions and give a lead to the people. This is what I desire, nothing else.

### **Service to the nation**

The nation has to be improved. Render service to the country. Whatever you may do, consider it as service to Sai. Cultivate this spirit of sacrifice. When you are here, you display your spirit of sacrifice. But after you leave, you develop desires. This is not good. You must exemplify the same spirit wherever you may be. Wherever you may go, you must have the spirit of service. You must redeem your life through selfless seva.

V/Embodiments of the Divine Atma! The whole of last night you were all immersed in the blissful vibrations in Prasanthi Nilayam caused by the chanting of the Lord's name. You must see that the Nilayam in each of you is always filled with these divine vibrations.

What is this Nilayam? It is your body, which enshrines the Atma. There are the divine vibrations always in you. They constitute your Life-Force. The body is inert by itself. It is the divine vibrations that animate it. Both the body and the Vital Force derive their power from the energy radiating from the Atma (the indwelling Spirit). You are thus a composite of the body (material substance), the Life Force (vibrations) and the Atma (Radiation). Seek God within you. This is true Sadhana.

is shared. The heart is like a perennial spring. The more you draw from it, the more it *will* flow with love.

Bhagavan concluded his discourse with the Bhajan, "*Prema Muditha Manase Kaho*". The entire Auditorium reverberated with the name of "Rama" recited by a myriad devoted throats in unison.

**From Bhagavan's discourse in the Poornachandra Auditorium on the morning of  
March 11, 1994**

*"A loveless heart is a dry desert. Love is the foundation of life. The air that is inhaled and exhaled has to be loved in order that it may replenish and revive."* —**Baba**

#### *SPIRITUALITY AND BUSINESS*

### **Bhagavan's Concept of Dharmic Management**

We all know that Bhagavan Baba's clarion call that Dharma is for everybody, for all people in all walks of life, at all times, in all situations. And we all know that whenever Baba says anything He "means business". In this case, in both senses of the "means business" phrase: He is serious about his mission to restore Dharma to the world. He fully intends to restore it in the business world as well.

Too many business people don't seem to be hearing this Divine wake up call. Or, they seem to forget or ignore this Spiritual Directive, or they simply don't think about it. "Business is business", they say, "and business has nothing to do with spirituality." They behave as though the moral standards we live by in life don't apply to business. They take it for granted that the norms of honesty and integrity in life become bent out of shape when applied to commerce. When they think about it, of course, they see that this twisting is not correct. But they never seriously pursue this thought.

#### **The profound issues**

A few years ago, Bhagavan Baba directed me to write a book on human values and spirit in management entitled "Dharmic Management". At first I thought it would be a relatively easy assignment as I had been working and teaching in the field for over a generation. So I set out to draft a straightforward management book about how to transform organizations toward being more Dharmic. But, the deeper I dived into the ocean of questions facing managers (and anyone) these days, the more profound the issues were. Ultimately, I found myself plunged into the big questions of life that people all over (not only business people) are increasingly asking: What is

live a life of more integrity?

It follows that people carry those questions into the workplace, and thus it is rapidly becoming clear that more and more business people are asking how they can live a fuller, more ethical, more Dharmic life, both on and off the job.

### **Dharma and spirituality**

I also soon discovered that any talk of Dharma in business without addressing the issue of Spirit in business is incomplete. Dharma and Spirituality are inseparable. To paraphrase Bhagavan's educational philosophy and apply it here: The end of business is not profits it is character!

The next three years, writing the book was a wondrously blessed Sadhana. Bhagavan, my beloved Mother-Father, took me strongly by the hand and led me over and through the barricades of ignorance and shyness. As I travelled this wondrous road I was made to see that the key questions for today's managers and leaders, and anyone else (because everyone nowadays is a member of some sort of organization), are no longer issues of task and structure but are questions of spirit, integrity, and human values. The book became my humble presentation of Swamiji's clear truths about the erosion of spirit and the pattern of thoughtless dishonesty that is sweeping the world these days.

### **Dharma and the workplace**

In the book I (Swamiji, really) explain that the word Dharma is Sanskrit for deep, deep integrity having the courage and self-discipline to live by your inner truth and that Dharmic Management means bringing that truth with you when you go to work every day. Dharmic Management is the fusing of spirit, character, human values, and decency in the workplace and in life as a whole.

At one point, I reached out to a panel of business managers for some straight-forward comments about character in the workplace. We talked for several hours of the competitive world out there and how you have to maneuver for position or get left out. They complained about the explosion of greed in the world and spoke of kick-backs and double dealings becoming so commonplace in certain places that people think it is natural. They fussed about being forced into all this by "the system." "That's the way it works," was their thin excuse for the adharmic in business.

"It's the pattern," they said, their voices tinged with resignation and sorrow. "Take, take, take. After a while taking becomes second nature. Giving? Hai, you never even think about it—it's just take, take," They eventually summarised their woes: "Fact is, you have to make a living, and to do that, you have to be in an organization and to be in one without self-destructing, you have to compromise yourself. Personal integrity gets sanded away. You erode your principles everyday so you can live to erode another day. That's sad, but true," they lamented. "After a

won't let them forget. "Man's conscience will always tell him," says Swami.

### **Agonising questions**

I had asked them to shed a little light on the subject, and was a bit surprised when they directed the glare smack in my face. Suddenly we were squinting at the harsh realities of life suffered by people in organizations. Their lengthy discussion can be distilled down to a few heart-rending queries

*How do we live a Dharmic life in a world that tears at our integrity?*

*How do we scrub away the deceit and self-interest that sticks to us in organizations?*

*How do we guard our values in their hard, real world?*

*How do we harden ourselves, against compromise?*

*How can we stop sandpapering truth?*

*How can we overcome this widespread selfishness and greed that we are (actively or passively) victims of!*

### **Facing the demons**

These are beastly questions brought about by the powerful demons that Swami tells us are devouring us; Ego, Greed, Desire, Deceit, and Fear. There is simply no way that we mere mortals can win against such monstrous adversaries. We must enlist the aid of the power that is mightier than these demons. We have to turn toward Spirit, following Bhagavan's teaching, "always, ALWAYS turn Godward."

In one part of the book Bhagavan's teachings inspired me to write certain prescriptions for building character. Here are some of the ones that pertain here:

**In the World, not of the World:** Although we have to act out our parts in this worldly drama, we must not succumb to the dishonesty that exists throughout the world. We can, and must, play this role with utmost reverence for Dharma.

**Listen to inner Truth:** Through thick and thin, remain attached to your inner truth. This is your direct line to, and from God. Indeed, "Truth is God," states Bhagavan.

**Dharmic Credo:** The greatest decisions of life are made daily in the silent inner garden of the soul. We must cultivate and nurture that private place. Writing up a personal manifesto of right action, integrity and character is a way to further that. Use this credo as a staunch life policy, as no less than a covenant with God to guide your every act.

**Do No Harm:** Above all else, hurt no one. Sometimes, to get things done, it may seem that we have to bend certain rules. The point, as Bhagavan points out, is never, ever to go so far that it harms others or yourself. Never step even a little beyond your own sense of rightness because that sense is inner truth signalling.

and more) you have to become serious about Swami's injunction to limit your desires. You know by now that more is never enough. All desires, including even satisfied ones, just add lust for more. Turning Godward, obtaining His help is the medication for combating this deadly disease.

**Empower Purity:** When you feel contaminated you have to scrub-up and the sooner the better, even if it isn't a major thing causing it. Contamination doesn't just sit, it accumulates. You're always becoming either cleaner or dirtier. The task is to constantly think of purity, to continuously place our attention on our own purification.

You empower your purity (your Truth, the God within) so it can empower you. Bringing pureness so cleanly into consciousness makes that truth the strongest part of you. And you can make it automatic. Do this re-programming each time you feel you are being corrupted and it not only helps you ride through the bad situation, but it also becomes a habit. Purity then becomes self-enacting.

This, of course, is the same mechanism as Namasmara, repeating the name of the Lord, which Swami prescribes for all of us. This wonderfully simple act actually brings the Lord, installing Him in our heart, and thus transforming our life. We can do the same with purity, and transform our foulness.

**Regrow Wholeness:** Swamiji tells us to give our self to Him. This means that no matter how bad our past mistakes, we can give them over to Him-Whatever it is that we lost along the way, heart, courage, purity-we can, with God's help, grow it back. Slowly and surely we have to reclaim, refill, and become whole-and thus regain our Self.

### **Spiritual leadership**

**Leadership of Organization Character:** The main task of the Dharmic leader is to make integrity workable in the organization. An environment saturated with integrity soaks those who inhabit it in integrity. Coming to an organization that is already awash in integrity makes personal integrity easier. Good leadership creates the conditions in which people are always keeping what Swami calls "good company".

The Dharmic leader does this in three ways. First, by taking the lead himself or herself. Swami says: "As is the ruler, so are the subjects". The leader has to model personal integrity and then has to demand it. There is no other way. The character of an organization is leader-bound. The leader is either part of the solution or part of the problem. (Note: this applies to people below the "official" top, also. Don't wait for them "up there" to do it. It can be said 'that you are at the "top" of your particular segment of the organization. Character is worked from the top down, so you must take responsibility for your own actions from your own personal "top" down to yourself).



organization's values. The leader with character sends crisp signals: "This by God is what we stand for!"

Thirdly, and finally, the leader of character takes as the primary task of leadership nothing less than conferring Dharma. It sounds audacious at first "conferring" right action, simply bestowing goodness on a human system. And yet, the leader has to assume that it is his or her responsibility to assign character.

You have to endow your people with heart and grit to live by integrity. You literally "in-courage" them. You actually grant fearlessness. You absolutely require self-discipline. You expect, adamantly and openly, that the organization lives by its collective inner truth. This is spiritual leadership. This is leadership as Bhagavan would have us practise it.

All of these tasks of leadership appear to be "new" responsibilities for leaders. That's because people haven't thought about it much as yet. But they will. Dharmic leadership, as well as Dharmic management and Dharmic living, is but another of the elements in Bhagavan's clarion call to Dharma.

**Dr. Jack Hawley, Ph.D., California**

*(Dr. Hawley is the author of "Reawakening the Spirit in Work: the Power of Dharmic Management" published in the USA by Berrett - Koehler, San Francisco; in India by Tata McGraw-Hill, New Delhi; in Argentina (Spanish language edition) by Errepar, Buenos Aires). Ed.)*

*What is the happiest day in your life? All are happy days to a person of true knowledge. Happiness is an internal conscious experience which comes as an effect of the extinction of mental or physical desire. The less the desire, the greater is the happiness, so that perfect happiness consists in the destruction or satisfaction of all desires in the Absolute being. Life is an experience meant to train the individual for a higher, deeper and more expanded state of existence through the experience of the results of action. The aim of everybody's life is the attainment of complete perfection in the spiritual Absolute.*

**—Baba**

## **Mahasivaratri at Prasanthi Nilayam**

Devotees from all over the world thronged in their thousands at Prasanthi Nilayam to participate, on March 10th, in the night-long sacred sadhana of chanting the name of the Lord in the Divine presence of Bhagavan Baba and taste the bliss of His sweet message.

The Mandir premises, both inside and outside, were filled with expectant devotees who were eager to have Bhagavan's Darshan and blessings on this holy Mahasivaratri day. Bhagavan walked into the compound of the Mandir, radiating love and compassion, wearing a robe of golden hue. He blessed the multitude of devotees going around within the Mandir and the grounds outside blessing those who were seated outside the Mandir compound for want of space inside.

Punctually at 7 a.m. the students started chanting sacred hymns in praise of Siva and the Siva Linga, filling the entire area with Divine vibrations. This was followed by devotional songs. After an hour-long programme, Bhagavan directed the distribution of sweets to all the thousands of devotees, while Bhajans were going on. He took the Arati at 8.15 a.m. It was announced that Bhagavan would give His Sivaratri message in the afternoon.

Well before 4 p.m. the Poornachandra Auditorium was filled to capacity and thousands of devotees, both women and men, had to be content with squatting on the platforms and grounds outside. The stage of the Auditorium was specially decorated with a backdrop depicting a Sivalingam with the table as the Peetam (Base) for the Lingam. Bhagavan came at 4.25 p.m. The afternoon's programme began with a group of students chanting Vedic hymns. Bhagavan made a quick round to give darshan to the devotees in the Auditorium.

### **A surgical miracle**

Sri V. Srinivasan spoke on the importance of the festival of Sivaratri and said all those present on the occasion were indeed fortunate to participate in the sacred celebration in the Divine presence of Bhagavan Baba.

He referred to a highly complicated surgical operation performed on a person who was ailing from diseases of the heart, the kidney and lungs, besides cancer. As other doctors had declined to undertake surgical treatment for the person, he was brought to the Sathya Sai Super Speciality Hospital where the expert doctors, after ascertaining that Baba had given His permission to them to perform the operation, completed the multiple surgery successfully after working for five hours. The success of the operation was solely due to Bhagavan's grace, he said. He concluded his talk by appealing to all devotees to put into practice the teachings of Bhagavan as the only way of expressing their gratitude to Bhagavan for the unlimited grace that he was showering on all of them.

Bhagavan then gave one of his longest discourses, lasting nearly two hours, wherein He stressed the need for Sathya and Dharma to be practised by all as the foundation of a God-oriented life. (Details of the discourse are published separately). At the end of the discourse, Bhagavan initiated the night's Bhajan programme by lighting the sacred lamps and exhorted all the devotees to join in the singing of Bhajans throughout the night. Bhagavan blessed the gathering with His presence for some time.

taking the major part.

The next morning Bhagavan gave darshan to the devotees at 6.15 a.m. and blessed the gathering with another Divine discourse in which He spoke about the significance of Sivaratri and made a special reference to a communication from American devotees offering a donation of Rupees one hundred crores for the Central Trust in appreciation of the wonderful way the Sathya Sai Super Speciality Hospital was being run for the benefit of the poor. Bhagavan described it as a shining example of selfless sacrifice (Details of the discourse are given elsewhere).

After the Arati, Bhagavan personally directed the distribution of prasadam of sweet pongal and tamarind rice to all the thousands of devotees assembled inside and outside the Auditorium.

### **Helping Others**

I recently began voluntary work at Kobe Kaisei Hospital (Japan). This is a difficult country to find meaningful activities. There is a barrier of language, culture and customs. These prevent foreigners from assimilating into Japanese society. On the other hand, we all need friends and social activities and it is all too easy to lead a frivolous lifestyle. I believe we should help the community in which we live. This brought me to Kaisei Hospital. The first thing I was given were the Ten Commandments of Human Relations.

1. Speak to people—There is nothing as nice as a cheerful word.
2. Smile at people—it takes 72 muscles to frown; only 14 to smile.
3. Call people by name—the sweetest music to anyone's ear is the sound of his name.
4. Be friendly and helpful—if you would have friends, be friendly.
5. Be cordial—Speak and act as if everything you do were a genuine pleasure.
6. Be genuinely interested in people—You can like everybody if you try.
7. Be generous with praise, cautious with criticism.
8. Be considerate to the feelings of others. It will be appreciated.
9. Be thoughtful about the opinions of others—There are three sides to a controversy-yours, the other fellow's and the right one.
10. Be alert to give service. What counts in life is what we do for others.

I met a variety of people at Kaisei Hospital. I particularly remember a young boy of 12 years who was ill with leukemia. It distressed me to think, so soon he must face death. It makes you realise that time is wasted in anger, vanity and uncharitable thoughts.

education of a foreigner, has shown what we should do for India. My work at Kaisei is a small contribution to my ideal of helping the less fortunate.

**Shalini Chand (Kobe)**  
(From Kan-Sai Light, Japan)

### **Devotion: Whence and Whither**

Where does devotion dwell?  
Not just in winning words,  
Nor in the sweetest song,  
But in the little deeds  
Done with love all day long.

What does devotion shun?  
Egos that usurp his role,  
Tongues that do not speak true,  
Acts irreverent of Him,  
Thoughts not of cheerful hue.

When is devotion false?  
When the outer show is grand,  
And wears the Hypocrite's pose  
When artificial routine  
Robs fragrance from the rose.

How does devotion grow?  
With ears that listen with love;  
With small acts that kindness breeds;  
With hands that hold and help;  
With efforts that fill the needs.

Where does devotion end?  
As Lord Sai walks through you  
His love you cannot miss;  
Replete with thoughts of Him  
The journey's end is bliss.

—Hal Honig, Nov. 23, 1993

In the secure joy of just knowing about the advent of Sathya Sai, the follower can already feel the grace of having come through the many sufferings of a lost spirit to whom divinity was completely veiled, having now at least found out about this living God. The deep sense of security in life continues to expand in discovering more of its true meaning through Baba. By comparison, life spent trapped unknowingly in the coil of fruitless and deadening entertainments or passing and futile mundane ends, appears grey and devoid of charm.

Baba points out the indisputable truth that, since pleasure is but an interval between two pains, to reach equanimity resulting from non-attachment to the body, and from anything whatever in the world, is the only way to attain realisation. This way leads, he tells us, to the experience of 'Bliss-Being-Truth'. This amounts to renunciation of all worldly desires, while still living in the world and fulfilling one's normal functions and duties. Otherwise, the desires still inherent in the last breath are carried over at death and, presumably through the life giving prana energy in the breath, cause rebirth. The desires that were unfulfilled or unrenounced are present form birth in the form of instinctive and other tendencies (vasanas).

The ego-illusion, Baba teaches, though itself an unavoidable result of having been born into the world where we strive for a livelihood, is also always making us chase unnecessary worldly mirages in the form of false ambitions and ever-new desires to satisfy. However, this is no Eastern fatalism that excludes the possibility of excellent work to good human purposes. It is primarily a question of inner liberation.

### **End of the search**

The search drives us ever onwards, from one thing to another. For example, in my younger days I changed my work often, and even my profession several times, I left one country for another and, like most of the young persons of my time and background, became involved in a host of different pursuits, a few good, most middling and some bad. In my self-confidence and worldly prowess, progressing towards the fulfillment of many wants with which I had equipped or rather unwittingly lumbered myself, I revelled in good health and my strong positive life energy, taking it all pretty much for granted and mostly accepting the world as it came. Yes, the proverbial 'young and foolish' did apply, though I was also eager to do something useful. I did not really look very far ahead or see perspectives I have since learned and I had no clear idea of how changed everything becomes for the invalid, how differently life itself can appear 'from the outside' as it were. Nor did I realise the inner gains that really were to be made under such conditions.

Life always seemed to hang a carrot before me or donkey that I ways brandish a stick behind... until I was made able gradually to accept that renunciation of worldly ambition is the only solution that gives real peace of mind. The 'drive' that had previously been to improve my situation, my knowledge and also partly to realise some ideals that I happened to believe in, brought me ever closer to the end of that road. I was freed decisively from being 'driven', by pressures from both within me and outside. It was like getting an early spiritual pension. Before

sufficient to put a stop to this for me. Destiny, having first granted me some of my most heartfelt desires, began to make me reduce them. Baba granted me some fulfillments too. He has said that either he must grant what we crave for, or we "*must realise the very absurdity of it and conquer the worthless yearning*" My greatest gain is real and continuing peace of mind! In the dark era of materialism and the dissolution of cultures, it was Sai Baba in his very existence, his love and his teaching who lit the way beyond for me. This way is at present as smooth as a highway!

How the future appears is a reflection of our own mental and emotional projections onto the world as we perceive it. Whether it seems fearful and hopeless or the contrary will of course also depend to some extent on the entire situation from which one has to view it. Inner changes mean that I now feel I can recognise a sea change actually taking place in the world saga that is unfolding in this era. Some facts still remain unavoidably true. For example, despite the unheard-of material wealth and technological facilities that abound in some places today, far surpassing even the most fabulous legends of history, this is still countered and even outweighed by poverty, many forms of illness and the ravages of conflicts and of many other untold sufferings of unnumbered millions.

### **Dreams and predictions**

Back in the 1970's, I slid further and further down into the trap of hating, in abstract and at a distance, all those who contributed to the blindly selfish rush of humanity towards the precipice. I even withdrew into the Norwegian countryside for years, avoiding contact with the madding crowd as much as possible and, with the solace of lake and forest, wrote volumes about an imaginary world to come after the great global catastrophe I had come to regard as almost certain. I did not lack in most dramatic dreams of such events. A number of imaginary features of the society I described, I later found to my surprise and joy to be embodied already in the ashram of Sathya Sai. There I witnessed in real life, the climax of my novel an envisioned candle-lit procession of many different groups of people from the entire known world to a great hall where birds flew in and out while music was played!

All predictions, clairvoyant visions and other scares of forthcoming world catastrophe have been put to shame by Sai Baba. He has, on a number of occasions, particularly in 1990, spoken out very firmly to refute all speculations about any future major world disaster. This he did on several occasions to various persons who questioned him, such as leading members of the Sathya Sai Organisation in America, including Dr. Hislop and the author and psychiatrist, Dr. Sandweiss, among others. Further, he spent some time during his Sivarathri festival discourse in 1990 before the many thousands gathered there, to make a public refutation of rumours that he had previously predicted a world cataclysm. He has on various occasions since the 1970's reportedly said during interviews that there will be no nuclear holocaust. He has also said publicly that there will continue to be natural and human disasters of one kind and another, but that these, such as the Iran-Iraq war or earthquakes, are not really major events on a world scale. A striking example of a prediction that Sathya Sai Baba did make and which was fulfilled—one that may be tested by anyone who wished to do so by reading the May 1986 edition of Sanathana Sarathi—was on April 10th, 1986, when he gave the annual Yugadi (Hindu New

*"the heat will be excessive and some fire disasters may occur in Vaisakha month"* (The Hindu month of 'Vaisakha' is from April to May). The Chernobyl nuclear reactor fire disaster actually began 16 days later on 26th April, This disaster was recorded as the hottest fire ever caused by man.

### **Individuals must change**

Sathya Sai's lesson is that we all must set strict and intelligent limits on our personal desires. The world can only be changed if enough individuals change themselves; without this absolute prerequisite it cannot be 'fixed up' as if from above by any government or any known type of business or educational organisation, party, union or pressure group. The efforts of individuals at self-transformation may be channelled through organised activities, but it is only the sum of those personal efforts at self-control that can set right the ills with which mankind is confronted. When people co-operate in the spirit of divine unity, the resulting whole then amounts to more than the sum of its parts. The removal of selfishness and greed, which is the renunciation of self, is the only motor of lasting change and regrowth. Without this, no amount of ecological or other enterprises will be able to correct the imbalances, because the desire for more—when supplied—only leads to increasing desires for yet more.

It is a futile exercise to try to change others through informing them, for I know that the only valid response I can make to the lovelessness in so many places that Baba calls 'living death', is to improve myself, dive deeper into spiritual activities, care more and do more. The world seems already to have plenty of persons publicly pronouncing advice and criticism (of others). That is why my chief interest in practical life now is work in the Sathya Sai Organisation.

Nowhere but in the Sathya Sai Organisation have I experienced such harmony of minds and spirits towards the highest of ideals. When all persons share a spiritual philosophy and work together towards its realisation in Baba's spirit of mutual respect and love, the experience is vital and filled with significance. After having looked into many other movements and organisations, I find that the directives Baba has given for his organisation to be the wisest and most pure for carrying out any sort of spiritual human enterprise. Yet this is definitely not to say that no problems or personal conflicts can arise under Baba's wing. They surely can and do. Yet the means of their solution is never far away, not least because of the richness and practical fruitfulness of the teachings that are the leading light of all members.

To show me that I should continue to engage in the work of his organisation when our best efforts seemed to be without visible progress or results; Baba gave various signs. Pictures of him fell down at very significant moments concurring with and correcting my thoughts, once in a most dramatic way. Through dreams, Baba directed me in subtle but very definitive ways, such as when he caused me in March 1987 to travel to an European Organisation conference in Ghent, near Brussels, despite my back and neck problems. It turned out about six months later that, as a result of my going to Ghent, I was inspired to suggest something as the planning of Sathya Sai Education in Human Values training in Europe that eased certain clashes of personality which

nothing until much later.

Because of its unique aim, methods and spirit, the Organisation gives an unmatched opportunity for learning non-attachment from worldly cares and results and thus for moving towards the goal of life. This involves always being able to keep our minds above any turmoils or trials of the environment and rise above irritations and injustices that assail us. What happens each moment must be viewed both as an expression of divine intent and as a passing instance. As one learns step by step through life that each experience is a result of the activities of timeless Consciousness everywhere, within and without oneself, one does not attach undue importance to what passes. No details will then distract us from the greater canvas, no waves swamp the basic awareness that the soul truly exists, essentially independent of the stream of experiences it witnesses.

The goal truly worth striving for is the 'other-worldly treasure' that lies beyond the world but can be appreciated while still in it; Truth-Being-Bliss (Sat-Chit-Ananda), the natural condition of the eternal soul within (Atma). For me it has been, and still sometimes is, hard to have the necessary patience, since spiritual change is always gradual and, as Baba says, "Start early, drive slowly and reach the goal safely!" It has taken a lot of 'slow driving'—to see any appreciable change in myself. Nevertheless, when I look back ten years, I see how impossible it would then have been for me to absorb and integrate certain insights that have indeed become an inseparable part of my awareness nowadays. At that time, no one could have taught me such things or conveyed to me my present understanding, because a process of growth was required. Though paradise were to fall into one's lap, or infinite truth into one's consciousness, it would not be possible to hold on to it until one becomes pure and non-attached in all things.

There is evidently nothing to be gained in hanging about, at the ashram or anywhere else, waiting for the grace of God to fall into one's hands without making any personal efforts. Under Baba's master plan, we in the Sai Organisation learn which plans are good (in the real sense) through Baba's subtle guidance and intervention.

### **Baba as teacher**

The great spiritual American writer, Ralph Waldo Emerson, wrote in 1841 of two different kinds of teachers whether sacred, philosophical or literary, the first kind who "speak from within, or from experience, as parties and possessors of the fact; and the other class, from without, as spectators merely..." The first alone "speak from within the veil, where the word is one with that it tells of..." and, "The same Omniscience flows into the intellect, and makes what we call genius." Sathya Sai Baba is clearly of this order *par excellence*. His words also resonate within the listener and awaken the beautiful inner life to the deeper heart, which is the same as wider, inclusive consciousness. 'The veil' that conceals the inner reality is drawn more aside with the progressive discovery of divinity that moving up along the Sai highway opens for.

Not only are the words of Sathya Sai heard through the ears; they come from him within, for example in clear dreams. It is true that dreams show us how the minds, even when idling,



most amazingly detailed concoctions. The mind does this, and we call most of it 'mere imagination' or 'unreality'. That Baba appears amid such dreams, and fashions them to his purposes for the benefit of the dreamer, helps to demonstrate for us something about waking reality as well. Since the mind can create such a convincing world, why cannot it also be the creator of the waking world too, just as Vedantic philosophy maintains? Baba has often restated that teaching most tellingly; the restless mental action of the mind's desires is what sustains the entire 'veil' of creation (Maya). When stilled, the mind begins to reveal its own source. This is doubtless also why Baba said to me, "Don't think".

By the 'source of dream', I mean the origin not only of sleeping dreams, but also of the much more fantastic dream, the waking dream that we think to be and call 'reality' or the universe of space-time. The Creator of all that, in whom we find our very own Identity, I fully believe to be beyond the reach of any mind and to be of unlimited Awareness. Thus, the source becomes the ocean; they merge into One. Indeed, the inability of the mind to encompass the Infinite causes it to make everything finite. Its basic nature is to 'divide and rule', to distinguish this from that, figure from background and negative from positive. The way ahead is the way beyond the limits of mind. For me, therefore, Sathya Sai Baba is the very Source of Dream, the Preceptor into whose physical form is poured, as he has him-self assured us in many ways, the entire flow of the ocean of Siva-Sakti power that engenders and plays with the Cosmos.

—Robert Priddy, Oslo

*(The above article carries extracts from the final chapter of a forthcoming book by Mr. Priddy entitled, "The Source of Dream", which received the blessings of Bhagavan Baba in March 1994 at Brindavan. Ed.)*

## **Sathya Sai Baba, the Poorna Brahman**

I have been a seeker for truth all my life, through many ups and downs, periods of comparative happiness in a worldly sense, followed by upheaval, the working out of trauma, and deep depression which I can only describe as "dark nights of the soul". Yet I always emerged with a degree of equanimity and a feeling that my soul had learned something.

In middle age I joined the Roman Catholic religion. My guru and friend was an eminent Catholic writer who was later invited by the Pope of the day to research the Vatican Library in order to write the history of the Catholic Church for schools. He returned from Rome a deeply disillusioned man, and died about a year later, I always felt, through a broken heart and the loss of the will to live, for Roman Catholicism was his life support. He had no idea of the amount of misinterpretation, excision, and interpolation that had taken place with the scripts over the centuries, and often for political rather than spiritual reasons.

The truth is that all the major religions of the world have been in varying measures falsified by theologians. Even Swami's precious Vedas have suffered. He has said that Vedanta is a much misunderstood philosophy, and that the Vedas have been misinterpreted by fanatics and false interpreters who have seen complexity in what was intended as simplicity. He says the message of the Vedas is love, pure love, the philosophy of Love.

What, then, in the absence of Religion, can we turn to? The short answer is to God who is Love. Swami says: "Each will come in his own way, at his own pace, according to his inner urge, along the path God will reveal to him as his own." I regard this as the ultimate in wisdom of vision, and one of the most important proclamations ever made. As opposed to it He says of churches "it is good to be born in a church, but it is not good to die in one." He urges us to rescue ourselves from the dogmas that restrict our expanding spiritual consciousness.

### **The religion of love**

I think Dr. Gokak put Swami's views very well during a visit to America. He said: 'there are people who don't want many rituals to bind them on their way. They want to feel free, or they want a life of psychological awareness. They don't want to be bound down by any particular rituals. Their hearts prompt them to turn their whole life into a pilgrimage. If one wants to turn one's life into a ritual and be a free person, not professing any religion but be speaking only of the Divine, then that is also welcome. Just as Baba does not want rituals to be discarded, he does not want them to be adopted either. It depends on, a person's needs in his life. If one needs a religion then one takes it with understanding. If one needs the other life style one takes that with understanding, too.'

The 'other life style' is really Swami's world religion of Love which has no rules except Love which becomes the sole moral arbiter of everything one feels, thinks, says and does. The purification of the heart is the aim so that one can tap the divine intuition, for Swami says 'the pure heart becomes inspired, it sees beyond intellect and reason.'

How does one begin to achieve this high aim? Swami says: 'The sole purpose of your incarnation is to grow in love, to expand that love, and to merge with God who is Love, and this is best done by service.' Seva, or selfless, loving service to mankind is Swami's highest teaching, He says: 'Seva is the highest worship and the highest spirituality'. 'Love is born in the womb of Seva.' 'You cannot attain liberation unless you do Seva.' It is also the best way to eradicate the traits of the lower self—anger, hatred, jealousy, envy, undue material desire, pride and ego. Young people, therefore, when choosing a career should have a desire to rate social good above everything else. Neither is there any valid reason why middle-aged people, perhaps a little set in their ways, should not transform their lives, although it might involve 'a leap in the dark'. But if such is taken in the right spirit of faith, courage, conviction, and self-effort they will find that they are invoking a law of God Who will eventually guide them into the right niche.

I first became a devotee of Sai Baba in 1978 after reading Dr. Sandweiss's The Holy Man and the Psychiatrist. I had only read a few pages when I knew with absolute certainty, with a

the time I had finished the book I knew with the same conviction that an Avatar had incarnated in India.

### **"Found our God"**

I have only visited Him twice, in 1980 and 1982, and each time Swami was only available for 9 days. But in that short space of time He gave my wife and 18 interviews, (5 entirely private), and He answered all the questions we had. He also told us we write the truth and that we write from the heart, and He said this three times, which gave us a tremendous boost.

The truth is we came home in Baba and found our God after long spiritual odysseys. Much of His teaching we had already worked out for ourselves, particularly on Love, and some of the remainder we seemed to 'recognise' as if it was already lodged in our super conscious minds. In the circumstances we felt it more important to work for Swami rather than to continually visit Him, in which there can be an element of self-indulgence. But we have never felt 'cut off' as He has given us many, many dreams and other evidence of His presence.

And so for the past 15 years we have given our lives to Swami and He has fulfilled them. We have lived frugally, foregoing social life and holidays, eating little and spending little on clothes. Have our views on Swami changed over these years? Yes, there has been a continuous affirmation in our feelings about the importance and the power of Love. Nothing much matters to us except the expansion of our hearts. Love is the miracle-worker, the liberator of souls, the only integrating force in the world. I believe it to be the energy force that created the Universe and sustains it in being. Without love there-would be no life, just an endless void.

Sai Baba is the very essence of Divine Love, its embodiment in human form. The golden thread of love runs through the basic tenets of his teachings. He says: 'Love is truth, Love is righteousness, Love is peace, and Love is non-violence' and 'Love is my greatest miracle.' What more can one say?

I have come to believe, over the years, with my higher self—as did Professor Kasturi, Swami's biographer and closest aide for 40 years- that Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is the Poorna Brahman, our Lord and Creator, who has come to redeem this tiny grain of sand in his universe. It is my belief that our tiny planet has never been in greater danger, both physically and morally since it solidified from primal spirit. The cold war may be over but there are still enough Megaton bombs to destroy every acre of our land space. And morally, since the Industrial Revolution, we have become more and more immersed in material living and vicious competition, and, latterly, in polluting the land, the seas and the air; crime and drugs are rampant, and what Swami refers to as 'a sickening desire for ever-increasing comfort.'

So thank God for God. Sai Baba will save the world.

*[The above article was the last one written by Ron. Laing, before he passed away on New Year's Day. The article is carried in the spring 1994 issue of the Quarterly Magazine dedicated*

*of Sathya Sai organisations for three years—1981 - 1984. Together with his wife, Peggy Mason, he wrote the book "Sai Baba the Embodiment of Love". Ed.]*

### *Embodiments of love!*

Nature is the best teacher for mankind to learn the noble and sacred lesson of selfless sacrifice. Look at the trees which yield fruits for the enjoyment of others, without any trace of selfishness. The rivers flow for the benefit of others, providing water for quenching their thirst and helping them in many ways. Cows give delicious milk to the people without even a trace of selfishness. Similarly, a good person is one who strives ceaselessly to render help to his fellow-beings.

"Ugadi" or New Year day is a festival that teaches lessons in selfless service. It is not intended for feasting. It is a sacred day when wholesome wisdom should dawn and enlightenment should blossom in the hearts of people.

There are four yugas or aeons, namely, Krita Yuga, Treta Yuga, Dwapara Yuga and Kali Yuga. The Krita Yuga commenced in the month of Vaishakha, Treta Yuga in the month of Kartika, Dwapara Yuga in the month of Margasira and Kali Yuga in the month of Chaitra. As the present Kali age started in the month of Chaitra, the first day of the Chaitra month is called Yugadi. The aeons are only measurement of time. Time is God. God is called Kala-swaroopa, the very embodiment of Time. Hence, we must respect Time and spend it in useful pursuits. Wasting of time is ungodly.

This world is termed as "Jagam". "Ja" means taking birth (janmam) and "gam" stands for "going". "Jagam" means that the world is a place where beings are born and die. In this changing world, God is the changeless entity. God is all-pervasive and can be experienced anywhere. He is worshipped as "Kalakalaya namah", "Kalaswaroopaya namah" and so on. Without Time, there is no world; without the world there is no creation; without creation there is nothing. Every created thing is born of Time.

This New Year Day proclaims the truth that God is the Master of Time. Unfortunately, man fails to understand the power of God. He wastes three quarters of his time in unworthy earthly pursuits. Spiritual pursuit is the right way of making use of time. It calls for nurturing good feelings and doing good deeds without selfish motive, extending love and compassion towards all beings. This is real sadhana. 'Sa' means Atma and 'dhana' means wealth. By utilising your time in spiritual pursuits, you can enjoy spiritual wealth. But, man wastes all his time in unholy thoughts and evil deeds without understanding the divinity within him. One should understand the value of time, each moment of which vanishes faster than lightning. If you want to sanctify your hard-earned human birth you have to cultivate divine thoughts.

This is the age of 'Kali', which is often described as 'Kalaha' Yuga, the age of discord in which there will be misunderstanding and quarrels between husband and wife, father and son, preceptor and disciple. Giving up the quarrelsome attitude, people must cultivate love and compassion and shine as embodiments of love which they really are. The heart is termed as

towards others, can he be deemed fit to be called a human being. We find today people indulging in cruel deeds, devoid of even a trace of compassion, and behaving worse than birds and beasts. Even trees and rivers help mankind selflessly. But humans are not behaving in a manner befitting their status as superior beings. They do not have the attitude' of helping one another. Trees are helpful even when they become dead and dry serving as firewood. Trees are the best example of 'Tyaga' bhava or the attitude of sacrifice. They are the greatest teachers of the quality of sacrifice. But human beings, who get all the benefit from trees, are not having the same spirit of sacrifice. They are attached to their bodies and- spend their energy and time to provide comforts for the body. How long will then body last? It is a bundle of diseases, a repository of filth and foul excretes. It cannot help one to cross the ocean of life (Samsara). It is subject to changes such as childhood, adolescence, youth, adulthood, old age and finally death. One does not know when, where and how death will occur. Man neglects his rightful duty (swadharma) and relies on this transient body, behaving like a beast. He does not make any effort to realise that in the changing body there is the changeless and eternal Atma (Spirit). This Divinity is the same in all beings and changeless through all the stages of life.

### **The endless quest**

Everyone' wants to achieve happiness and makes all sorts of efforts for this purpose without knowing where to find it. He thinks he can get happiness when he gets a job to earn his livelihood and pursues his studies only with this end in view. After he gets a job, he is still not happy. He wants to get married. He marries and sets up a family. Even then there is no happiness. He wants progeny. He gets a child. Still he is not happy. He wants promotion so that he can earn more to maintain his family. He gets it. Even then he is not happy. And he goes on like that in quest of happiness that eludes him. Happiness is not there in all these attainments or possessions. It is only in the heart within. He is himself the embodiment of happiness. Yet, without realising this, he goes on seeking happiness elsewhere.

"Hithyanandam paramasukhadam"—Permanent bliss is only within and once you realise that you are the blissful Atma and not the transient body, you will always be happy. Some people raise the question "Where is God?" God cannot be seen outside. You must direct your vision inside. Then you will realise that the entire world is a reflection of the Atma within you.

*"Poornamadah Poornamidam  
Poornaath Poornamudachyathe  
Poornasya Poornamaadaaya  
Poornameua auasishyathe"*

"That (Brahman) is Whole. This (creation) is also Whole. From that Whole this Whole has emerged. Even though this Whole has come out of that Whole, yet that Whole remains WHOLE only."

What does this mean? From whatever source a thing is born, it retains the quality of the source in full. For example, this tumbler is made of silver. It retains the quality of silver fully.

made of clay and it retains the quality of clay. Similarly, man has come out of God and, therefore, he has the divine quality in him. God is "Paripoorna Swaroopa" or "Total personality". You should engage yourself in wholesome divine pursuits and fulfill the purpose of this valuable human life. You should thus reflect your divinity in the human form.

Ugadi teaches man the lesson that he should perfect himself as an embodiment of divinity. You should not waste time, because a moment gone, will not come back. You are only looking after the needs of the body, eager to make it last longer. But you forget that Time is God. There is nothing that can supercede this. So the 'Sadhana' you should do is to utilise your time in doing good deeds for the benefit of society at large and not to satisfy your self-interest. Don't waste your energy in unnecessary talk or gossip. God has endowed man with all the organs of perception and action, not for selfish activities, but to do godly deeds and help others. In the Purusha Sookta it is declared that Brahmana came out of the face of Cosmic Purusha (Brahmanasya Mukhamaaseeth). The reason for this is that all the organs of perception which help man to acquire knowledge, namely, eyes, ears, nose, tongue are in the face. Brahmana does not mean one that is born in the Brahmin community. It refers to one that has knowledge of "Brahmam" (Brahmajnani Brahmanaha).

Since the organs of perception are in the face, 'Brahmana' is described as "The face of the Supreme Lord". Through these organs you can see, hear and speak.

*You must see no evil, but see only good.  
You must hear no evil, but hear only good. ,  
You must speak no evil, but speak only good.  
You must do no evil, but do only good.*

This is real sadhana. You need not do Japa, dhyana and Tapas. Your monkey mind wanders elsewhere when you sit in meditation. Then it becomes only a waste of precious time. Do your duty as dedication to the Divine. You can thereby transform work into worship.

For sadhana, the nine-fold path of devotion has been prescribed for humanity: Shravanam (hearing God's glory), Kirtanam (singing His Glory), Vishnunamasmaranam (remembering the Lord's name constantly). Padasevanam (serving the Lotus Feet of the Lord), Archanam (offering worship), Vandanam (prostrating), Dasyam (doing service as a servant to the Lord), Sneham (worshipping as a friend), Atmanivedanam (total surrender). You must listen to the glory of God being chanted, and do service to humanity, chanting His name and singing His glory. You should have the attitude that all are embodiments of God, that the whole Universe is a manifestation of God. In "Vandanam" you should dedicate all the ten organs of perception and action as an offering to God. This is symbolised by bringing both your palms, together and offering "namaskaram". All the ten fingers represent the ten Indriyas (organs). "Namaskaram" also implies that "nothing is mine". The limbs are intended for service to others only. "Dasyam" means that you should render service to humanity considering the persons whom you serve as masters.

"Sneham" means friendship. It is not the type of friendship that you generally cultivate by saying "hello". You must keep the heart hollow so that it will be filled only by Divine thoughts. All human relationships are based on the body, while the relationship with God is from heart to heart. It alone is permanent and unchanging.

Spirituality means seeking to realise the oneness of all beings. There is only One. All came out of this One only. The entire creation itself came from the One. This truth is proclaimed in all religions. For instance, the name of Yesu (Jesus) itself spells out this truth. 'Ye' means one, 'su' means 'good'. There is only one good. In the term Allah, 'A' stands for Atma, 'la' for 'layam'. Invoking Allah signifies merging in the Atma which is the One God. Names and forms are momentary and transient. Atma or Conscience is permanent and changeless. In Vedanta it is called Sat-Chit-Ananda. Sat is changeless while Chit is subject to change. To give an example, sugar is changeless and retains its sweetness in whichever way it may be used, while water is subject to change. If the two are combined, you get syrup, which is comparable to 'Ananda'. Thus the combination of the changeless and changing entities gives happiness or Ananda. (Bhagavan sang a Meera Bhajan and explained how Meera in this song, directs her mind towards Krishna and appeals to him to enter her heart and experience her pure love). It is only by fostering love you can win the grace of God. The Prema Rasa (juice of love) will be drained away if you have holes in your heart (spiritual heart) in the form of bad feelings and evil thoughts. If you plug these holes by curbing the evil qualities, the juice of love will be retained to some extent.

You should avoid following the body or the mind and follow only the Conscience. The purpose of life is to help others and not to indulge in sensuous pleasures. From dawn to dusk, you are engaged in acts for the sake of maintaining your bodily comforts. What have you achieved by this? Only mental unrest and physical weariness or illness. Your aim must be to achieve Divinity. Thyagaraja questions his own mind in a song whether wealth will give "sukham" (comfort) or service to the Lord and comes to the conclusion that service to the Lord brings lasting happiness. Service involves sacrifice (Tyaga). You should sacrifice that which you consider very dear to you. Sacrifice brings about real communion with the Divine while carnal pleasure results only in disease. Control of the mind alone will lead to union with the Divine.

This day is celebrated as Ugadi as Kaliyuga started on the first day of Chaitra. Kali represents both Sukham and Shubham (comfort and auspiciousness). Power or wealth cannot confer both. You must use the time well for the benefit of all. As you think, talk and act, so will be the results. Think of God and do good deeds by way of service to society, chanting the name of God.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Love is God. Start the day with love. Fill the day with love and end the day with love. Live in love. There is no need to fear. It is only a mental creation. Foster love. Then only Divinity can be realised.



**(From Bhagavan's Discourse on Tamil New Year Day, April 14th, at Kodaikanal)**

*AVATAR VANI*

*UGADI SANDESH*

### **Foster Love: Eschew Hatred**

*Embodiments of divine love:*

Though three ornaments of a permanent nature are available for man in the shape of charity for the hand, hearing God's glory for the ears and speaking the truth for the tongue, man is engaging himself in the pursuit of all transient and useless worldly things. He should strive to achieve that by getting which everything else is achieved.

The first step is to understand the link that connects any two individuals. It is nothing but love. It is on the basis of love that the entire society is closely knit. What is a country? It is not the land but the society that makes a country or a nation. When the nation is prosperous and progresses with healthy growth, the needs of the individuals are also fulfilled. The individual is dependent on society. He is born, brought up and sustained by society. Therefore, it is the duty of every individual to render selfless service for promoting the common welfare of society.

All are the children of Mother Earth and should follow the selfless activity of the earth, which rotates on its own axis and goes round the sun at 66,000 miles per hour. By this constant motion we get day and night and variations in the seasons without which we cannot have food crops which sustain mankind.

As children of the earth people should learn the lesson of selfless activity (Tyaga) from Mother Earth. Without sacrifice it is difficult to sustain life itself. Some say knowledge is valuable. But, character is more valuable than knowledge. One may be a learned scholar, one may hold high positions of authority, one may be very wealthy or be an eminent scientist, but if one has no character all the other acquisitions are of no use at all.

Sacrifice, love, compassion, and forbearance are the sterling human qualities that should be fostered, shedding jealousy, hatred, ego and anger, which are animal qualities. What is the use of being born as a man and leading a life of birds and beasts?

Man should maintain equanimity in pleasure and pain, loss or gain. Without pain you cannot enjoy pleasure. Sorrow is verily the royal road to joy. Sufferings are the stepping-stones that lead man towards virtuous conduct. One should neither be elated by pleasure nor dejected by pain.

the world and entrusted man with the responsibility to look after them. God allowed man to use things in the world as he wished, but on one condition. He has to suffer the consequences of his actions, good or bad.

### **Do Good: Be Good**

So, you have to do good deeds if you want to experience good results. Doing bad deeds man wants to enjoy good and beneficial results. It is folly to expect good results from bad deeds. Nature is like a mirror, which reflects only the object before it. In every human being, good and bad are co-existing. One should strive only to do good deeds which alone will lead one to liberation or Moksha. Moksha is not an object that can be acquired from outside. It is a way of life itself. When you follow your inherent nature and cultivate good feelings you can attain liberation from worldly bondage.

### **"Bhaava" and "bhava"**

This year is called 'Bhava'. You should foster good 'Bhaava' or attitudes and feelings in this year. Your guna or character depends on the food you consume. You should not be carried away by the vagaries of the mind. Such a great and powerful warrior as Arjuna told Krishna that the mind is wavering in nature and difficult to control. "It can be controlled by practice and detachment", said Krishna. The leaves in a tree move when the wind blows. Just as the wind causes the leaves to move, the company one keeps influences a man's mind. You should flee from evil company. Though inherently the heart is good, by evil company it gets polluted with such bad qualities as anger, jealousy and hatred. You should use your body, mind and intellect for the benefit of society at large and not for selfish purposes. The mind is like a mad monkey, while the body is like a water bubble which may burst at any moment. Therefore, you must follow only the Conscience. You cannot realise your Divinity as long as your mind is filled with evil thoughts. Discarding all bad qualities and bad thoughts, you should develop good thoughts based on unsullied love. Start the day with love, spend the day with love, fill the day with love and end the day with love. This is the way to God. The primary requisite for cultivating love is to get rid of doubts and disbelief and develop confidence.

### **Avoid evil company**

Where there is confidence there is love; where there is love, there is peace; where there is peace, there is bliss; where there is bliss, there is God. It is only because you are confident that she is your mother, you love her. If you doubt this, there is no scope for such love. Confidence is the basis for love and steadiness of mind. But, what we find today everywhere is mental restlessness. Most of you have come here from far off places, seeking mental peace. After coming here, you indulge in mixing with evil people, which makes you lose even the little peace you had. You should question yourselves as to the purpose for which you have come here.

### **Know your source**

If you want to lead a meaningful life, you must know wherefrom you have come and the destination or goal which you want to reach. Right from the time of birth you are asking the question, 'Koham', (Who am I?). One's entire life is spent without-getting an answer for this

and senses. You are the master. The body, mind and senses are just instruments. The answer to the question 'Koham' comes from within as you are breathing 21,600 times every day. As you inhale, you make the sound "So" and when you exhale, you utter the sound "Ham". Together, "So-ham" means, "He is me". This is the great truth proclaimed by the Vedas. "Tat twam asi" "You are That". You may study the process of water from the ocean going up as vapour through the sun's energy, forming clouds which come down as rain. The rainwater is conveyed by rivers back to the ocean after undergoing several changes in the process. The Intellect is the Sun, Truth is the cloud, and drops of love are the rains. These flow in the river of Bliss which merges in the ocean of God. Just as water from the ocean comes back to the ocean after going through different stages of transformation, man has to go back to his source, that is God.

### **The eternal truth**

If a piece of charcoal is kept apart from fire, it cannot burn. Both must be brought close together and you must use a fan to make the charcoal catch fire. Love is the fan which will make you glow with divine effulgence. This is the truth proclaimed by the Upanishads, which say: "You are God". You think you are only the body. The body is inert without the soul which is the Life Force.

You need not go anywhere searching for God. Divinity is within you. Just as there are many limbs in the body which are activated by one heart inside, the same God is the Life Force for all beings. The entire Universe is a reflection of the Supreme Being.

Your 'Bhaava' or attitude is the cause of your suffering or happiness. With whatever feeling you see an object, the same is reflected back. Drishti or Vision determines your view of Srishti (Creation). When you see the world through coloured glasses, you will see everything in the colour of the glasses you are wearing. Whatever happens, you should take it as a gift of God. Love is God. Live in Love. This is the proper way of worshipping God. All forms of worship and penance are only for control of the mind. They will not give you the realisation of God. God is within you, around you, beside you. He is the only true friend. You develop friendship with worldly people, who may desert you when you are bereft of your wealth, power or status. God alone will be with you always.

As the Gita declares, the devotee dear to the Lord is one who does not hate any being (Adveshta Sarva bhoothanam). You should not harbour hatred towards any one but keep away from bad company. You should not cultivate relationship with evil persons as this will spoil the purity of your mind. The mind is the cause of bondage or liberation. You turn it toward God and cultivate detachment. If you turn towards the world you develop attachment. Desire is an unnecessary burden in your life's journey. You must reduce your desires to a minimum, as it may not be possible to give up desire totally.

If you analyse the difference between God and man you will find that life plus desire is man and life minus desire is God. Confine your desires to primary necessities for sustaining life such as food, clothing and shelter. When you have excessive desire you become restless.

worry at all. This is real Sadhana.

Even when you are engaged in your daily chores, you can convert them into worship of God. While you are sweeping the floor, you can deem it as clearing your heart of all impurities. All work should be done with a pure heart filled with devotion, just as cooking must be done in a clean vessel. Whatever good you may do without a genuine feeling of love is of no use. It is love in a pure heart that transforms work into worship.

### **Self-enquiry**

I would advise all, and especially the overseas devotees who have come here from far off countries, to subject themselves to a process of self-enquiry. Is it right to call yourself a man? It is only a half-truth. You should be able to assert: "I am a man. I am not an animal". You will have to get rid of the animal qualities of ego, jealousy and hatred and develop human qualities of love, truth, sacrifice and happiness. Consider pain and pleasure as passing clouds. Happiness can be attained only by union with God. Worldly pleasure is transient.

By nourishing good feelings in the heart you can transform yourself from bad to good. This is called Samskara. It is akin to converting paddy into rice to make the grain fit for preparing food.

### **Stick to one path**

There may be many paths for the same goal. You get confused because many preachers say many different things. You must choose one path, one road. God is one and he can be realised by love. Fill your hearts with love and distribute the love to others considering that all are sparks of the Divine.

You must feel the Divine within you and develop divine qualities. Then only you can shine as a true human being. You should cultivate harmony in thought, word and deed which is the hallmark of a human being. Prema (Love) is the only weapon by which you can attain Godliness and make your life purposeful. God is like gold, the possession of which will enable you to make any jewel you want. Through unblemished love alone you can achieve the grace of God and enjoy blissful peace.

People coming to me frequently tell me: "I want bliss", "I want peace", "I want liberation". When you want a jewel to be made out of the gold that you hand over to a goldsmith, he will have to melt it in a crucible, hammer it, cut it and weld the pieces to make the required ornament. By these processes only it can be made into a beautiful chain. Similarly, you must hand over your mind to God and allow God to do what is necessary. But, now-a-days, the devotees are laying down conditions to God while seeking His Grace! You must surrender to God and submit to His Will. God knows how to shape you.

If you want to send a book by parcel, you have to pack it properly. In order to make use of the book you have to remove the packing. God has given you peace with a packing. When you

order to enjoy peace which is inherent in you. When a sculptor wants to make a wooden statue of Krishna, he chisels the wood to get the shape of the statue. So also you have to shed your evil thoughts and feelings and surrender to God unconditionally without any reservation whatsoever.

### **“Be good: do good”**

To overcome the bad influences of the body, the mind and of wealth (tana, mana, dhana) the scriptures prescribe cultivation of "Satsang". What is "Satsang?" It is generally believed that this refers to the company of good people'. But this is not correct. "Sat" means Truth, which is "Atma" or God. So Satsang means the company of God and not of people. Divinity will manifest within you if you follow any one of the nine types of devotion. In a nutshell, the precepts to be followed are: See no evil: see only good. Hear no evil: hear only good. Speak no evil: speak only good. Think no evil: think only good. Do no evil: do only good. This is the way to God.

If any one starts talking ill of others, go away from that place without lending your ears to such evil talk. In the Ramayana, Kaikeyi was influenced by the words of her servant Manthara who instigated her to stop the crowning of Rama and arrange for his banishment as she had some grouse against Rama. Because Kaikeyi lent her ears to the evil counsel of Manthara, she manoeuvred to send Rama to the forest. Thus both these women earned a bad name for themselves for all time. Among men, you have the example of Duryodhana in the Mahabharata who always bore ill-will towards the Pandavas and nourished always bad thoughts leading to evil designs. Similarly, Keechaka looked at Draupadi with evil eyes and was killed by Bhima. Ravana did evil deeds. Manthara committed the sin of speaking ill of Rama, Kaikeyi lent her ears to evil talk, Keechaka committed the sin of casting evil looks on Draupadi, Duryodhana nurtured bad feelings and Ravana indulged in bad deeds. These are examples to prove how the acts of speaking evil, listening to evil words, thinking evil and doing evil deed cause one's downfall. Spiritual Sadhana consists in speaking good, thinking good, seeing good, hearing good and doing good.

Excessive talking must also be avoided as it is waste of energy. When one gets weak due to wastage of energy, he is prone to get angry and develop hatred. You must, therefore, use the God-given energy for good purposes. Energy is a divine gift. By curtailing unnecessary talk and keeping silent, you can conserve energy. "Talk less and work more" is the golden rule to be adopted.

### **Keep connection with God alone**

Many foreigners come here and involve themselves in unnecessary relationships with people. Some person says, "I have come alone", when he first meets me. After some time he brings a lady with him and says, "She is my wife". Why should you cultivate such attachments and relationships when you have come here for spiritual pursuits? All these relationships are temporary. You must cut off these connections and establish connection only with the permanent and eternal entity, the Supreme Lord. God is omnipresent. He was there before your birth and he will continue to be there after your death too. Therefore you should make efforts to keep close

hands of the Divine. Then you can always be happy.

Your behaviour and character are very important and these should be reflected in your adherence to discipline and good manners. Today, the nation is in turmoil due to lack of discipline. You should follow the maxim: "Help ever, Hurt never". People don't understand my ideal of perfection, which consists of purity, patience and perseverance. Patience means being in a state of peace (Santhi). I am always happy and peaceful. Even when some people wish me "Happy birthday". I tell them that I am always happy and the wishes should be addressed to those who are not happy. Another feature of patience is not being elated by praise or depressed by calumny. I am not affected by pleasure or pain. It is the perfect state of Samadhi (Sama + dhi), which means equanimity in pleasure and pain. Perseverance is most essential for the accomplishment of objective. By perseverance Nara can become Narayana, that is, man can become divine. People lacking this quality cannot achieve anything. Their efforts are like trying to retain water in a pot with several holes. If you direct all your actions towards God, you will become one with God. This should be done on the basis of Prema or love.

A man living without love is as good as dead. You are having love towards your father, mother, wife, children and others. There is nothing wrong in this. But you must see God in every one of them. This is the essence of the well-known prayer to God

*Thvameva mathacha pitha thvameva  
Thvameva bandhuscha sakha thvameva  
Thvameva Vidya dravinam thvameva  
Thvameva Sarvam mama deva deva.*

This prayer addressed to the Supreme Being means: "You are the father, mother, friend and relative, You are Knowledge and wealth. You are everything, Oh my Lord!"

We should see God in every being. The whole Universe is a manifestation of Brahman. As a human being, you have come from Narayana. You are divine but you are not realising it. When you do 'Namaskaram' with folded hands in obeisance, it means that you are offering your five Karmandriyas (organs of action) and five Jnanindriyas (organs of perception) to the Divine. Offering namaskaram itself emphasises unity. If you have unity and purity, divinity will blossom there. But you have only enmity and community now.

You have to practise speaking sweetly and softly and avoid unnecessary connections and relationships with all and sundry. The easiest Sadhana is to reflect on God with love that is expanding and embracing one and all. It is the only way to realise the Divine.

Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the Bhajan, "*Prema Muditha Manase Kaho Rama Rama Ram!*"

**From Bhagavan's Discourse at Kodaikanal on 11-4-94 Telugu New Year's day**

## Ugadi Celebrations at Kodaikanal

Ugadi (Telugu New Year's day) was celebrated on April 11 at "Shruti", the abode of Bhagavan Baba in Kodaikanal, in the Divine presence of Bhagavan, with over ten thousand devotees participating in the bhajans and receiving the blessings of Bhagavan.

Situated on the slope of a hill facing the attractive lake of Kodai, "Shruti" wore a festive look with floral decorations and traditional "toranams" of mango leaves. Bhagavan gave darshan to the vast gathering of devotees including a large number of overseas devotees. The students from Sai institutions offered a programme of devotional songs accompanied by their own orchestra. Bhagavan sat through the programme, which concluded with the offer of Arati to Bhagavan. Bhagavan personally supervised the distribution of Prasadam to all the devotees.

In the afternoon, in spite of the inclement weather—it started raining from 1 p.m. onwards—the devotees assembled in large numbers, braving the cold and rain, eager to hear the Divine Message of Bhagavan.

The meeting commenced with a talk by Professor Sampath, former Vice-Chancellor of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher learning. He spoke on the significance of the New Year Day and recalled Bhagavan's declaration that people should treat every hour and minute and second as new. The New Year Day, he said, was an occasion when people generally dedicate themselves to the task of putting into practice Bhagavan's teachings, which are very simple such as "Help ever, Hurt never". He said Bhagavan has been rendering unique service to mankind by the establishment of the Super Speciality Hospital for the benefit of the poor and the needy. He mentioned the case of a kidney transplant done recently on a two-week old child who had lost its mother after delivery. One kidney of the father was transplanted, altering it to suit the child's body. The operation was considered a miracle that was rendered possible by Bhagavan's grace. "Devotee can express their gratitude to Bhagavan only by following his teachings in practice as he expects nothing from us for the grace He showers on us. On this day we should re-dedicate ourselves to the task of purifying our hearts and living up to His teachings", he concluded.

Bhagavan then commenced His discourse with a poem in which he emphasised that the ornament for the hand is charity that for the tongue is truth and that for the ears is hearing the sacred scriptures proclaiming the glory of the Divine. He emphasised the need for fostering universal love and seeing God in all beings. [Details of the discourse are given separately.]

The Tamil New Year Day and Vishu, the New Year Day observed by Keralites, synchronised on 14th April 1994. Prodigious crowds from Tamil Nadu and Kerala, apart from a large number of overseas devotees, lined up near "Shruti" from the early hours of the morning, to celebrate the auspicious day in the Divine presence of Bhagavan Baba.

The premises of "Shruti" presented a gay and festive look with extensive floral decorations, buntings and banners carrying New Year greetings in Malayalam and Tamil. Colourful umbrellas from Kerala lent additional charm to the picturesque beauty of "Shruti", which stood out against a background of lush green lawns and the fine foliage of flower bearing trees.

The programme for the day started with melodious nadaswaram music at 7 a.m. followed by Vedic chants by the Metro Vedaparayanam group from Madras. Bhagavan Baba came out at 8.30 a.m. and gave Darshan to the vast multitude of eager devotees, moving around them and blessing them all.

The band of students of the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, who had accompanied Bhagavan to Kodaikanal, gave a devotional treat to the gathering with select songs in Tamil and a few English Bhajans.

Maj. Gen. S. P. Mahadevan, President of Sri. Sathya Sai Seva Organisation in Tamil Nadu, and Prof. Sampath, former Vice-Chancellor of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, spoke about the significance of the New Year Day and expressed gratitude to Bhagavan for His gracious presence on the auspicious occasion. They also spoke about the glory of Bhagavan's mission which was encompassing the entire world.

Bhagavan then delivered His Divine discourse in which He mentioned that the New Year Day underlines the importance and sacredness of Time, which should be utilised for unselfish and divine pursuits (Details of the discourse are published separately).

After Arati to Bhagavan, sweet prasadam was distributed to all the thousands who had assembled there.

**- KSS**

## **Heal Yourself: Heal the World**

“Heal the World”: Three little words, but with enormous implications.

In fact they tell only part of the story. Heal yourself, heal the world, would be more accurate; and heal yourself, heal the world and let the world heal you would be even more so.



We are all part of the One Consciousness, the one mind that is creation. It is the amalgamation of all thought, experience, understanding and wisdom we know as God, or the Infinite Mind.

You are God. I am God. We are all God—as Sai Baba says, So when we say 'heal the world', it is not a one-way process. We can help to heal this glorious expression of life called Planet Earth, but the Earth can heal us, also. We are part of her and she is part of us. We are all the same consciousness at different levels of evolution and understanding.

If we don't heal our own wounds we cannot heal the planet. Physicians heal thyself.

I have seen in the light of extreme experience how people, constantly project out into the world what they think of themselves. I have observed outwardly aggressive people venting their inner hatred of themselves on others around them. Their victims are merely mirrors for them to thrash out in anger and frustration at their dislike for all that they are and have been. This is the real activator behind so much violence, crime, and negative behaviour of all kinds.

The terrorist organisations and those who force their will on others through fear and violence are revealing to the world their deep hatred of themselves every time they maim, kill or scar another victim. The extreme negative imbalances within them are there for all to see.

People were persuaded by the media at one stage that I was mentally ill because of the information I was presenting about earth changes and the nature of life. As a result, many people came along to ridicule and laugh when I spoke at Universities and public meetings. They did not realise that in doing so they were making a statement about themselves, not me. How sobering it would have been had they asked themselves what imbalance must exist within them to have gleaned pleasure and enjoyment from ridiculing someone they believed to be mad. When you do not respect others you are merely saying you have no respect for yourself.

### **FEAR, GUILT AND HATRED**

How often have you noticed how people get angry and upset with those who act in ways that they themselves also act? How often have we said of such people: 'It's O.K.' when they do so and so, but when someone else does it they go crazy? What we are seeing is that person reacting against someone who mirrors back at them the character traits they dislike in themselves.

Humanity's problem in general, if not in every 'individual', is that far from respecting itself, liking, loving itself, it hates itself. Humanity is awash with guilt, fear, and lack of esteem. This goes back through scores of physical lifetimes. It is this guilt, fear and self-hatred that is expressed through division, war, conflict at all levels, and in the belief that somehow material 'success' can compensate for the spiritual and emotional black hole that grows like a cancer within so many.

means a reconnection with the One Consciousness, an understanding of our part in the eternal scheme of things, and our infinite potential for love and creation. Religion has hijacked spirituality and largely abused its name to build empires of myth and control engineered and perpetuated by the manipulation of fear and guilt.

### **The spiritual answer**

Spirituality is the answer while, in stark contrast, religion is part of the problem. I talk of the need for self-respect and self love and yet religion constantly tells us we have 'sinned' and must feel guilty about all that we are. I heard a lady brought up in a Roman Catholic School say that she was forced to recite every morning that she was unworthy.

The whole religious, economic and social status quo is designed to make us feel either guilty, fearful, unworthy, dissatisfied, or envious; often all of them and more at the same time. This is terribly destructive both for people and the planet.

Self-love and self respect are crucial to the future well being of the earth because the extreme negative thought patterns we have created and continue to create by the way we feel about ourselves, and therefore others, have taken this planet to the brink of nonexistence.

Every species has a collective mind. This has been shown through what has become known as the Hundredth Monkey Syndrome, when researchers found that once a certain number of monkeys learned something new, the whole species could suddenly do it without being shown. They could not explain this, but in fact the information is absorbed by the collective mind of the species, and once a certain number of 'individual' minds learn new information it becomes so powerful within the collective energy field that it is available to everyone linked to it.

It is the same with humanity. At some level all our minds are linked and it is here that the damage has been done to the earth and it is where, therefore, the healing can happen as the process is reversed.

The dominating thought patterns in the collective minds growing ever more powerful by self-perpetuation, have been those of suicidal economics which depends for its success on destroying the world; of possessions used as the measurement of success; of seeking to control others through economic and physical invasion or suppression; of believing the earth was put here for man (rarely woman) to plunder and control as he sees fit, and so on.

### **Re-stabilising the planet**

These highly imbalanced, negative, thought patterns have bombarded the Earth Spirit, the earth consciousness, and caused great disruption to her natural balance. This has affected her ability to hold the balance of the elements, which is one reason why the weather extremes continue to worsen as we have seen in so many areas, including the United States. Like others

Yet if we can, as a human race, destabilise the planet with our thought patterns, we can also re-stabilise and help to heal her by changing those patterns. If love replaces hate, compassion replaces vindictiveness, and fear and guilt fade and die in the wake of joy and hope, then we cease to be part of the problem and immediately become part of the solution. It is really as simple as that.

Once the dominating thought patterns in the collective mind become love, joy, hope, respect and compassion, everyone on the planet is affected by them. And the power of love is so great that it will not take anything like 519 of humanity to think in this way to make the switch in the collective mind from negative to positive and on to balance.

So when people ask the question, what can I do, little me, one person, I say this: you can change the world. You ARE the world. Every time another person begins to think in a non-destructive way, we are getting closer to the big switch in the collective consciousness that will transform life on Planet Earth.

Love yourself and you'll love others. Forgive yourself and you'll forgive others. Respect yourself and you'll respect others.

Heal yourself and you'll heal the world.

—*David Icke*

(From the Quarterly Magazine, edited by Peggy Mason, U.K.)

### **The Lure of Nagarsankirtan**

As I lay out of gear,  
Fighting the biting cold in fear,  
Bhajans sweet and soothing I hear,  
Sung by devotees so sincere.

Braving the cool and chilly weather,  
In the early hours of winter,  
With reverence they assemble together,  
When the city is in deep slumber.

Singing the praise of the LORD,  
They pace solemnly along the road,  
Awakening the drowsy in their abode,  
As they go singing aloud.

They chant the name of KRISHNA and MAHESA,  
As all the names reflect SAAYEESA,  
Our LORD-incarnate PARTHEESA.

With rhythmic speed and clapping of hands,  
Keep pace with the clanging of Cymbals,  
Synchronise with the beauty of damaroos,  
And harmonise with the melodious songs.

Caught in the charged environment,  
In a state of complete entrancement,  
I hasten to the gate in thorough excitement,  
And join joyfully in the divine sacrament.

—C. Kamalaharan, Thiruvannamiyur, Madras

### **Experiencing the Avatar: A Priest's**

*The exciting story of how a young Catholic priest from Italy, Don Mario Mazzoleni, suffering from a serious illness, came to know about Bhagavan Baba and was transformed after his first encounter with Baba in 1981, and what troubles he had to face subsequently, is related in an autobiographical account which was published in Italian in 1991. The book, entitled "A Catholic Priest meets Sai Baba", was subsequently translated into other European languages. The English translation has just been published by Leela Press Inc., Faber, Virginia.*

*The following extracts from the book testify to the profound impact of Bhagavan Baba on Don Mario and his conviction about the Avataric mission of Baba:*

I had become affected by a serious illness which let me rest from a life of intense activity, and I started to read many books about parapsychology, Eastern spirituality, and finally, about Sai Baba.

The best thing to do, after discovering Sai Baba, is to study Him. Nothing in my life has given me as much joy and filled me with so much bliss as studying this person. This in itself is extraordinary. When in school I was forced to study such personages as Napoleon, Cavour, Mazzini, the emperors of ancient Rome, or the popes throughout history. All I got out of it was an overwhelming boredom and a fervent desire for the end of the class. But when I devote myself to the study of Sai Baba, His work, and His teaching, I never get tired of it, even when studying things that I already know (or think I know). In fact I always benefit from it: it is always uplifting and refreshing.

I have noticed ever since I first found out about Baba that people never tire when they talk about Him. You can go on for hours describing His divine games and miracles, His encounters with His devotees, His ways of drawing them to Him, and you forget even to eat.

Another thing I have observed ever since I have been involved with Sai Baba is that talking about Him warms you and recharges you with new energy. At times, remembering a story about Him or recalling one of His characteristic gestures moves the heart so deeply that when you are talking to someone who does not know Baba, you are liable to dissolve into tears of joy. Often, when I speak of Him, I have seen tears in the eyes of people whom I was meeting for the first time, people who until that moment had always felt distant from faith and religion.

To study Sai Baba! Especially to those who have known Him, this idea will seem presumptuous. Someone who proposes to study Sai Baba might remind them of a frog who is fed up with his own confining little bog where he knows every nook, so he decides to go to the ocean in order to understand its secrets.

Although Sai Baba complies with even a skeptical scientific curiosity, my "study" was not really a challenge to His greatness, but rather an investigation to learn more about Him. When you come across someone with whom you feel an affinity, it's only natural to want to enter into that person's life. And then if the encounter goes well, you want more than simple acquaintance; you desire a close friendship, intimacy...

For me to study Sai Baba meant first of all to see Him, then to investigate His activity, and third to understand His thought, His message. Although I expected to take these steps one at a time, I soon discovered that they are not separable. Sai Baba began to be a message from the moment I first saw Him. Because of this, someone who sees Him has already received an enormous gift. I don't say this rhetorically, because the things you understand upon meeting Him may be enough to revolutionize your life, but they still are only an-infinitesimal part of what you did not understand at the time and will gradually discover in the course of subsequent events.

During my research regarding Sri Sathya Sai Baba, I realized that the phenomenon that is Sai Baba transcended not only science with all its laws, but also theology, insofar as it too is a science, subject to the power of reason, and therefore as limited as human reason itself. I understood that if medicine or physics had to upset all its conclusions and surrender before the "phenomenon" that is Sai Baba, theology could not escape from having to do the same in front of the "revelation" that is Sai Baba. In short, it had to be either revolution or surrender.

I would say to myself, "What does it matter if the world does not want to recognize him? This too is part of his plans. Why should I worry about a task that is fully his responsibility? The sad thing would be if I let myself be blinded by fear, succumbing to the instinct to protect my respectability, I would be re-absorbed by skeptics, in order not to upset theories that have become sacred and inviolable. If I did that, what use would I be? It would serve no purpose to

apathy."

Immersed in these thoughts, I decided that Sai Baba's teachings should be actively pursued.

After having been concerned all these years with a figure as controversial as the "barefoot saint" of Puttaparthi, I have concluded that it is not legitimate to take into consideration the opinions of anyone who has not seen him, who has not heard him, who has not read his discourses, who is unfamiliar with the environment in which he was born, the religious and social context in which he lives, or who has no elementary notions of science and theology. To understand a fraction of Sai Baba's reality, it is not enough to have just one of all the qualities listed above; you must have them all, at least to some degree. And yet there are already groups, often among Catholics, who pronounce judgment, who have already declared that Sai Baba must be a demon or a powerfully mystifying magician. Yet, if you inquire further, you will find that they have only seen a photograph of Sai Baba and heard something about him. They are people who are afraid of competition, or of the intervention of a God who might come and overthrow their kingdom, or overturn their money changing tables.

Out of the thousands of Sai Baba devotees that I have seen, I have observed in them a great desire to return to their original church with renewed fervour. Moreover, this return is often prevented by pastors who have, in effect, excommunicated the devotees, by singling them out in their sermons as traitors to their faith. Nonetheless, there are some parish priests with open minds who have realized that an authentic spiritual conversion has taken place in these people baptized in the "Light of the East", and that it is a conversion worthy of complete respect.

The same obstinacy that serves to divide two theories can be used to unite them. I became aware of this possibility in my recent studies, when I discovered that what divides theologians in their assertions is only an attitude that ranges from laziness to closed mindedness. If that is all, don't you think that the effort of discussion should be to promote union?

What we need today is people and theologians who seek this unity with a sincere heart-practising it in daily life-and who in their studies disregard the points of disagreement that destroy, embracing instead all that unites!

This is what the poet Kabir says:

*What use is it if the scholar ponders words and concepts,  
If the heart does not overflow with love?  
What use is it if the ascetic dons saffron-coloured robes,  
If inside that one is pale?  
What use is it to display morality  
To make it shine in front of all,  
If there is no music inside?*

The truths which unite are discovered through humility and purity of heart. Everything which divides is founded in pride and ill-will.

Something which makes it difficult to come to agreement is obstinacy and willfulness. In that case, the only solution seems to be the art of maintaining silence. If the truth lights its own way, it is wise to avoid instigating conflicts in cases where we know they will only end up destroying the peace.

The essential thing is to realize that in conducting their searches, all religions have always aimed at the same goal. They use the most diverse methods—one travels by boat, one on a raft, one in a ship—but they are all in the same water.

One of the most serious faults that prevents people from seeking union is presumption. There are people who are convinced that they are doing the will of God even when they persecute, kill, and torture others.

Spiritual people stay clear of all fanaticism. They do not care whether people sing one way or another, whether they wear a japamala around their necks, or a cross on a chain; rather, they desperately seek every point of union with others, all the while taking care not to agitate others' hearts.

### **Unlimited love**

Sai Baba does not compete against religions. That is his greatness. He is a person on his own who transcends religion itself, and he is not interested in having initiates or followers. He does not add or remove a single iota from scriptures, but rather explains them, showing how they have been distorted or forgotten.

Those who see in Sai Baba a man who is organizing villages and colleges for the love of power and money, forget that he has at his disposal all the gold in the world, and that someone who knows how to draw pearls and diamonds from the ocean with a simple movement of thought, has no need to beg for alms. They fail to realize that with their foul and miserable yardstick they are judging an extraordinary being, someone with immeasurable powers, who can draw from an inexhaustible reservoir from which they themselves benefit, even though they are ignorant of this and ungrateful. They do not realize that what they see in him is a reflection of their own tendencies.

Sai Baba's unlimited love flows with compassion towards religions that are foundering in a state of corruption and decadence.

To approach Sai Baba, the essential prerequisite is a heart open to truth and closed to prejudice. Then, only then, does Sai Baba reveal himself.

declarations, but mostly from His work of salvation. In the same way Sai Baba does not worry about making everybody know who He is right away, but He works in the hearts of men, redeeming them.

The world does not change because of someone's declaration that he is the Messiah. The world will change when man discovers that he is himself divine.

Jesus did not correct those who declared that He was the "Son of God" or "Christ" or the "Messiah". Even during his triumphal entry into Jerusalem he condemned the Pharisees' effort to suppress the crowd's homage of the "Hosanna". He always displayed an extreme reserve in regard to the titles people attributed to Him. This was not due to false humility; it was because of the false concept of Messiah that His contemporaries had developed in their minds. They were hoping for a political and nationalistic Messiah, one who would solve all their little social and economic problems.

In the same way even today there are many people who charge Sai Baba with indifference to the sorrow that weighs on the world, and they ask themselves, "If He is so powerful, why doesn't He eliminate all the suffering there is in the world?" These people would like to change the mission of the Divine Incarnation. Jesus Christ did not change the sorrowful state of the world either, neither in His own time, nor afterwards. Everything that had to happen—bloody revolutions, wars, destruction, persecutions, poverty, epidemics, etc.—it all happened on schedule.

Even at His birth all the children under two years of age were slaughtered, by the insane command of a criminal king who was afraid he would lose his kingdom. The same kind of thing had already happened at the time of Krishna: Kamsa had all his sister's children killed, because she had been told that her eighth son would suppress his wicked uncle.

It is never the task of a Redeemer to resolve human errors with a magic wand. Doing so would ensure that the errors would continue to be committed. It is not the mission of an elementary school teacher or of a parent to do the students' homework. If that were to happen laziness would triumph, diplomas would be given unjustly, and degrees would soon prove deleterious to the whole society. No one among us would willingly go to a doctor who had received his certification by buying all his degrees! The project to perfect society is based on understanding one's own errors and on the effort we make to avoid them.

Some people who have seen Sai Baba pass in front of so many sick people, often without even looking at them, think they detect a mark of cruel insensitivity in this behavior. The truth is that His apparent indifference to illness, which is nothing but a tiny episode among so many existences, contains a deep message: it is not your bodies which move Me to pity—the great Master would tell us—but only your mental state. Heal your minds and then your bodies too will no longer undergo suffering. First remove all the causes which have brought on the pain, and you will have perfect health.



While a Hindu has no difficulty believing in the divinity of Jesus Christ, and worshipping His form along with those of Krishna or Rama or the other Avatars of Vishnu, for a Westerner this would be apostasy.

The concept of Avatar deserves close study on the part of Christian scholars. It may be that the whole problem, which makes us think that we are in some antithesis with the East, stems from a faulty interpretation of dogmas, or in an irrational and self-serving respect for opinions that have been catalogued as unquestionable and presented as immutable for all time. In fact people change, and with them their collective and individual level of consciousness also changes. If man changes, his thought will change too.

No human being has the authority to declare that God can only incarnate a certain way, or that He cannot choose to spread His message as He wills, not only, through prophets, but also by incarnating as the Christ, that is, as Avatars. It would be an unforgivable theological and philosophical absurdity to deny the Divine Power the right of taking human form in other epochs, among other nations, and in other physical forms. On this point there can be no contrary dogma, because this truth is self-evident, and even a child can understand it: God cannot be limited by anything: much less by a human mind. If we want to have some mental concept of God, the first attribute we must give Him is all possible freedom.

*See in me yourself, for I see Myself in you all. You are My life, My breath, My soul. You are My Forms all; when I love you, I love Myself; when you love yourselves, you love Me! I have separated Myself from Myself so that I may love Myself. My beloved ones, you are My own Self.*

—Baba

*Bhakti, to be effective, must be regularised through self-discipline; it should not be allowed to grow wild and untended. You rush forward to touch My feet or to prostrate before Me, ignoring the children, the aged and the sick, upon whom you fall when you press forward towards Me. Do not forget the Sai in those people, when you rush forward towards this Sai. The merit of all the hardship you underwent to see and hear this Sai is as good as cancelled when you inflict pain on the Sai who resides in them. That plus and this minus add up to zero. In your frenzy to offer homage, you should not forget others who have been waiting long for the chance; you must provide facilities for their darshan.*

—Baba

## A Gift from Sai

You are the star, and more

You, and the feet that walk to You.  
We are merging in time,  
a beloved trail.

Your starry voice beckons  
my spirit of passage.  
Only one light is revealed,  
only one sound  
to name the course.

Today, another dawn awakes  
and promises the boundless love  
in which You embrace the Universe;  
all the joy of the power  
by which You give us life;  
and the infinite freedom  
of the one who received Your Name,  
Your soft Name, Sai! in his heart.

**Rosana de Berra, ARGENTINA**

### **Diversity: Unity: Divinity**

From the viewpoint of eternity, everything in the world always appears only more or less temporary. All our experiences of its changing diversity must seem fleeting and insubstantial. Yet to all of us living and acting in this world, it mostly shows itself to be stable and often inert a real existence, for us, which has its own momentum and laws, packed with an endless variety of things and thoughts, challenges and goals.

#### **The fact of natural diversity:**

Diversity characterises everything that makes up the natural world, as well as human beings and our societies. Human culture and civilisation has always aimed at finding a greater purpose in all this and fulfill it. Without the millions of species of different organisms, plants and animals, the ecology of nature becomes impoverished and can suffer serious breakdowns. Without the many sorts of human activity, the ever-changing pattern of occupations, enterprises and pastimes, the present level of world development could not have been achieved. Thus, variety is clearly 'the spice of life'.

The lesson I see in the fact of this diversity is to perceive everything for what it is and to respect and enjoy its uniqueness. Each moment is an unrepeatable historic event. Each thought,

a special individual acting in a private drama. Life's richness comes from this profusion of nature and life and is experienced best through wonder and expanding one's vision all the time to include others and to appreciate their otherness for what it is, not liking them for what we want them to be.

### **Quest for unity**

Without this basic experience of diversity, I cannot see how the truth can be known or the diversity of all beings be realised, as Sathya Sai Baba urges us to do. At the same time unity must be sought and realised.

***Unity in Scientific Theory:*** Because each object or being has its own *raison d'etre* or function (its Dharma)—also in cases where Science is unable to determine it—we must always, examine carefully the multifarious facets of Nature and their interrelations before we can build up any sound conception of the unity that is expressed in and through all the many things. The sciences all work on the assumption that all the apparently distinct and different natural phenomena they study in great detail are expressions of underlying universal laws. Thus, natural science always searches for unity in Nature. Its most general theory necessarily assumes a constant energy that is inherent to any physical event that can occur. This uniform energy, though it can never be observed as such, is the unifying factor in all things and events.

However, the sciences have so far failed to explore the nature of human unity. Neither group unity nor social unity is much understood and even less is known to the psychological sciences of the experience of unity and its importance to the growth of a health personality. Without the guiding vision that we can experience increasing unity with all that is—and without the insight that 'Unity is Divinity'—it is impossible to see how unity of purpose in human society can be understood and generated.

### **Social unity and diversity:**

Both Unity within a nation and international unity are important. As Baba has pointed out, India was conquered by foreign invaders only because disunity prevailed among its various peoples. Also, international unity, such as in the United Nations' Institutions, is studied in Sai Colleges. Baba contends, however, that it is the good motive and behaviour of many people which bring about a greater communal unity, not formal or political decisions at the top. Mutual tolerance and respect can be exercised at the national or supranational level only when it is backed up by the mass of the population.

### **The power of love**

Those of us who have some understanding of the far-flung influence of Sri Sathya Sai Baba's perennial teaching on the world today, are convinced that the essential ingredient in its source is the Spiritual Power of Universal Love (Prema) that He imparts to His words. Ideas of unity like most other sublime ideas also propounded by Baba have existed throughout the ages. But Baba's renewal of the call for human unity and, further, our own union with Divinity is effective because the power of love is daily demonstrated in practice by Him in many ways.

Unity means true understanding of others put into action, which makes it an expression of love. The many amazing manifestations of this beneficial power world wide—both direct and subtle in nature—have been spreading and reinforcing faith in Spirituality since the time of Shirdi Sai Baba. Astute observers can discern the influence of Sathya Sai Baba's teachings in the revival in many lands of selfless spiritual practices both within the older religious traditions and in a range of newly emerging forms.

### **Pure ideas and unity**

An idea of perfect unity is somehow present in the human mind, just as is the idea of good and God (even though a person denies that these ideas are true). The fact that such ideas are inherent in us, as if imprinted in our souls, led thinkers like Socrates, Plato and others to conclude that they reflect a higher reality. We are constantly reminded of that reality to some extent by the diverse phenomena of the sensory world in which we are repeatedly reborn. The higher ideas, such as those of Beauty, Virtue, Truth, and Goodness are gradually developed and enlarged in our minds when we see examples of them in the outer world. Our perceptions become purified through such ideas or ideals as unity, until the oneness of humanity, of all creation and of God becomes increasingly evident to us.

Practising the idea of unity involves repeatedly seeing ourselves as part of a greater unit, be it a team, an organisation, a nation, world civilisation or God and acting according to it. By making room for others' progress other than pushing oneself ahead, by competing only so as to excel and not to beat others and by self-control and avoidance of selfish individualisation, unity with others comes to be an experience and a reality.

### **Unity and divinity**

Diversity is not in contradiction to unity, but division and disharmony are. Unity is found precisely in diversity and vice-versa. The greatest instance of diversity in unity is, of course, the entire Cosmos. All the elements of the Universe—a bewildering complex of vastly different entities—are held together as one coherent regulated whole. What other cause can be conceived as capable of designing, creating and maintaining this unitary diversity than Divinely Omnipresent God? That Infinite Consciousness and Love is certainly no 'superfluous idea', as materialists still assert. In short, Unity is Divinity.

Unity and diversity are found at all the different levels of Cosmic Evolution, while the highest expressible idea, Baba tells us, is Advaita or the teaching of the individual's realisation of unity with the Godhead in non-discriminating total Being-Awareness-Bliss. By wondering at and venerating all the manifestations of the Divine Will, recognising and embracing whatever is unique, different and good for its purpose, we approach unity.

**- R.P.**

## **When the Lord Whispers to Us**

It was one of those days when I was amidst a busy group of hard-working, good and fun loving friends of mine. It was 6 o'clock in the morning when the teacher's whistle was heard on the field. Busy feet rushed to the serene field, a lovely carpet of green which was dominated by the Lion-shaped hill. The precious day had dawned. The rays of the rising sun were yet to bring forth a new glory through the ring of lovely mountains lit by the glow of a new dawn. A cool breeze blew across the morning sky.

The 'Sports-meet Day' would soon arrive. We all know that our dear Lord desires perfection along with united team spirit in any little item that we present before Him. Almost fifteen days had passed and our teachers were trying their best to get some co-ordination and perfection in the 'formations' item we students were going to present. Every effort seemed in vain, especially with a group of 500 students who were not only enthusiastic but fun-loving and naughty too. Despite our limitations, we all seemed confident to do our best on the Final Day.

Two more days ahead of us, our performance was yet not up to the expectations of our teachers. We prayed silently in our hearts: "God, please help us to do the item perfectly." God did listen to us. He knows how to teach and at what time.

God chose that serene morning to whisper this message to us. We were still getting ready in our respective positions, when there was a sudden change in the sky. The rising Sun spread his rays of light pink and golden yellow across the sky. A cool breeze caressed our cheeks and in a moment, each one of us was looking 'up' filled with admiration and amazement. It was an unbelievable 'EXPANSIVE SIGHT'. Hundreds of lovely white cranes were flying in grand formation from the northern horizon to the south, just beneath the drifting clouds. Their numbers seemed countless.

I stood still, gaping at the thrilling sight of cranes flying in perfect formation. We all were struck with wonder and awe at the glory of God and Nature. We clearly understood the meaning of what the Lord whispered to us. When small birds, in their thousands, can fly in a formation off perfect order, why can't we? At once, our doubts disappeared. We knew we could do it.

I thought to myself: "God loves His children. He always sends His blessings and messages to them secretly—mostly through the Nature around." So we can never really miss Him. He is always with us.

**V. ARUNA (III B.Sc.)**  
(ANANTAPUR CAMPUS)

## Sri Rama: the Ideal for Humanity

*"Sweeter than sugarcane juice  
sweeter than honey,  
sweeter than nectar itself is  
the name of Rama.  
As you chant the name you  
taste the nectarine  
sweetness in abundance"*

### *Embodiments of the divine self!*

The sage Valmiki, who was pure, holy and utterly selfless, wrote the Ramayana in hundred crores of stanzas for the redemption of mankind. But the Devas and the Rishis, realising the supreme greatness of the Ramayana, sought from Valmiki a share in his great work.

Responding to their appeal, Valmiki distributed the slokas among the denizens of the three worlds. After the distribution of the slokas in equal shares among the three, one sloka of 32 syllables remained. After distributing in equal measure 30 of them, two syllable: remained. These two syllables were the letters "RA-MA", which he gave to the dwellers of the three worlds. The same two syllables are found in the names of Krishna, Hari, Jesus, Allah and Sai

Thus Valmiki offered to the residents of; all the three worlds the two syllable name: of the Lord equally.

Rama is closest to mankind. Wherever they may be, to whatever and or clime they may belong, people everywhere have to understand the Rama principle. Rama was an ideal son. Every family requires an ideal son. On the eve of the coronation he chose to go to the forest as an exile in accordance with the command of his royal father. In carrying out the injunctions of the father, Rama stands out as the supreme exemplar.

Rama, moreover, was an ideal brother. He exemplified harmony and love among brothers. He treated his brothers as his own life-breath and showered his love equally on all of them. Thus Rama is an example of fraternal love for every family.

Rama was an ideal husband. Rama's adherence to the principle of monogamy has to be properly understood. Valmiki understood it very well. One word, one arrow, one wife was the rule for Rama. What is the reason? In the body there are many organs. But all of them are animated, nourished and sustained by the heart alone. In the same manner the wife, for the husband is only one and the husband for the wife is only one. To demonstrate to the world this ideal of monogamy, Rama set the example.

### **Ideal friend or enemy**

Rama was an ideal friend. There cannot be a greater friend than Rama. There are in the world fair-weather friends who display their friendship when one is wealthy or wielding power. But if wealth and position are gone, not a single friend will show his face. Rama, however, was not such a friend. He was loving, considerate and affectionate equally in weal and woe, in times of joy or sorrow. Guha was an ordinary boatman. Rama hailed him as his fourth brother and showered his love on Guha. Rama treated in the same friendly spirit everyone who came to him for any help or to find an asylum. He thus stood out to the world as an ideal friend.

Rama was not only an ideal friend; he was also an ideal enemy. In the world, it is common to see men resorting to all kinds of deceitful devices to foil their enemies. But Rama never stooped to such unworthy practices. Rama adhered to the noble heroic path even in dealing with his enemies. For example, when Rama was engaged in battle with Ravana, Ravana could not stand up to the arrows of Rama. All the weapons of Ravana were destroyed. Rama noticed that Ravana was tired and weaponless. In such a situation it was not proper to kill the enemy. There is no heroism in killing a weak or powerless man. The enemy should be destroyed when he is strong and powerful. Recognizing the plight of Ravana, Rama laid down his arms and told Ravana, "O, Ravana! You are tired and without weapons. You are not in a fit condition to carry on the fight. Go home, take rest and return to battle tomorrow. We shall resume the fight tomorrow." By displaying this kind of magnanimity towards his enemy, Rama demonstrated that he was an ideal enemy.

Rama was, first of all, an ideal son. In any country, anywhere in the world, every family needs an ideal son. Hence Rama's story does not have a message for the Bharatiyas alone. It has a lesson for all countries and for all mankind.

### **The example of Rama**

The significance of Rama's example of an ideal brother should be realised. Today brothers fight among themselves, go right up to the Supreme Court and even lose their lives in their bitter quarrels. Out of love for petty money and possessions, today people are prepared to sacrifice all fraternal feelings. Rama's way was different. He regarded his brothers as part of his own being and would not cause the slightest pain to them. Thereby he took his brothers to the supreme state. Today brothers take their litigation to the Supreme Court! This is not right at all.

Rama was an ideal husband. When Sita was abducted, Rama felt the loss as if he had lost half his body. He looked upon his wife as "ardhangini", one half of himself. When Rama appeared grief-stricken over the absence of Sita he wanted to merely show to the world what the loss of a wife means. He never thought of a second wife. Rama felt, "it is my duty to protect my wife." Every husband in the world should have a similar conviction.

Today in the world, friends turn into enemies overnight. This is not right at all. Friendship should be enduring and last for all time. Normally it lasts as long as one has wealth and strength.

This is the kind of friendship that every man should experience.

### **Let love rule the world**

Hanuman was a servant. He exemplified the ideal of a servant. Rama embraced Hanuman and said: "Dear friend, Hanuman! You in your physical form belong to a different species. You are a monkey and I am a man. But the love principle is one and the same in both of us." Caste and creed may vary. But the love principle is one. In all beings, in all countries, in all individuals love animates every one. Today the reign of this love principle has to be established all over the world. God is the indweller in the heart. The heart is full of love. That love must be shared with others. It is only when the love is shared that the old saying about equal mindedness in joy and sorrow, in gain and loss, will be realised.

### **Rama's equanimity**

Here is an illustration of this truth: Many people in Ayodhya knew that Rama was leaving for the forest. One aged and poor Brahmin exclaimed: "I hear Rama is going to the forest for fourteen years. I do not know whether I will live so long." Feeling thus, the old Brahmin, Trijata by name, came all the way on foot to have a last glimpse of Rama. Eyes are given to man not to look at the world but to see God. Hence, the power of sight should be dedicated to God. With that aim, the old man, after enduring many hardships, came to Rama. What was Rama doing at that moment? The one who was to be crowned at one moment was getting ready to go on exile to the forest that very moment. Will any human being be able to bear such a reversal of fortune with equal mindedness? Will he be able to look upon both in the same manner? Anyone other than Rama would be plunged in grief. But Rama (before leaving, for the forest) was engaged in giving away to the poor all his jewels and possessions. What should have been a moment of distress was turned by Rama into an occasion for joy in distributing all to the people. Nothing is lasting in human life. No one can tell when life will come to an end, where, in what circumstances. Life may end in childhood, adolescence, middle age or old age. Death is certain. Hence man must learn to give up attachment to possessions.

### **Rama and the old brahmin**

Rama was giving away all his things. When the old Brahmin approached him, he was distributing his cows and furniture. When Trijata saw this he exclaimed: "What an embodiment of sacrifice is the Lord! He is truly immortal, because of his acting up to the Vedic dictum that immortality can be achieved only through sacrifice and not through good deeds, progeny or wealth. He is the embodiment of bliss. He is the very form of Dharma." Looking at Rama, he exclaimed: "Rama! You are indeed the embodiment of Dharma!"

Dharma (Righteousness) is the life-breath of every body. For this Dharma, sacrifice is one element. For Dharma and sacrifice (Tyaga), Prema (Love) is the basis. Hence Dharma, Tyaga and Prema are essential for every human being. They are the three forces which activate the body, the mind and the Atma.



noble Brahmin! What for have you come?" The old man replied: "Swami! I am advanced in years. I learnt that you are going to the forest for fourteen years. I do not know whether I may live that long. I wish to gaze upon your splendourous face for once, experience your love for at least a brief moment, touch your sacred feet, and redeem my life." Rama asked him: "Have you no other desire?" "I do not have any other desire. I have difficulty in living. But I am reconciled to what I deserve according to my Karma. I am not concerned about it. I am only keen to have a vision of you, to speak to you and touch you." Then Rama asked him what the benefit was from these three. "Darshanam, papanashanam" ("vision of the Lord destroys all sins"), "Sparshanam Karma Vimochanam" ("touching the feet of the Lord frees one from the bondage of Karma"), "Sambhashanam sankatanashanam" ("conversing with the Lord dispels all distress"). The old man said: "Swami! Man is haunted by three problems: sin, consequences of his deeds and sorrow. To get rid of these things, I need a vision of you, contact with your feet and conversation with you." Rama was supremely pleased with the Brahmin's words. He drew him close to himself, embraced him and asked him: "Does this give you joy?" Shedding copious tears, the old man said: "I do not know what is heaven. I have no idea what is Kailash or Vaikuntha. But in your embrace I have experienced all these. This is my heaven. Give me some alms. I shall return to my place." Rama said: "Child! When you have offered me your love, I must offer my love to you in return. That is the way of love—give and take. As I have received your love, you must accept something from me."

The old man carried a stick in his hand. Rama said: "Child! Through my touch, you have received considerable strength. Your old age has disappeared. Cast your stick as far as your strength will permit. All the wealth and the cows in the area covered by your throw will be yours." Rama's touch had endowed the old Brahmin with immense strength. He felt that he should act up to Rama's command. "My life will be meaningless otherwise," he thought, "Although I have no desire, I shall obey Rama's command." With this feeling, he hurled the stick with all his might. Thanks to the power of Rama, the stick traversed the banks of the Sarayu and returned to where Rama stood. Several mansions, buildings and cattle were within the area which came to the Brahmin as Rama's gift. The Brahmin said to Rama: "O Lord! When I came solely to have a vision of you, why are you burdening me with so many possessions?" Rama replied, "O noble Brahmin! This is the fruit of your good deeds in your previous life, this is not the reward earned in the present life. Imagine how many came to see me from afar while I was preparing to leave for the forest? It is your wish which stirred my love. But for the laws relating to the governance of a kingdom, I would have given this entire kingdom to you. My love for you is my greatest gift." So saying, Rama gave the land to the Brahmin. Then the Brahmin said: "This is a supreme example to all the people. Even at the moment when He was leaving for the forest and the whole of Ayodhya was plunged in grief, Rama displayed his love by giving away all his possessions. His supreme quality is sacrifice!"

### **CHARITY AND SACRIFICE**

Thus, the Rama principle teaches us the supremacy of the qualities of charity and sacrifice. The Rama principle does not embody just one or two great qualities. Rama's entire life was filled with ideals of every kind.

To convey the great lessons of Rama's life-story to mankind, the divine incarnates from time to time and from age to age. When does the Lord incarnate? The answer is given in the Gita: "To protect the good, to punish the wicked and establish Dharma, the Lord incarnates from eon to eon." When the pure, the saintly, the Godly and the good are oppressed, the Lord incarnates to protect them and to punish the wicked. To relieve their suffering and to confer bliss on humanity, the Lord makes his descent on earth. When wickedness grows and the forces of evil rear their heads, the Lord comes down to put them down and establish righteousness among mankind.

Today falsehood, injustice and wickedness are rampant in the world. Humanness has been reduced to dust. Behind the human form, there are no human qualities. Human values have been given the go-by. Love does not prevail between man and man. If love is lost, what remains? Love is life. A man without love is a living corpse.

### **Live in love**

Therefore cultivate love. Share it. Live in love. This is the need of the Kali age. (Turning to another episode in the Ramayana, which indicates what love the people of Ayodhya and Mithila bore to Rama and to Sita, Bhagavan said:) The people of Ayodhya set out in their thousands to witness the wedding of Rama and Sita in Mithila. The whole of Mithila was rejoicing over the auspicious occasion. Women were summoning all women and children to witness the sacred wedding. They were telling the other ladies: "Sisters! What a unique opportunity to witness the glorious wedding of Rama and Sita!"

### **Rama-Sita Wedding**

The wedding of Rama and Sita is not a wedding of one young man and one young woman. This wedding is a union of Cosmos (Prakriti) with the Supreme Lord (Purusha). An old lady sang a song calling upon all women to join the company of people going for the wedding. She described the decorations in Mithila, the divine beauty of Rama and Sita, the splendid scene in the palace and depicted the memorable scenes they would witness at the wedding. (Swami sang the song in his own mellifluous voice with such verve and charm that the entire wedding scene seemed to appear in all its splendour before the gathering.) A similar appeal went forth from the men's side to all men, describing the wedding as an occasion that would eradicate all the beholders of their sins. "Come, all ye, for the glorious wedding of Kaushalya's son" was the refrain of the song.

The whole world seemed to rejoice at the wedding of Rama and Sita, because it had its cosmic significance. It represented the union of Prakriti (Sita) with Purusha, the Supreme Absolute: Every being in the cosmos, whatever may be the gender, in external form, is essentially feminine. Prakriti (Nature) is feminine. She represents one half of the Lord-Ardhangini. The Paramatma (the Overself) is the Purusha (the Supreme Godhead) Together, Prakriti and Purusha represent the concept of "Ardhanareeswara"—the Divine conceived as half-male and half-female. This union of male and female is found in every human being. Everyone should understand this aspect of the Ramayana story.

Ramayana should not be considered as a sacred epic for Bharatiyas alone. The term "Rama" means "One who delights the heart." ("Ramayati iti Ramah") Whomsoever you may worship it is the one Divine who delights the heart. There is only one God and one Goal.

### **God is one**

When you consider mankind as one species, God is only one, by whatever name you may describe Him, as Allah, Jesus, Rama, Krishna or Buddha. The Bharatiyas hold to the belief that God is one, though the wise may call him by different names. All religious scriptures and godly men have in all ages worshipped God as one. Therefore, no one should have feelings of differences or even entertain ill-will towards others. Cultivate the feeling of Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of Man. Bear no ill-will towards anyone. Help ever; hurt never.

Rama showered his love on everyone. Love is the most important factor in life. Love is God. Live in love.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan: "*Prema mudita Manase Kaho Rama! Rama! Ram!*"

**From Bhagavan's discourse on April 20, 1994 at Kodaikanal**

AVATAR VANI

EASWARAMMA DAY MESSAGE

### **Sacred Role of Mothers**

#### *Embodiments of divine love!*

All that you see, hear, think and do are due to the power of Brahman (the Absolute). The feeling that you are the doer and the possessor is the source of all troubles. It is only when man realises that everything is permeated by the Divine that he will be able to experience the Divine bliss. The phenomenal world enables man to participate in mundane activities related to the physical, the social and the natural. But human life should not be confined to these alone. The sensory life is based on the inner life. Life and the world are like two sides. The world is external and life is internal. The phenomenal universe is based on the inner subtle entity.

The phenomenal cosmos is a vast, boundless mansion. But every mansion has to stand on an appropriate foundation. Without a strong foundation, the mansion will collapse. For the vast physical, gross and mighty mansion of the world, the subtle, infinite and powerful mind is the foundation. Consequently, man can be powerful only to the extent his mind is powerful. Society benefits equally from the powers of man's mind. Nor is that all. The entire human race benefits thereby. There is thus the interdependence of man, society and humanity for their security.

### **Man and the mind**

be called a man. Without the mind, one ceases to be a man. It is only when the subtle, invisible, inner base of the mind is in a proper condition that a being that has donned the human form can attain his true state.

In the world today various changes are taking place. There is shortage of wealth and property. Nor is there any dearth of amenities for comfortable living. There is no lack of facilities for entertainment or recreation. Nevertheless; modern man is oppressed by frustration, depression and disappointment. What is the reason? It is the failure to use the divine power of the mind properly that accounts for the frustration and the lack of peace of man to-day. The differences between man and man are growing continuously. These differences lead to disastrous conflicts.

Hence, the first requisite is to strive for the proper use of the powers of the mind. The mind of man to-day is that of an intoxicated person because his mind is giving free rein to the senses.

### **Wealth and power**

The world today is filled with two kinds of intoxication. One is intoxication arising from wealth. The other is the intoxication of power. These two are not different from each other. They are like the two parts of a seed. Through wealth one secures positions of power and power is used to acquire wealth. Man's life today is based on these two: power and pelf. Man's conceit grows beyond bounds when he has only one of these two. The state of those who have both needs no description. Forgetting humanness, cherishing animal qualities, man develops a demonic nature. Man today makes no effort to realise the greatness and power of the mind. Instead, he is submerged in worldly activities and wastes his life.

### **Education and ethics**

Man's heart, which ought to be filled with compassion that is natural to it, is today full of cruelty and bitterness. Education, which should serve to refine man's nature and make him a hero, is failing in its purpose because in his conduct man is a "zero". An education which does not develop humanness is an utter waste. The educational system should ensure that along with knowledge right conduct, is also developed. Ravana and Duryodhana achieved unrivalled eminence in scholarship. But it was of no avail because of their polluted minds. They ceased to be human: True education should produce a blossoming of human qualities. It should not be merely for earning a living, but should result in a ripening of the heart, filling it with love. "What happiness can one achieve if all his education makes him concerned only about filling his stomach and makes him forget the Supreme Lord?" (Poem)

The goal of human life should be to strive for that which will give enduring happiness and not, transient pleasures. The yearning for this sacred goal should be developed while one is still young and has a pure, untainted, innocent mind. Of what use is all your book knowledge if you have not learnt to lift your hands in prayer to God? You salute persons of no account for selfish reasons.

with faith in God from childhood. Here is a story to illustrate this need:

### **What is in a name?**

Rithudhwaja and Madalasa were a pious couple with intense faith in God. Madalasa was a woman of noble character. She excelled every one in virtue, wisdom and sacrifice. She was the embodiment of holiness. The couple had a son, to whom the father wanted to give a name that would be in accordance with his Kshatriya lineage. After considerable cogitation, he gave the boy the name "Vikrant". Madalasa burst into laughter when she heard the name. She was unhappy over the excessive interest taken by the king in naming the child. She felt that some name should be given for the physical body for worldly purposes. But to show excessive interest in it was meaningless. Later a second son was born, who was named "Subaahu" (which meant one with fine arms). Madalasa again laughed at the naming of the child. The king felt insulted by Madalasa's behaviour. Sometime later a third son was born. Rithudhwaja told Madalasa: "You don't like the names given by me for our sons. You better name the third son yourself."

A name has to be given to anyone in the world as a mark of identity. In keeping with this need, Madalasa named the son, "Alarka". The king was angry on hearing the name. He burst forth: "Is this the name that should be given to the scion of a royal family, a warrior's son and belonging to a line of courageous kshatriyas? What a shame! I will not call him by this name."

### **No names for the atma**

"Alarka" means a 'mad dog'. The king asked: "Is my son to be called a mad dog?" Madalasa approached the king and said: "A person who does not know his real nature, who has no awareness of his divinity and who does not know his oneness with the Divine is worse than a mad dog. What value should be attached to the names of persons who have not recognised their true nature? What significance can names have for foolish persons who are not aware of the oneness of the universe and who do not contemplate on divinity? The body is human in form. But they are not mere men at all. They are the embodiments of the Atma, the Formless and Attributeless Self. They are pure and unsullied. It is sheer ignorance to give names to the Atma." In view of this belief, Madalasa started teaching her children from an early age their essential spiritual nature and their inherent divinity.

### **Role of mothers**

Today, the mothers are responsible for the good or bad behaviour of their children. It is a matter for shame for any mother to say: "My son will not heed my words." If the mother had brought up the son on right lines from the beginning, he would not behave like this. The snake-gourd has to be made to grow straight by tying a stone to it from its tender stage. Likewise, the stone of discipline and devotion should be attached to a boy from his infancy. Mothers experience the disobedience of their children because of their failure to inculcate discipline in the early years. Madalasa began teaching her sons from their childhood in this manner: "Child, you are not a son, nor am I a mother. Both of us are manifestations of Sat-Chit-Ananda. We are like the waves on an ocean, not different from each other. All have arisen from the ocean of Sat-Chit-Ananda. It is folly to think otherwise."

Swami sang a song describing how Madalasa treated the children. Placing them in the cradle of 'Omkaara', on the cushion of 'Tattwamasi', she named the child, 'Eruka' (Awareness, Atma, Prajna or Brahman) and called upon all the Devas to swing the cradle.

### **Respect for parents**

In this manner, the mothers of ancient times taught the truth about their divinity to the children and made them aware of their true nature. Thus the sacred stories of Bharat were taught to the children, who learnt to respect their parents and elders. If one does not respect his parents and revere his preceptor, can he be termed a human being? To be a true human being one has to respect his parents and kith and kin in childhood, revere the teacher in boyhood, please elders in his manhood, and worship sages in old age. Ignoring these duties, youth today are running wild. They should realise the preciousness of human life as Tulsidas described it. At the outset, mothers should teach the children the immense value of human life. Alas! They themselves do not know its value. How are they going to teach others? Hence, the parents themselves should learn the value of human life. They should have faith in the divinity of human life.

### **Purity of heart**

Today, because fear of sin and love of God have become rare, morality in society is absent. Even when people seem to offer "Namaskar" (salutation with folded hands), it does not stem from the heart and is only an artificial gesture. How long can such artificial expressions sustain a man? What is needed is a pure mind, filled with sublime thoughts. It should be selfless. When the mind is selfish, the man becomes selfish. A man with a polluted mind displays vicious looks. His speech and actions are impure. If the heart is pure, everything else will be pure. The Atma is like a flame in the body. When it is covered by the ten senses, its light filters through ten holes, as it were. And when it is covered, in addition, with the blanket of Abhimana (Attachment to worldly objects), the effulgence of the Atma (Self) is not visible. When attachment is given up and the body consciousness goes, the Self is revealed in all its brightness. .

(Bhagavan related the story of King Vikramaditya's encounter with a Brahmin who had been repeating mantras and performing yagas for years to get a vision of God. Vikramaditya prayed with all his heart for one brief, moment and had the vision of God. The Lord told Vikramaditya that God does not respond to mere mechanical repetition of mantras or performance of rituals. "I respond to the call of a sincere devotee even when he says 'Madhava' only once with a pure heart").

The rituals done by people without feelings from the heart are dry and lifeless. They are like the mirage in a desert where you see water but It cannot quench your thirst. Even while singing Bhajans, you should utter the names from the depth of the heart, not concentrating on Raga and Tala.

A young student, who had spoken earlier, referred to Shirdi Sai taking two rupees from devotees. The two rupees represented faith and devotion. When both join, it can grow into a big tree and yield the fruit of Divine Grace.

Today is observed as Children's Day all over the world. Parents should not hesitate to correct the children when they go wrong. (Swami then referred to an episode from the Ramayana which illustrated how 'a devotee who seeks nothing but the love of God is rewarded by the Lord in ample measure.)

### **Devotion rewarded**

Rama was giving away all his possessions before leaving for the forest. An aged Brahmin, who was staggering on his feet, came to Rama seeking His darshan. When Rama asked him what he wanted, he replied that he didn't want anything and he came only to have a look at Rama as he was not sure he would live till Rama returned from the forest after 14 years. Rama was so much moved by the pure heart of the Brahmin that he insisted that the old man should receive some gift from him. Submitting to Rama's will, the Brahmin agreed to receive the gift. Rama then asked the Brahmin to throw a stick as far as he could. All the land covered by the place where the stick landed would be his. The old Brahmin said: "Though I have no desire I have to obey the command of my king." He threw the stick chanting the name of Rama. It covered a large area, which Rama gifted to the Brahmin. The Brahmin, whose name was Trijata, said: "Oh Rama, why should I have this land? My (Gati) fate, (Sthithi) position, (Mati) mind and (Sampati) wealth are all yours only. That is why I came to see you." Rama said, "Such persons as *you* are the pride of our society."

To-day, in the Kali Yuga, it is extremely rare to find such persons. Selfishness and greed are rampant every where. Parents have a duty to shape their children as ideal sons of the nation. Students who have acquired proximity with Sai should develop more and more spiritual wisdom. Get rid of negative thoughts first. Then try to develop good thoughts. You are living in Swami's Ashram. How far are you following the code of conduct relating to Ashram life? There is no use in keeping only the body in the Ashram and letting the mind roam elsewhere. You should have only 'Daiva Chintana' or thoughts of God in your heart.

Swami concluded His discourse with the Bhajan, "*Bhajan Binna sukha santhi nahi*".

**From Bhagavan's discourse on Easwaramma Day, May 6, 1994, in Sai Ramesh Mandap at Brindavan**

*BHAGAVAN IN BRINDAVAN*

### **Purity: Patience: Perseverance**

Bhagavan Baba and His party of students and teachers returned to Brindavan from Kodaikanal on the evening of May 4th. From May 5th, Bhagavan graciously permitted the students and a few others to assemble in "Trayee Brindavan" after the evening bhajans in Sai Ramesh Mandap. These meetings were utilised for talks by different students or teachers every evening on their experiences at Kodaikanal, as well as occasional talks by elderly devotees on

Bhagavan on one or other aspect of the spiritual quest that should be the primary goal of mankind. Swami enlivened His discourses with episodes from the great epics and quite often, with stories pointing to a profound truth or illustrating a moral ideal.

One evening Bhagavan in the course of His discourse, related a story concerning a disciple who went to a sage to seek a mantra (spiritual message) which would lead him to liberation. Bhagavan conveyed the message that purity, patience and perseverance were essential requisites for realisation of the Self. The story brought out the importance of determination and steadfast pursuit of the goal regardless of the sacrifices and ordeals involved in realising it.

The disciple, Bhagavan said, went to the sage and asked him to give him a mantra. The sage said that he would impart the message only if the disciple agreed to serve him for twelve years, carrying out all his injunctions. The disciple agreed and carried out his services to the preceptor with devotion for twelve years. At the end of the period, when the sage felt that his own end was approaching, he asked the disciple to bring a palmyra leaf on which he would inscribe the mantra before his passing. The disciple went in search of a palmyra leaf, but before he could get it, he found that the preceptor was dead. On enquiry from a boy who was there, he learnt that before passing on, the sage had written something on a bed of sand, which a woman had copied and then wiped off the inscription. The disciple went in search of the woman, who was having some donkeys. He learnt from her that she had inscribed on the palm leaf roll that she wore in her earlobe what she found on the sand. When she learnt from the young man that the writing on the sand was a mantra intended for him and for which he had served the sage faithfully for twelve years, the woman said that she would give him the palm leaf only if he served her dutifully for twelve years. The man, who was determined to get the mantra at any cost, agreed to serve her.

The young man looked after the donkeys and served the woman for many years, living upon the food given by her. One day, he could not get the food from her and went about in search of food. At that time, he learnt that the king of the region had been feeding the poor for a long time and that he might be able to get food if he went to the feeding place. On going there he learnt that the king had stopped the feeding from that day because it did not yield the result he was expecting from it. The king had started poor feeding on the advice of his preceptor who had told him that he would have a son if a truly godly man ate the food that he would serve to the poor. A bell was kept in the palace and when it rang by itself, that would be the sign that a godly man had partaken of the king's food. As the feeding had gone on for long without the bell ringing, the king decided to stop the feeding.

That was the very day when the young disciple went to the feeding place. On learning that all the vessels used for cooking the food had been sent to the river for cleaning, the young man hastened to the river bank to find out whether some food scraped from the vessels would be available for him. He found some crumbs at the spot and started eating them. At that very moment the bell in the palace started ringing.



who was the person who had eaten the food that day which made the bell ring. After enquiries, the messengers traced the young man at the river and brought him to the king.

The king was overjoyed on seeing the young man because he felt that he would soon have a son. He offered the young man half his kingdom and invited him to stay with him. The young man told the king his whole story and said that he was not interested in the kingdom or anything else, but only in the mantra from his guru, which was now in the keeping of the woman with the donkeys. The young man insisted that the palm leaf ear-ring worn by the woman should be obtained without any compulsion.

The king sent out men to trace the woman, who was brought before him. Learning that she was an acrobat, who could perform feats on a rope, the king asked her to demonstrate her skill before the queen who was now enceinte. As she was dancing on the rope, he asked her whether she could catch two diamond ear-rings he would throw at her and wear them while dancing on the rope. She readily agreed. The king threw the shining diamond rings at her. Catching them in her hands, she took out the palm leaf rings from her ear-lobes, cast them down and wore the diamond rings in their place.

As the palm leaf rings dropped down, the young man rushed towards them and eagerly read the message inscribed on them. Immediately after reading the mantra, the young man secured instant illumination and liberation.

Swami said that a spiritual aspirant should have such determination and preparedness for any kind of sacrifice to achieve his goal.

—N.

### **Working with the Lord's Children**

*Life will be reformed by teaching the children  
The Lord's example of love we daily observe  
His precious time He shares mostly with them  
But to all He has granted the chance to serve*

Swami gave me an unforgettable lesson with 10-year-old Michael, a truant child I had been tutoring. Like other disadvantaged children I have worked with in New York City, Michael was often completely unresponsive. His behaviour ranged from inattentive and hyperactive to indifferent. I began to question my effectiveness and wondered whether or not my time was being wasted until this remarkable experience showed me how much a little act of kindness can really mean.

basketball on Saturday, which I did. He was very pleased to have someone there just for him, and as we walked down the street after the game, I asked whether anyone had ever taken him out before. He said that two or three years ago a psychiatrist, "Dr. Clark," who had spent time talking with him, had taken him out for a pizza. Michael then said very seriously, "He was very nice to me." Unfortunately, Dr. Clark was transferred to another school shortly thereafter.

Michael and I had a good time together, and late in the afternoon we went to St. Patrick's Cathedral, where we looked at all the altars and I explained to him, how to light a candle and say a prayer. The first prayer he said was for his mother. He seemed to enjoy the experience of lighting candles and saying prayers. When I told him that it was time to go, he asked for "just one more candle." He took a lot of time selecting the altar and then closed his eyes to say a very, very long prayer.

After leaving the cathedral, we stopped for something to eat before taking him home. "Michael," I said as we sat in the coffee shop, "can you tell me who you lit that last candle for?" He hesitated a moment and answered: "I lit it for Dr. Clark." Then he paused, looked steadily into my eyes and added very softly, very solemnly, "He was very nice to me."

I was moved almost to tears by this incident. It was an unforgettable lesson. Dr. Clark, who works with many children, probably doesn't remember an unresponsive child he spent time with years ago, but Michael remembers!

Not a leaf turns without reason. Not an eyelid opens or closes without His Will. No thought, no word, no deed that comes from love is ever lost or wasted. It is for us to remember always to serve Him in others with love in our hearts and not to be concerned with the results: they come in His time, they come in His way, and they have to be good.

### **Setting a good example**

I opened the door to greet a young man who, at age 9, had been the first child assigned to me in my work as a volunteer "mentor." Until he was 11, Saulito and I had a special one-to-one relationship in which I served as his adult friend, guide and example. Then he moved out of my area in New York City, and we lost contact.

Seven years later, Saulito had gone through a great deal of trouble to find my address and phone number. Now face-to-face once more, our talks summed up much of what Swami teaches about service and what mentoring means.

Saulito remembered everything we had done together, including the names of my office staff, my father's instructions to him on how to shake hands, the museums, the plays, the country visits, and the concerts. "How is your friend with the orange robe?" he asked, "I don't remember His name." But Saulito did remember the many aspects of a positive new world for him. This was fresh evidence of Swami's reminder to give as well as you can, and leave the results to Him.

around to give me a push," he said, "and most of all, there was no one I could look up to." Since Saulito was about to enter the Marine Corps, I told him that he had just resolved his problem because in the Marines he would be continually pushed and he would always have someone to look up to—albeit a drill sergeant.

The greatest tragedy today is the ever more serious devaluation of young lives: Children without hope, love, and guidance. Anger and violence are the models of life that the media stress, Human values are forgotten. There is "no one to look up to", as Saulito said. What is needed is an army of positive role models. If each of us mentored ONE child and improved ONE life, what a major change would take place in this world! What an opportunity to serve as His messenger.

1. by setting a good example
2. by setting a good example
3. by setting a good example

That is the heart of Swami's teachings and the heart of mentoring. One needn't be a professional teacher to serve here. Mentoring calls for regular and sustained interest in the well being of a student by a loving caring adult who can consistently set a good example.

Swami spends 75 percent of His time with young people. Sai is love, and so He gives love. Sai is joy, and so He gives joy. Find the time to share the blessings of His love and His joy with a child in need.

### **The power of selfless service**

*A first step:* On Palm Sunday in April of 1987, a group of seven teenagers entered the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine in New York City for a new experience—that of helping to serve a hot sit-down lunch to 300 homeless people. The teenagers were part of an experimental mentoring class that I had been conducting during my lunchtime. These weekly meetings were opportunities for me to share Swami's teachings so that they could learn to handle their problems more effectively. The students developed a sense of openness and friendliness towards each other that was new for them. The E.H.V curriculum was an important part of our time together. The students began to realize that they have the power and the ability to improve the quality of their lives if only they make the effort. We had often talked about selfless service and several students agreed to try on Palm Sunday. All of us met for a short breakfast at my apartment before going to the Cathedral.

When the students arrived at Church that Sunday, they set up the tables, served the food, spoke with the homeless guests, cleaned up and reset for the next of the three lunch settings. They worked for three hours and the time passed very quickly. When we left, it was with a feeling of exhilaration, having worked hard and very well. After leaving the Cathedral, most of the students admitted to having had doubts and fears about interacting with the homeless. Those doubts and fears were replaced by an experience of love.

All youngsters, regardless of their social and economic backgrounds, respond with equal enthusiasm to a noble idea. One of the students later wrote of the experience.

"The feeling was one of knowing that we have done something good in serving the needy. I felt very good about myself—walking around the room and seeing all of those poor homeless people; a feeling that I never felt started to blossom. On that day I realized that I'm no different from those I was serving. I know now that if I help humanity or just one person through rough times, I can hold my head up and say I did something I can be proud of, and that is a feeling like no other. This experience is one none of the students who were involved will ever forget."

*Service is an awareness of Oneness*

*It is an expression of Divine Love*

*Only by practice can it be learned*

*As Good acts within, around & above*

### **In the Lord's time**

***A Second Step:*** Swami took the proposal I gave Him at an interview in May 1993. A year's work had gone into developing a school program for involving an entire 9th grade in service activities and E.H.V. The school principal was enthusiastic about the project. When Swami told me to continue with it, I felt particularly happy. In an interview In August, Swami asked me how the project was going. "Very slowly" I replied, and, once again, He told me to continue. On returning home, I learned that the school principal had been assigned elsewhere, the building closed for major structural repair and all the children sent to other schools. That was not what I expected! But Swami had told me to continue. Knowing from past experience that everything happens in the Lord's time, not in our idea of time, I began to seek other schools to work with. This is usually a very slow and difficult process. Swami reminds us that 'By sheer perseverance and determination, man can achieve anything.' I started searching in earnest.

Six months have passed since that search began and by His grace, the results are surprising. Four schools are now involved and none of the planning of the preceding year was wasted. The original idea is now taking shape in a manner that is vastly more effective and more natural. Instead of imposing a planned programme, a seed was planted and has grown and has now begun to flower. This is how it is happening in the most important of the four schools.

I spoke to several classes about the value of selfless service as a practical way of life and as a result, a first group of students volunteered for the Cathedral homeless lunch. Before leaving my apartment that Sunday, all the students, fourteen year olds, were asked to make sandwiches to carry with them and distribute on the streets during the course of the day. This had not been done before. In every way, the total experience was beautiful. When the reports got back to their peers at school, other students wanted to come. Soon there was a waiting list which required increasing the service from, once a month to every Sunday. But this was not enough to fill the demand and I took a chance, first asking Swami's help.

New York City hospital. This visit is, for many, heartbreaking. To see young children totally paralyzed for life, on respirators, many unable to communicate, is painful to see. My concern was that the students would be frightened. Nevertheless, I decided to take the chance and bring them. Surprisingly, two of the teachers I had gotten to know asked to come along. The result proved to be a deeply moving experience for all concerned. The students, who come from difficult backgrounds, immediately saw the need and knew just what to do. There was no hesitancy on their part. They talked to the children, read stories to them, played games, held their hands. They gave love sweetly and spontaneously. They gave meaning to Christmas. The patients, many of whom couldn't talk, spoke with their eyes. They radiated joy. The two teachers also worked perfectly and when several hours had passed and they suggested that it was time to leave, the students didn't want to go. Normally they are restless, anxious to leave school, impatient even on a special trip. We stayed another hour! All of us were deeply touched and the experience had enriched the lives of all. The teenagers all kept asking to return and see their new friends. That has been done. How they visit regularly two Saturdays a month.

More surprises were to follow: The teachers were able to see another side of their students and with it, a new and respectful attitude developed. Ray, one of the teachers, said: "I'm not just the man who comes in to teach English. I am also the man who wipes the tables and takes out the garbage for the homeless lunch. Our discussions in class have changed. They are easier, more interactive, more friendly and much more effective." The students saw another side of their teachers with the result that the overall tone of the school has begun to change as it develops a character uniquely its own. Over half of the teaching staff now volunteers to do service with the students. It has become an important personal experience for all. Since we all meet at my apartment for breakfast, Swami's pictures are everywhere to be seen. Questions are asked and answered and more information has been requested and given.

—**Hal Honig, New York**  
*(To be continued)*

### **With Bhagavan at Kodaikanal**

Bhagavan Baba's annual sojourn in the bracing climate of the Kodaikanal Hills began this year on April 5, when Swami left Brindavan, in the early hours of the morning, on the car journey that took Him to his Summer abode.

By the Grace of Bhagavan, a group of 36 boys, from the College and the Secondary School, 6 teachers and a few invitees were privileged to accompany Him in a cavalcade of vehicles. Several devotees who were keen to be with Swami, followed Him in a long stream of taxis and cars. After a brief stopover for lunch at Sankari, a few miles beyond Salem, Swami and His party headed for the destination, "Sai Shruti", which was reached at 8:30 p.m. during a

the Divine Master and to receive His instructions for the duration of His stay.

### **Ecstatic routine**

The next morning, on April 6, at 6:15 a.m. Swami emerged from His chamber, like the rising Sun, and beckoned the students and the others to come for breakfast in the dining hall in the divine presence. This signaled the start of a spiritual interaction, filled with divine ecstasy of an extraordinary kind, over the following twenty-eight days. Each day, there was a lunch session around 11 a.m.; tea at 2:30 p.m.; and dinner at about 7 p.m., providing delectable interludes in the radiant presence of Bhagavan. Immediately after breakfast, the boys had the opportunity to be at the Lotus Feet, surrounding Bhagavan in the central hall of "Sai Shruti", adorned by a magnificent wooden image of Lord Vighneshwara. Swami would engage the boys in conversation of an extraordinary kind that generated awe, tears, laughter and glimpses of divinity again and again. It would then be time for- Bhagavan to go to the devotees and bless them with morning Darshan on the lawns of "Sai Shruti". Swami would direct the boys to take a walk round the lake during the interregnum. After darshan and interviews, Bhagavan would be back in the central hall with the eager boys, having briskly completed their walk, seated closely around Bhagavan's chair. The joy of Swami talking to the boys, turning to the elders in the hall and inviting them to pose 'difficult' questions to the boys on what they had learned at college or school and, on a number of occasions, Swami relating stories from India's great epics and scriptures, spiced with moving episodes from His own early life, would go on till lunch-time.

### **With the devotees**

The third interactive session of the day would commence after tea and go on till it was time for the evening Darshan followed by Bhajans. The gleam of joy on the faces of the thousands of devotees—a large number of them from overseas—was always a thrilling spectacle. For many of the devotees a single benign glance from Bhagavan would suffice for a lifetime and serve as compensation for the trouble taken by them to make the journey to Kodaikanal, and bear with personal inconveniences.

### **Downpour of discourses**

The day's fourth session, inside "Sai Shruti", was invariably such as to thrill the minds and hearts of all those present in the small venue the students, the teachers and guests called in by Swami. There were usually brief talks, given in the Divine presence, by one or more students and guest speakers chosen by Swami. Then followed the Divine discourse of the day. Occasionally Swami would invite suggestions about what He should speak on and the students would make eager responses. The twenty-eight discourses showered by Bhagavan at Kodaikanal on the participants inside "Sai Shruti" covered a wide range of spiritual themes and were memorable for the profundity of their message and the unique charm of their exposition. Swami pointed out again and again, "Without placing unswerving faith in the Lord, it is futile to expect anything worthwhile to be achieved."

On three special occasions, during the stay in Kodaikanal, Bhagavan blessed large audiences with Divine discourses: on Ugadi day (April 11), Tamil/Malayalam New year's Day

issue. The third appears in the current issue.)

On Sri Ramanavami day, in the intimacy of "Sai Shruti", Bhagavan produced, for the spiritual delight of the participants, lustrous ivory figures of Rama, Sita, Lakshmana and Hanuman and the Mangalasutra worn by Sita on her wedding day. While describing Hanuman's mission to Lanka in search of Sita, Bhagavan brought forth Lord Rama's ring which Hanuman carried to Lanka to be shown to Sita, and the "Choodamani" which Sita gave to Hanuman to be shown to Rama. It was an ecstatic experience for one and all to witness these marvellous manifestations of Bhagavan's Divine power.

### **A memorable picnic**

One of the highlights of the Odyssey in Kodaikanal this year was the first ever picnic, organized in a dense forest area, which Bhagavan blessed with His divine presence and participation. Mere words are inadequate to capture the extent of the beauty with which the forest appeared to adorn Herself, to welcome Bhagavan Baba and earn His Grace. The three hours that Swami spent in the forest, in a happy mood, amidst passing clouds, will forever be etched in the memories of all those present. Swami most graciously delivered a discourse in the course of which He materialised a diamond, still not fully cut, bigger than any other diamond known to humanity. Swami observed: "If this diamond is fully cut, the human eye will be totally dazzled by the ensuing brilliance". On this memorable occasion, Swami spoke also on the divine mystery of "Hiranyagarbha" and produced an enchanting golden globule that contains within it the entire universe.

On April 26, Swami spoke on "Trayee Brindavan", Bhagavan's abode in Bangalore, an architectural jewel, which was inaugurated by Him ten years ago. Swami dwelt on the importance of the three Vedas (Rig, Yajur and Sama), which are called "Trayee".

Bhagavan showered His Grace on five ardent devotees at Kodaikanal by accepting their hospitality at lunches hosted by them for Swami and His boys and other guests of Swami. This provided interesting interludes in the daily routines, giving an opportunity to the participants to see Bhagavan in the setting of the houses of householders radiating joy and motherly love. The boys used these occasions for photographic sessions with the Divine Master, taking advantage of the scenic beauty of the Kodaikanal Hills.

On the morning of May 4, Swami bade, 'Good-bye' to Kodaikanal and left for Brindavan. There was a brief stop-over, for lunch, at the residence of an ardent devotee in Coimbatore.

To all those who were privileged to be in the close proximity of Bhagavan for a period of thirty days, during which Kodaikanal attained a special sanctity owing to the presence of "Sai Krishna", it was a reminder that they were reaping the fruits of their good acts in their previous birth. When the writer mentioned this to Swami, Bhagavan said, with a smile: "Not one birth, at least a hundred births in the past and more births to come."

lavish my attention on you because of my love for you. I do not want from you anything in return. My great anxiety is that you should conduct yourselves well not only when you are near Me but also when you go some distance away from Me. You should love Me, you should have rocklike faith in Me. I will be happy when people see you in action and say: 'He is a good human being. He was a student at the Sai Institute'.

Bhagavan's message came again in these simple words: "The essence of all that has been said in the eighteen Puranas is contained in this dictum! 'Help ever; Hurt Never'. Your great resolve should be: I shall ever maintain harmony in thought, word and action. The spiritual path is easy to follow. All you have to do is to cast off your desires. The road ahead is smooth and straight, and there is a charioteer waiting to guide you."

Bhagavan presented these gems of Truth embedded in the shining jewellery of great spiritual stories; like that of Queen Madalasa, a great shining lamp of Bharatiya culture, to cite one example.

Over a whole month, day after day, in Kodaikanal, Bhagavan took infinite trouble to inculcate in the minds of those who were privileged to be with Him a deep understanding of Love and the importance of Awareness, Purity, Selflessness and Divinity. Bhagavan's message is for the whole of humanity, overriding religions, caste, creed, sex, colour and all such divisive factors. The small band of people, blessed by Bhagavan to be close to His Lotus Feet for thirty days, have a God ordained obligation to be the torchbearers of His effulgent Divine message:

—S. Sampath

### **To the Children of the World**

We bless you to find happiness  
through Swami's unconditional love,  
To go through life accepting  
His blessings from above.

May you find great satisfaction  
in helping and serving others,  
And never looking at all  
for any worldly returns, ever.

As you begin your day  
today and everyday,  
Remember that. "hands that serve  
are holier than lips that pray".



Through the coming years  
people of all kinds  
you are bound to encounter,  
Their religion, race; caste, or wage,  
why even ask or bother.

Don't let power, fame, and fortune  
overcome your sense of humanity,  
Use them cautiously, wisely,  
and with all humility.

A great Avatar,  
Swami is here to stay,  
"To live only to love,  
Love only to, give". He says.

Your own children tomorrow  
will always look at what you do,  
Be careful, love and nurture them  
for they are God's precious gift to you.

Life with its twists and turns  
Its ups and downs,  
is a time we all have to live through,  
It Is only a game, a dream, a challenge,  
Be strong, never give up  
do something meaningful to your life  
and the world that surrounds you.

Speak softly and truthfully,  
think good thoughts,  
act with good deeds,  
Have faith in God,  
dedicate everything to Him,  
for He Is TRUTH; indeed!

Take care of yourself,  
your soul and your body,  
Believe that "You are God, God is You"  
for Swami resides in you  
As in everybody.

As parents,

a wild foundation,  
Your happiness, you very well know,  
is our only consolation.

With great affection, we love you  
Even when we have to part  
You have always held a place  
very special in our hearts.

I try to show you the best out of life  
the way we know how it should be.  
We hope you understand us,  
your eyes can choose what you  
want them to see.

Be cheerful, be happy!  
Your smile is a beauty,  
Life is a gift,  
find the joy in it,  
think positively.

Growing up,  
move on with your own life  
in Dharma, Prema, Santhi, Sathya,  
always hold on to Sai Baba.  
Stay on the right pathway to God,  
never lead life astray,.  
Say your mantras, chant the Gayatri,  
think of God, always pray.

Our dear child,  
to God let your loving heart sing,  
Reach out and go back to Him,  
forever and always,  
you have our blessing.

—**Ruby Nandan, USA**

*This is the path of Seva, Swami says, "The fulfillment of man's life on earth consists in filling himself with the love of God and channelising that love into arts of service, service of all who are embodiments of God." There is really no 'other' no 'neighbour'. Everyone is oneself, for all belong to an indivisible whole. Service uplifts us, delight us, satiates our hunger, expands our*

## The Light

*In the deep fog of darkness there is always a Light,  
No matter how little it may seem it is forever bright;  
You may not find the small glow,  
But be happy, there is always a tomorrow;  
Take Sai's Hand and He Will show you the Way,  
But be patient, you may not find the Light today;  
One by one your problems disappear,  
He is with you so why should you fear;  
Now your challenge is over and you can see the Light too,  
You are the Light and the Light is you.*

—By Vivek Bilgi, Edmonton, Canada

## Advaita is the Answer

*Many serious spiritual aspirants all over the world. have been attracted to the message of Vedanta. Among them was Dom Bede Griffiths, a Christian missionary, who donned the ochre robe and headed an ashram in South India called Shantivanam. He passed away on May 13 last year in his 85th year. The following are extracts from an insightful lecture he delivered to the Study Society in London (they reveal his near identity with the message of Bhagavan Baba).*

My whole life has centered on Advaita, the principle of non-duality. To me, it is the answer to the problems of humanity. As long as we remain in the world of dualities, of opposites, we are going to be divided and in conflict. The only way to transcend all conflicts is to go beyond duality.

In the fifth century before Christ, there was a breakthrough in human consciousness. That was the time when the Indian thinkers expounded a new philosophy, Advaita, in the Upanishads. The Upanishads start with the world of senses, of human experience and suffering, and they break through to the transcendent mystery, the reality for which there is no name. As long as we name things, they belong to a world of reason and the senses. But when we touch reality, there is no name. We must go beyond all names and forms and open our hearts and minds to the divine mystery. Mystery means you cannot name it, you can't put it in your words, but you can

Brahman, which means to grow or to swell. Sacrifice was central to all Hindu worship. They built fire and offered everything to fire. Agni, the god of fire, came; he was a messenger of the gods and he carried the gifts up to heaven. The power in sacrifice is the power of the whole universe. The ancient Hindus believed that the whole world is based on sacrifice. Sacrifice is to make a thing sacred. To make a thing sacred is to open it to the divine. Everything should be made sacred in that way.

### **All are sacred**

In India, food, drink and bathing are all sacred actions. In the traditional Hindu way, you have your banana leaf and you put your food on the banana leaf, then you take some water and you sprinkle it round the leaf and make a sacred space. You keep out all the contrary forces. The water purifies that space, and then you offer that food to the divine and the divine power consumes it in your stomach. You offer it in the fire of your belly to the divine. Every meal is a sacrament, a means of union with God. The ancient tradition saw the world as essentially sacred.

There is always a danger that in Advaita we tend to put down the world. But genuine *Advaita* recognises that Samsara and *Nirvana* are the same. Samsara is the world of change and *Nirvana* is the end of all change. To realise *Nirvana* is a wonderful insight, but you cannot get this insight as long as you remain on the merely rational level. The rational mind is created to divide, to analyse, to break things up. The Greek philosophers started it, modern science has carried it to the limit, dividing the world up more and more, breaking it all up into pieces.

That went on until the nineteenth century and then came the great revolution in the twentieth century in science. The first idea was that everything in this world is a solid, separate, concrete object, moving in space and time. That was the world as understood by Newton, who created a system of solid bodies moving in space and time; the Earth and the planets moving round the sun. This construction lasted for 200 years.

Scientists thought that when they had reached the atom, they had reached the limit. Atom means "atamos". You can't split the atom; it is indivisible. They thought that they had now found the building blocks of the universe. It is all made up of atoms which obey mathematical laws; understand the mathematical laws of atoms and you will understand the universe. Then a breakthrough came. It was found that you could split the atom; there are other particles. You got electrons and neutrons. The critical moment came in the 1920s when they realised that these particles were also not ultimate. You can't distinguish between particles and waves. A particle dissolved into waves. All these solid bodies had suddenly disappeared and there was nothing but waves of energy. Today in science, the universe is a field of energies. We are all connected into it as part of our very being.

### **God and the world are one**

God and the world are not two. There is no God over there. That is an illusion. It is a useful illusion, but when we think seriously, we know that God and the world are not two. This universe is a web of interdependent relationships, and we are all parts of this interrelated

not affect the whole. There is a poem by Francis Thompson that says, "Stir but a wing and disturb a star." If a butterfly stirs its wing it disturbs a star. The whole is an interrelated whole. It is a marvellous vision when you think of it. Every one of us is a part of this whole universe, interrelated with every physical being in the universe.

Then we take it a stage further. We tend to think that our ego consciousness is ourselves. Who am I? I am this being sitting here, thinking, writing, and so on. This is me. I have conscious thoughts, and will, and I build up my conscious self. It is a very useful thing. We can't live without this conscious self, but it is a terribly limited thing. We all think of ourselves from childhood and we grow up with this idea that I am a separate self. That is an illusion. We are not a separated self. Psychology has opened us up to the understanding that this conscious ego is just a small portion of our real being and beyond the conscious ego is the vast depth of the unconscious; what Jung called the collective unconscious. If I go beyond my ego consciousness, I discover my links with other people and with the whole world. Then I go beyond and discover my relation to the universe. Time and space are all aspects of this total reality and we are all parts of this cosmic whole.

### **The web of life**

This is why ecology is a vital subject today. We thought we could do what we liked with the world around us: We have been abusing it, polluting it, destroying it and it is beginning to destroy us now. The whole conscious mind is unaware of its unconscious links with the whole of matter, with the whole web of life. The physical sciences are opening up to the world as a field of energies in which all these different forms are projected like a hologram. If you take a hologram of somebody, you just get a picture of different patterns of light. But when you put a laser beam through it, it reveals the three-dimensional face behind. Interestingly, every part of the photo shows the whole face. It is extraordinary. We are all part of this universe of vibrating energies and within them are these three-dimensional wholes which we observe as human beings, trees, animals and the world around us. These are interrelated, interdependent aspects of the one cosmic totality.

The Eastern philosophers observed the mind. They sat in meditation and they watched their thoughts. By, watching their thoughts they discovered how the mind works. They found that all these concepts of the mind by which we divide the world are limiting concepts. They arrived at a deeper vision which transcends all

### **The higher wisdom**

So, as we go beyond our rational mind, we discover wholeness. When we go beyond our mental consciousness and scientific concepts to the deeper wisdom we integrate it into the higher wisdom. We must not lose our scientific and rational knowledge, but we must integrate it into the higher knowledge. This is the challenge facing us all today—we can't remain on this level of rational, conceptual, analytical and divisive knowledge. It divides everything. It divides up the universe, it divides up human beings; it divides religions; it divides philosophies. It is what is called the learned knife, which cuts everything to pieces and that is why we quarrel and fight all

open ourselves to this transcendent mystery of non-duality, then we are set free from the limitations of this multiplicity and we discover the unity behind it all. Only when we transcend this dualism of the mind and open to the non-dual reality are we free from this conflict and the tragedy of the world.

## **Mother**

*It takes a Mother's love, to make a house a home –  
A place to be remembered, no matter where we roam.*

*It takes a Mother's patience, to bring a child upright;  
Her courage and cheerfulness, to make a dark day bright.*

*It takes a Mother's thoughtfulness, to mend the heart's deep hurts.  
All her skill and tolerance, to mend little socks and shirts.*

*It takes a Mother's kindness, to forgive us when we err.  
To sympathise with us in trouble, and bow her head in prayer.*

*It takes a Mother's wisdom, to recognise our needs,  
And to reassure us, by her loving words and deeds.*

*It takes a Mother's endless faith, her confidence and her trust,  
to guide us through the pitfalls of selfishness and lust*

*There are times when only a Mother's heart can share the joy we feel  
When something we dreamed about, is quite suddenly real.*

*There are times when only a Mother's love can understand our tears,  
Our bitter disappointments, and our child-like fears.*

*There are times when only a Mother's faith can help us on life's way,  
And inspire in us the confidence we need from day to day.*

*And that is why in all this world, there cannot be another,  
Who could fulfill God's purpose, as completely as our Mother.*

**—Ritchie**

**(From the New Zealand Sathya Sai Newsletter)**

*He alone leads us on the way  
"Act through us, O Lord", we pray  
How sweet the grace cannot be told  
To see His Divine plan unfold*

Other opportunities for service .O activities are developing that offer the use of important tools that the Lord has given, but to date are rarely used in schools.

At a high school's Christmas party, a fourteen-year old boy, who is very withdrawn and rarely talks, surprised me with a serious question. "How much does a bullet proof vest cost?" Abbie asked. "Do you want one?" I replied. "That's what I want for Christmas but I don't know if we can afford it." Richard overheard the softly spoken question and he talked about the violence in this country where guns outnumber people and children carry them into the schools. Every fourteen hours, a youth is killed by one of his peers. "We can't do anything," Richard said, "We just have to be lucky."

From that conversation, and the new receptivity on the part of the school as a result of service and EHV, I will hold regular meetings with a group of 10 boys to brainstorm the problem and to discover ways to deal with anger and violence in our society by first dealing with those qualities within ourselves. This pilot project will rest clearly on swami's teachings on sense control. At an interview late in 1992, I asked for permission to use His Summer Showers of 1990. These discourses should be required curriculum for all human beings as it guides us on the proper use of body, senses, mind, intellect and much more. Swami told me to go ahead and to incorporate these discourses in working with children.

At the same interview, I asked Swami whether I could have His permission to use Phyllis Krystal's Cutting the Ties methods in working with children. In the United States, we don't talk about God and spiritual matter, such as prayer, in the schools.

In our undisciplined inner cities rampant with guns and violence, so many of our children are living lives of great fear. The high C of the Krystal work allows contact to be made with the Divine, in each child. It gives effective tools that are easily accessible to the young, such as visualization and ritual. It provides methods for dealing with their fears. It is major tool in the development of the highest of spiritual lessons: that of detachment. Swami gave His permission. "Yes," He said, "go ahead and use" I have begun to do so

*Wherever there is a need, the Lord is present.  
Wherever there is a need, He provides the answer.  
To all He has granted the chance to serve  
Be good, see good, do good, that is ample  
Nothing more need be learned or done  
With your gift of a good example  
The Lord's certain grace will be won*

— Hal Honig, New York

## **The Universal World Teacher**

For the first time in recorded "world history, the entire globe has become virtually one inter-communicating and interacting unit. The crucial steps in this development were doubtless the globalisation of world trade and its many consequences, culminating so far in the age of widespread mobility like public air travel, and of instant communications via space satellite. This material unification of world society, so to say, is the background for the appearance of a true world teaching, crossing all boundaries of culture and religion and becoming available to persons in every corner of the globe through various media. This must indeed be the 'machine age', predicted in ancient times and recorded in the Bhagavata Purana and in other extremely old Indian texts, such as age old palm-leaf manuscripts (naadi) by Brighu, Kumar and Suka. The same texts predict in-unmistakable detail the coming of Sathya Sai Baba as the avatar of God in this Age of Kali. That he is known to millions, says Baba, is unique for any avatar within his own lifetime.

The spiritual teaching required in this age of unparalleled splintering and pulverisation of cultures, faiths and beliefs must be one which unifies the essential truth and goodness found at the core of every religion. It must recognise and tolerate the necessary fact of human and cultural variety, despite the divergences and conflicts that have arisen. Only such a teaching can be truly universal world teaching that may heal the wounds of history.

The very highest requirements one can set for a teacher at the most universal level are to be an impeccable example, to have unlimited knowledge of all cultures and be models of perfection inclusive love of all beings. That the teacher himself is always observed to act in perfect accord with his teaching, that he can convincingly answer questions that arise in any area of human endeavour and can demonstrate unfailing insight into any problem, individuals or collective... these are qualifications that ought to suffice for the title of 'Universal World Teacher'!

### **Baba's universal love**

Sathya Sai Baba's 'students' include a great range of all ages who absorb his every word and who study and practice in their own countries. Many of the people I have met who have come to Baba in their forties or later have been through wide-ranging searches for the highest truth and are convinced that they have at last found the ultimate person to learn it from. The sheer range of people and their backgrounds must surely make the gatherings wherever Sai Baba goes unique among world movements. There seems, at least at the outset, not to be one recognisable sociological or psychological factor common to Baba followers. It may seem an indiscriminate collection of individuals to some, and indeed it is, in that in principle no colour, class, creed, age-group or status etc. is either discriminated against or privileged more than others.

To judge by the written and transcribed testimonies of an impressive range of first-hand observers, Sai Baba's call is heard by persons from all walks of life, of every shade of wealth and



life and government, science and the arts, and many of the greatest spiritual leaders throughout India have met Sai Baba since he began his mission as a 14-year old in 1940. All have testified to the literally overwhelming impression of his great personality, his remarkable powers and his universal love.

### **Human values**

Baba's practical teachings tell how to be, what values and goals to aim and how to achieve them, including what sort of situations and activities to avoid and how to relate to all types of problem and difficulty. All this he relates to the five 'human values', which are universal values that are the quintessence of the worldview that Baba holds. They are found as ideals in one form or another in every known human society, even though they may only be partially agreed upon or may be practised only to a limited extent. These five—truth, right action, peace (of mind), active non-violence and love—are so fundamental that they neither can be, nor need to be, justified by reference to any other values. All other values, whether moral standards or intellectual criteria, can be seen to be sub-values that derive their validity from the human values. The five major values are unsurpassably universal because, taken together, they express and circumscribe the meaning of Goodness. The eternal idea of the Good cannot be explained without reference to the five values and subsequently to the host of sub-values that they embrace.

From his public discourses and talks to varying groups of people, it is always possible to discern Baba's central message to all, whatever their age, race or religion. Yet each discourse is also designed for a specific public. The discourses recorded in the collected volumes of the *Sathya Sai Speaks* series and in *Sanathana Sarathi* have very largely been for Indian audiences, and as such they often exemplify in themes and expound in terms well-known in the Indian culture. From this, and from the Avatar's continued insistence on the primacy of the Vedas' message for civilisation, one may regard him as a Hindu. This is a truth with modifications, for he teaches an unsurpassed degree of unity of religions and insists on the inclusion of all that is goad or laudable, true or beautiful in human life anywhere and everywhere. Essentially, Hinduism has always held and practised just this universalism. Thus, Sai Baba makes the Vedic teachings clear and accessible as one of great pragmatic, social and spiritual depth having relevance to modern life everywhere.

### **The avatar's role**

The reasons for the concentration on reviving the best in ancient Indian culture and spirituality can be discerned by cross-referencing many of his comments from here and there. Firstly, it is in India that Baba's mission started and it is there that he (at least, his physical body) has remained, but for one brief visit through East Africa to Uganda. He has asserted that the full Avatars never incarnate anywhere but in India for which he gives many reasons, explanations and examples. Secondly it is in India that morals must be regenerated first, regaining in practice the traditional universal spiritual values that were founded there as part of the earliest religion known to mankind. Only then will the mutually-sceptical sects of all religions and cultures of today again be able to find the truly non-exclusive approach.

self-righteous—to these facts and statements, which seem to put the, Indian Vedantic religion above all others. However, Sathya Sai Baba makes it clear that the essence of truth and goodness is in every religion. The reason for the advent of the Avatar is precisely that this truth has been clouded over everywhere and certainly in India too, causing the huge global spiritual decline that has produced the unprecedented excesses, madnnesses and ills of the twentieth century.

The overall aim of Baba's mission is the re-vitalisation of humanity's understanding of the unchanging true, nature and purpose of human life and of existence altogether. These truths were first realised and propagated to mankind bar Rishis, a handful of unsurpassed sages who live in the mists of time on the Indian continent. They discovered the ultimate truth through meditation and sacrifice and they gave this divine knowledge the verbal formulation known as the Vedas.

According to the accolades of today's Vedic scholars and Brahmin pundits, Sathya Sai Baba's teachings are most pure and give the easiest access to those scriptures, which Baba also often refers to and has done constantly since the age of fourteen.

This illustrates Baba's repeated assertion that his mission is above all a reinstatement of the dharma of the holy Vedas, which means all forms of right living and good action. This is a regeneration of ancient peaceful traditions, not only as the basis on which to raise India's present civilisation to its very ancient great glories, but also through this again to re-establish genuine religiosity throughout the world. These assertions and the actions with which Baba backs them accord with the original promise of God Vishnu to incarnate in a new form on earth "whenever evil threatens to vanquish good" and to "save *dharma* from decline".

### **Significance of Sai mission**

Some may ask, what difference the presence (or 'omnipresence') of Baba makes to the 'man on the street'? Any answer must take into account that the advent of Sai Baba is not, according to himself, an event-taking place only at the observable, worldly level. It is a process of assisting the change in heart of individual men and women who call on or need the help of Divinity itself. The spread from person to person of the immeasurable ideas and transformative impulses originating in the love and light of the Sathya Sai Baba avatar cannot therefore systematically be traced or measured by anyone. Neither empirical observation nor penetrative reason will be able to provide incontrovertible proofs about the extent and nature of the Avatar's task and actual achievements. Yet, to the 'trained observer' who specialises in the subject or practice that Baa playfully dubs 'Saience', unmistakable influences can already and increasingly be observed across the globe. Not least, it is seen in the faith of at least tens of millions that Sathya Sai Baba will become recognised as a figure of unsurpassed, stature in world spiritual history.

### **A look from the avatar**

Unlike gurus who often tell disciples what to do or not in a traditional way, Baba teaches and tests individuals by more subtle and indirect means. The ways he plays with us in what he sometimes refers to as 'the game of life', shows that he can call our bluff at any moment and raise

happen wherever we are in the world and over any period of time. After a lesson, he gracefully allows dedicated players to win some of the 'jackpot' of bliss this is surely also why his followers hang on every word they can hear him utter. But even...

*"A glance from the corner of the eye is' enough to get things going towards a successful conclusion."* (Sathya Sai Speaks. Vol. VII-B, Ch.1 1)

Baba does indeed give glances from the corner of his eye, sometimes so memorable and full of unspoken meaning that they keep coming to mind ever afterwards. Hard though it is to understand, one look from the avatar can have a deeper and more lasting effect on one's life than can a whole two-hour interview. It all depends, of course, on the particular look! Others have agreed with this, but how it is possible no one can quite explain. This applies both to his 'corrective' looks and—even more so—his exceedingly blissful and divine glance.

The look in his eyes can be lambent and suffused with understanding. At darshan on two successive days he looked at me from close by, somehow fluttering his eyelids in the most charming and beautiful of expressions. I have never seen him do this before or since, nor have I seen anyone else express anything like it. I feel that these glimpses of intense sweetness and love surely have the same attraction that the poets have tried to convey about the Krishna Avatar.

"Every gesture, word and activity of mine, however casual it may appear, is motivated to move you towards the fulfillment of your lives, and endow you with the Ananda (Joy) that your Atman (Spirit) is". (ibid)

—Robert Priddy, Oslo

*(Extracts from the author's recently published book, "The Source of Dream".)*

**BHAGAVAN IN BRINDAVAN:**

## **The Power of Faith**

In one of His discourses in "Trayee Brindavan" in May, Bhagavan spoke at length on the power of faith, He said: "Complete faith is most essential if you want to experience Divinity. There should not be even an iota of doubt. One living without faith in the Divine is like a lifeless corpse." Bhagavan related the following story to illustrate the power of faith:

A young boy used to go from his village to a school which was in a nearby town. He had to cross a forest en route to the town. Generally he used to return home well before sunset. One day, it so happened that he had to leave the school late in the evening and darkness set in.

afraid to walk in the night without company. His mother said: "Why are you afraid? Whenever you are in need of company, shout aloud calling your brother. He will help you."

The boy asked her: "Who is my brother?" The mother replied; "He is none other than Lord Krishna. God is a mother, father, teacher, brother, relative, friend and all. Whenever you are in trouble don't hesitate to call on him for help."

The boy had full faith in his mother's words. In these days, even if God himself tells, nobody believes. That is why Jesus declared: "If I were to be a child everyday for a while, with full faith in my mother, how happy I would be!"

Another day the boy was returning home from school late at night in the darkness. He shouted: "Anna Krishna" (Brother Krishna). After a few moments Krishna appeared before the boy in the form of a lad and told him: "Why do you fear when I am here? I shall escort you home." He accompanied the boy to the village outskirts and disappeared. The boy told his mother how the "brother" helped him true to her words. The mother said: "He helps not only you, but everyone who seeks his help."

From that time onwards, the boy used to call the "brother" whenever he needed his help and Krishna never failed to respond. Gradually he picked up courage.

"When you have full faith, God will surely help you and make you fearless. People who have faith in God will never be let down. But those who have no faith suffer. You need not search for God. It is God who is searching for a real devotee", declared Bhagavan.

### **Control of temper**

Swami referred to the vagaries of the mind and said the mind's speed is unparalleled. It is only because of lack of control of mind one gets into bad temper, which causes loss of discrimination and spells ultimate ruin. It is imperative that one should control the temper and avoid getting angry.

Swami cited an incident from the life of Babu Rajendra Prasad, the first President of India, and said: Rajendra Prasad had a very good servant by name Ratna who was exceptionally faithful and served him for a long time to the satisfaction of his master. One day he was asked to clean his room. Rajendra Prasad had kept a pen given to him by Mahatma Gandhi, in one of his books. When the servant was cleaning the table the book fell down and the nib broke. He became nervous but told his master the truth begging his pardon for his mistake. On hearing this, Rajendra Prasad shouted at him in rage and asked him to get out and not to show his face again as the pen was a highly valuable gift from Mahatma which he had broken.

Then the servant pleaded that he could not survive without him and sought his forgiveness. But Rajendra Prasad was in no mood to listen to him and went out bidding his servant to get out of his sight.

During the night, Rajendra Prasad could not sleep as the memory of his having driven away his servant was haunting him. When he got up next morning he missed his usual morning coffee which Ratna would usually serve him. He reflected over his behaviour and felt sorry for having sent out such a faithful servant for no big fault. He realised that it was his own mistake to have kept the pen carelessly in a book instead of keeping it in a safe place. He sent word to Ratna and took him back seeking his pardon saying: "Ratna you are a good boy. It was my mistake to have kept the pen in the book. So you must excuse me for my rash action." He asked him to continue to serve him till the end of his life.

Anger comes from temper inside and one who yields to this bout of temper is bound to suffer. You should control anger and avoid talking or acting while in an angry mood.

Another instance of how anger gets the better of even a very good person can be cited from the Mahabharata.

Swami said: Ashwathama prayed to Kali to help him to keep his vow of killing the Pandavas before sunset next day and got a sword from her. Draupadi heard about this and said: "The Pandavas are the five life-principles and I am the sixth. How can I live after they are gone?" So saying, she prayed to Krishna as He was always their saviour whenever they were in trouble. Krishna appeared before her and asked her why she had called Him. She explained how Ashwathama had obtained a sword from Kali with Her blessings for his killing the Pandavas before sunset next day. Krishna said: "The word of Mother Goddess has to be fulfilled. At the same time the Pandavas have to be protected, as they are my devotees. I shall have to devise a master plan." He summoned sage Durvasa. ("Though God can act on His own, sometimes He uses others as instrument," observed Bhagavan) Durvasa was glad to have darshan of Lord Krishna and asked Krishna as to why he was called. When Krishna said his help was needed, he remarked that everyone needed God's help and it was strange that God was seeking his help. Durvasa said: "Lord, I shall surely follow your command".

Krishna disclosed His Master Plan. He asked Durvasa to prepare a pit large enough to hide the Pandavas therein. He said: "You should spread some branches of tree to cover the pit and sit on the top of the pit. Ashwathama will come to you. You may tell the truth, but change only the tone"

Ashwathama came in the afternoon and prayed to Durvasa in all humility to disclose the whereabouts of the Pandavas, as he was a Trikalajñani (one who knows the past, the present and the future). Durvasa said in an angry tone: "The Pandavas are under my feet." As everyone knew the effects of Durvasa's rage, Ashwathama did not dare to proceed further and incur the sage's dreaded wrath. He slipped away from the place. By that time the sun had set and the Pandavas were saved.

humanity. God has to act in different ways in different situations. God has no anger in Himself. When He takes human form he has to act as a human.

## **The Ideal Teacher**

Bhagavan Baba has explained the role of Gurus (Educators) who are human incarnations of God. These are Gurus with a far higher stature and far deeper capabilities than the learned and cultural masters. They are the Avatars, the human incarnations of God. They confer, by mere willing the blessing of spiritual strength. They command and by the very force of that command, the lowest of the low, rises to the status of the one who has attained the stage of a Siddhapurusha. The Avatars are the Gurus. They are the highest manifestations of God in human form.

The mission of an ideal teacher, according to Bhagavan Baba, is crucial for the success of our educational endeavours. He often says that there can be muddy teaching in marble halls and marvellous teaching in muddy halls. This highlights His concept that it is not the buildings, laboratories, libraries, equipments, sports fields, etc., which are an index of an institution's name and fame but the quality of the teachers which determines the future of students, society, nation and the whole world.

Even more difficult than getting a good Shishya (student) is the task of securing a good Guru. The preceptor who has not mastered the Shastras (Vidya), which are the repositories of the experience gained by seekers in the past, cannot make a person a sublime man. Knowledge of the Shastras and experience gained by practical application (Tapas)—these two make a full man. Only such an Educator (Guru) can save the student by his instruction and example. The Guru means literally the 'big' person, the 'great' person. That is to say, the Guru must have mastered these two, Vidya and Tapas. Bhagavan Baba explains this concept in a very informal manner. When one desires to wash off the dirt from the clothes he wears, he needs both soap and clean water. So, too, when one is anxious to remove the dirt that has stuck to the mind; both Vidya and Tapas are essential. Only when both are used, the levels of consciousness can be thoroughly cleaned. No vehicle can move without two wheels nor can a bird fly on one wing. So too, no teacher can be ideal, holy and purified without Vidya and Tapas.

Bhagavan Baba refers to the Gita which beautifully depicts the ideal teacher and the ideal student. The pupil is the *Adhikaramurti* and the preceptor is the *Avataranurti*. Arjuna has earned the right to learn. Krishna has come as Man to teach man. The pupil is Narottama (the best of men); the preceptor is Purushottama (the best among physical embodiments). The pupil wields the bow; the teacher wields the secret of all skills, Yoga. He is Yogeshwara. Arjuna is Dhanurdhara. When these two meet, Vidya is transformed into Brahma Vidya

dedicated himself and his all to him. The greedy guru should not turn into *Vitthapahari*, a person who steals wealth. He should be a *Hridayapahari*, a person who steals hearts! The guru has to be an alarm timepiece. He must wake up those who are enveloped in the sleep of ignorance and reward them with teachings on Atmajnana, the knowledge of their Atmic reality.

### **The spirit of service**

Bhagavan Baba emphasises that teachers should be 'Sajjanas', noble men. Sharing with others, serving others, this is the main Sutra of Vidya: its genuine expression. Education is rendered noble when the spirit of service is inculcated. The service rendered must be free of the slightest trace of narrow selfishness. That is not enough. The thought of service should not be marred by the desire for something in return. You have to perform the service as you would perform an important Yajna or sacrifice. As trees do not eat their fruits but offer them to be eaten by others in an attitude of detachment, as rivers, without drinking the waters they carry, quench the thirst and cool the heat from which others suffer, as cows offer their milk, produced primarily for their calves, in a spirit of generosity born of 'Tyaga', to be shared by others, so too should those who have acquired Vidya offer it to others prompted by the motive of service and without consideration of selfish interests. Only thus can they justify their status as 'noble men', Sajjana. To promote the best interests of mankind, one has to cultivate the holy urge of Paropakaram (service to others) and the attitude of sharing.

### **Nation builders**

Bhagavan Baba emphasises that teachers are the builders of the nation. They should know that, life falls broadly into a three-fold pattern: spiritual (Paramarthika), empirical (Vyavaharika) and the apparent (Pratibhashika). What is apparent is the surf, what is empirical is the waves and what is spiritual is the water. Swayed by appearances, we regard the wave and the surf as independent entities ignoring the source, that is the sea. The surf and the waves spring forth from the sea. Thus the apparent Paramarthika is Kootastha. Kootastha means the one that transcends the limitations of time, place and circumstance, and eternal unchanging reality. Similarly, we allow ourselves to be swayed away by education and the educational institutions (empirical and the apparent) ignoring the source and the sustenance for these two which is the spirit. Bhagavan Baba cautions that the teachers will not be real builders if they are like those who see only the buildings and the apartments, ignoring the foundations which sustain the two. Bhagavan Baba says that our endeavour should be to seek the source and the foundations. While society is keen that education should enable: students to earn wealth and become wealthy, it is to be noted that this is of worldly importance only. While it has its own importance, we have to ask ourselves the source on which it stands. In spiritual parlance, wealth and opulence have a different connotation altogether. Wealth refers to the wealth of wisdom (Jnanaiswarya) and opulence refers to the opulence of character (Sheelasampada). Along with the wealth of wisdom and opulence of character, we should have the riches of good character and culture (Sadachara). The conglomeration of these three represents spirituality taking the following forms:

- (a) Wisdom as wealth (Jnanaiswarya)
- (b) Character is opulence (Sheelasampada)
- (c) Culture as riches (Sadachara)

### **Wisdom, character and culture**

Bhagavan Baba asks the teachers and the parents specially to make an enquiry into the source that sustains all. They should realise the truth that secular acquisitions like money and riches are only of this world and life, but wealth of wisdom, opulence of character and riches of culture will follow us life after life, for they are eternal virtues. A man may have vast stores of wealth and riches, but all these are utter waste without humanness. Hence, Paramarthika (spiritual) should run as an undercurrent in the teachings that we impart to our students about their daily conduct of life. It is for lack of this Paramarthika that dissatisfaction and discontentment have taken hold of our students, teachers and educationists. Though we have teachers and educational institutions in abundance, we do not see anywhere any sign of any one having partaken the nectar of wisdom.

Bhagavan Baba cautions teachers against developing swollen heads as soon as they acquire a little knowledge, pretending to be experts in every field and boast the whole day about their attainments. Bhagavan Baba compares a real teacher—calm and composed—to a leaf plate on which a full lunch has been served which lies low on the floor. The teachers with swollen heads are like the leaf plate on which nothing is placed which hops high with every gust of wind. The teacher, who is a real scholar and has many skills and human qualities in him, will lead an unassuming life. He attains Ananda.

Bhagavan Baba emphasises the hard fact that teachers reveal the direction and the goal. Students lay the road and journey into the future. The skill and strength, the status and stature of mankind are shaped and furthered in proportion to the quality and character of its teachers. Character is the hallmark of man. Teachers must dedicate their learning and wisdom to the great task of uplifting students to higher levels of knowledge and action. The virtues which they help to inculcate in their students are essential for the uplift of society also. When virtues are rooted in the heart, man shines in full glory. A life without good character is a shrine without light, a coin that is counterfeit, a kite with the string broken. "As the ruler (Raja), so the ruled (Praja)" says the proverb. "As the teacher, so the pupil" seems to be equally true. Teachers; therefore, have to be interested in high thinking and in a life which is steeped in renunciation. For whatever the science the teacher specialises in, the science of the Spirit, the science that leads to the ultimate Truth, has also to be mastered. Of all professions, the teacher's profession has to adhere to the ideal of Truth. When teachers stray away from Truth, society meets with disaster.

### **Teachers as students**

Bhagavan Baba very beautifully explains how ideal teachers should always go on recharging their intellectual batteries. Students study only for a few years but teachers, in order to justify being in the profession, have to be engaged in studies always without stopping. So teachers are to be reckoned as the only genuine students. To the question who is a real student, the answer is: "the teacher". "I shall be the ideal student which my pupils can emulate"—this should be the motto inspiring the teacher. Such a teacher has surely recognised his duty. The teacher must come down to the level of the students. If he does not and still continues to teach, the fate of the students is best left to the imagination. This is the process called "descent". It



the person who is to be benefited. The baby on the floor cannot jump to the arms of the mother, when she calls upon it to come up. "I am a great person, I cannot stoop". If the mother feels like that she cannot possess the child. Stooping does not make a person small. The teacher too is not demeaning himself when he comes down to the level of the student in order to teach him. It is only a laudable sign of love.

Bhagavan Baba emphasises that it is only the privilege of the teachers (Gurus) to bring in complete transformation in students (shishyas). He lays down the virtues of such teachers. They should be endowed with academic excellence, coupled with moral practices. Then they are qualified to teach the students. Virtues are most essential to human beings. Virtues derive their sustenance from morality. Morality is man's conduct taken in its totality. He who regulates his conduct with totality can himself regulate others. This self-regulation has been named 'Demammu' and the person who observes self-regulation merit it's the name of 'Dantulu'. Such teachers, who have mastered themselves, alone can decide the development and excellence of a nation. It is on the morality and integrity of such teachers that the prosperity of the nation rests and constitutes the eternal commandments of God. Even in distress, the repositories of wisdom derive their nourishment from this morality and integrity. Teachers with such qualities alone can foster these virtues among the students.

### **Sculptors and gardeners**

Bhagavan Baba compares a teacher to a sculptor. The sculptor, by subjecting a useless stone to different processes through careful chiseling, transforms it into beautiful idol. The stone thus transformed into a beautiful idol becomes worthy of worship when it is installed in a temple. Whose is the hand that has transmuted a useless stone into a sacred statue worshipped by many? It is the noble hand of the sculptor that has turned it into a statue and has lent an immense value to it. Similarly, it is the teacher alone verily the deft sculptor—who removes away, with deft handling, the drossness and weakness in a student and lifts him to sublime heights.

Again, Bhagavan Baba compares an ideal teacher to a gardener. The life of a student can also be compared to that of a beautiful creeper. The teacher should act as an imaginative gardener who tends and nourishes the tender creeper into a thing of beauty. It is only a gardener who knows the art and craft of gardening and is full of love, can nurture and nourish the creeper into a thing of beauty which is a joy for ever. The beautiful creepers will lose their beauty if, for instance, the gardener tends and grows them along with thorny bushes.

**—Prof. S.N. Saraf.**

*The above is extracted from Prof Saraf book, "Sri Sathya Sai Baba-the Eternal Educator.*

## **A Song for Swami**

<i>For every moment of joy that I feel inside me</i>	<i>..... I think of you</i>
<i>For every leaf that I see falling down .</i>	<i>..... I think of you</i>
<i>For every star that I see rising in the sky</i>	<i>..... I think of you</i>
<i>For every smile that I can give</i>	<i>..... I think of you</i>
<i>For every hand that I can help</i>	<i>..... I think of you</i>
<i>For every song that I hear</i>	<i>..... I think of you</i>
<i>Because You, Oh Lord,</i>	<i>.....are always close to me.</i>

***From the Bal Vikas group, Faenza, Italy***

**AVATAR VANI**

### **"Share Your Love"**

*One whose heart is filled with peace, whose speech is suffused with Truth, and whose bode is dedicated to service, will be unaffected by the torments of the Kali Age.*

*Embodiments of the divine atma:*

Human life is noble, sacred and precious. The way to realise this truth is to feel that you are a part of the Divine. Only human beings are endowed with the faculty to experience this truth. It is, therefore, the duty of every human being to strive for the realisation of this truth.

The human body is constituted by the five elements (Pancha Bhutas), the five sheaths (Pancha Kosas), the Annamaya (Food), Pranamaya (Life-force), Manomaya (the mental sheath), Vijnanamaya (intelligence) and Anandamaya (the sheath of Bliss). While other living beings have only the first three sheaths, the human species alone has all the five. Man is encompassed by attachment to worldly desires, which produce delusions of various kinds related to the three gunas (Satwa, Rajas, and Tamas). To attain liberation man has to rid himself of these desires.

The mind is the cause of both bondage and liberation. It is only by controlling the mind that man can achieve liberation.

Everyone is proud about the body, the mind and the intellect, forgetting the indwelling Atma, which is the basis for all of them. The Atma has no birth or death. It is like the root of a tree, which sustains the branches, the leaves, flowers and fruits. It is the basis on which the superstructure of life rests.

The Vedas have declared that man can attain immortality by renunciation (Tyaga) and not by any other means, actions, wealth or progeny. What is it that has to be renounced? One has to renounce one's bad qualities. Men today are only human in form, but are filled with beastly qualities. To manifest their inherent divine nature, men have to cultivate love of god and fear of sin and adhere to social morality (sanghaneeti). When people have fear of sin and love of God, they will not indulge in immoral acts. Thereby morality in society will be automatically ensured. It is meaningless to be born as a human being and lead an animal existence. .

God can be known only by experience and not by experiments. Sadhana is needed for this purpose. Men who are engaged in exploring space do not make the slightest effort to explore the Divine within them. Of what use are experiments aimed at exploring space, while there is no genuine cultivation of human qualities and the practice of such basic virtues as showing reverence for the mother, the father, and the preceptor. Everyone should act up to the motto: Help ever, hurt never. Every educated person should engage himself or herself in selfless service to society, with humility and a pure heart. All academic distinctions or even observance of spiritual practices are of little use if there is no love in the heart. The heart is called "Hridaya". It is made up of the two words, "Hri" and "Daya" (compassion). The Lord is described as "Hridayavasi", the indweller in the heart. Love and Compassion are inherent in every person. Each has to share this love with others. Failure to share one's love is gross ingratitude to society, to which one owes everything. One should give one's love freely to others and receive love in return. This is the deep significance of human life.

Bhagavan concluded his discourse with the bhajan, "*Prema muditha manase Kaho, Rama! Rama! Ram!*"

**From Bhagavan's discourse in the Sai Ramesh Mandap, Brindavan, on June 5, 1994**

### **"Seva as Sadhana"**

"SADHANA CAMP", organised by a large group of "ACTIVE WORKERS" (SAI devotees) from Bangalore, was inaugurated by Bhagavan Baba on June 4th in the Kalyana Mandapa at Brindavan.

The participants had a welcome opportunity to converse with Bhagavan on spiritual subjects and to get many of their doubts answered by Him.

Observing that "SEVA" (Service) was itself Sadhana (spiritual exercise), Bhagavan asked the gathering to whom service should be rendered and why. Some of the participants answered that service should be rendered to those in need "to smash away one's sins". Swami corrected them by saying that service should be rendered to society in a selfless spirit. They should have the heart to render service. No training was needed for it. Training, Swami said, is required for an "art", but only the heart is required for doing Seva. The heart, in this context, Swami said, is not the physical heart but the pure, spiritual heart; all service should be done with love.

Swami made a distinction between Divine Love (Prema) and worldly love (Anuraga) which is displayed towards parents, children and kinsfolk. The latter is related to the body and is a kind of attachment.

When the Seva Dal members introduced the "Active Workers" to Swami as "new" members, Swami observed that no one was "new" to him. The very term "MANAWA", referring to man, implied that he was "not new".

Swami said that if the spiritual heart was good, everything one does will be good. As service is rendered as an offering to God, the heart should be pure and free from the six vices (lust, anger, greed, envy, etc).

Swami ascertained from the participants that the service rendered by them included vocational guidance to women in the rural areas and reading books for blind children.

Swami advised the Seva Dal workers to serve the people with love. They should not be rude and tough towards devotees. Devotees should be treated as daughters and not as daughters-in-law! Swami urged that "love" should be the life-breath of the Sai Organisation.

One eager participant appealed, to Swami to show his Narayana Form with conch and discus. Swami said that with their inner eyes closed, they would not be able to see Narayana even if He stood in front of them!

*AVATAR VANI*

## **See the One in Many**

Students!

You should know at the outset the aim and significance of education. Education is for elevation from the mundane level to the divine.

bandhuscha sakhaathwameva" This prayer smacks of dualism. Why should you go on establishing such different relationships with God? The right way is to say: "I am you; You are me". This is true spirituality. That is why the Vedas proclaim "Tatwamasi", "Ayam Atma Brahma", "Aham Brahmasmi". "I am the Atma and Brahman" is the essence of Vedic teaching. This is the easiest path to realisation.

### **The wavering mind**

You should consider the Divine as One only which is manifest in many forms. All the forms are creations of the mind.

Arjuna asks Krishna in the Gita: "Chanchalam-hi manah Krishna! Pramaadhi Balavaddhrudam Thasyaham Nigraham Manye Vaayoriva Sudushkaram". "The mind verily is restless, oh Krishna! It is turbulent, strong and obstinate. I deem it as hard to control as the wind". If you go on cultivating relationships of various types, the mind is set wavering endlessly. To set it at rest will be extremely difficult. This is not the right type of devotion.

### **Vision of unity**

Narasimhan (in his speech earlier) said that it is difficult to comprehend the oneness in the many. In my (Swami's) opinion, there is nothing easier than this. Japa, Puja, Yajna, and ritualistic worship are more difficult. You consider it hard to see unity in the diversity in the world because you do not have the proper vision. Supposing you want to pick up your kerchief, you can do so easily if you open your eyes and look for it. If you are blind, it will be difficult to pick it up. Similarly, a person in ignorance will be in frustration and confusion. The easiest path is to feel "I am You, You are I", so that there is no other object.

You are the "Seer". Everything that you see is the "seen". When the vision is concentrated on the Atma within, both are one. When you get the feeling "I am you" there is no scope for any worry. This is the easiest royal path to comprehend the Reality. Without understanding this, people waste their lives in the process of meditation and other futile pursuits.

You are going on adding to your objects of attachment from the moment you are born in the world. First, you have mother and father, then brothers, sisters, relatives and friends. After marriage, another set of relatives and friends are added through your spouse. Thus attachment goes on multiplying.

On the other hand, if you go on detaching yourself from various relationships one after other, your attachments get reduced and you develop detachment or Vairagya leading to liberation. Attachment and detachment relate to external objects. Divinity is in closest proximity to you, but it takes time to understand divinity.

### **Three teachers**

There are three teachers for everyone. The first are the 'Parents'. They sacrifice their lives to give comfort to their children. Parents teach their children in a practical way by taking good

discrimination and taking the right path towards realising the divinity within him. The third teacher is your own Conscience. This is divine and always helps one to take the correct decision. When anyone tries to commit a sinful act or speak an untruth, the Conscience revolts and warns him that he is not right.

### **Jabali's appeal to Rama**

In the Ramayana, we have the example of Rama who went to the forest in obedience to the command of his father. This caused sadness to the people of Ayodhya. Even great sages like Vasishtha were in grief. Rama was the embodiment of righteousness and the repository of all good qualities. Though he was still young, his administrative skill was unparalleled. Bharata and Shatrughna, on arrival at Ayodhya, learnt about Rama's departure to the forest and felt so shocked and grieved that they did not wish to stay even for a moment in Ayodhya and decided to go to the forest to request Rama to return to Ayodhya and take up the ruler-ship of the kingdom as he alone was the right one to rule. All the people, of Ayodhya followed them. Even Vasishtha accompanied them to reinforce their efforts to bring Rama back to Ayodhya. All of them entreated Rama to return to Ayodhya and take over the reins of administration of the kingdom.

Sage Jabali, who was a Jnani, argued like an atheist. He said that one has several fathers and mothers during one's various births in previous lives and such relationships are only temporary like passing clouds. "In your case", the sage said, "your father is already dead and gone. There is no point in your adhering to the command of a person who is no more. By your not agreeing to rule the kingdom, you are causing a lot of distress to the people who may be led astray. You should not ignore the wishes of the living multitude in trying to honour the words of a dead person. So I entreat you to accede to the requests of the people and return to Ayodhya to take over the reins of the ruler."

### **Rama oh the plighted word**

Rama replied calmly, "Oh Sage! I thought you are a very learned savant and scholar well-versed in the scriptures. It is not becoming of you to argue in this manner. I consider it rather unbecoming on your part to ask me to ignore the command of my father because he has passed away. I have promised to carry out his command. I have given my word and I am still alive. How carp I go back on my word? It is better to give up the body than to go back on one's word. One should be ever grateful to one's parents, whether they are alive or dead. An ungrateful son should be considered blind and worthless. Many pray to the Sun as 'Himaghnaaya namaha.' When the sun rises, the snow melts away. (Hima means snow) He is also worshipped as Tamoghnaaya Namaha, that is, one who is the destroyer of Thamas or darkness. Darkness cannot co-exist with light. He is also called 'Krithaghnaghnaaya namah.' He is the destroyer of a person who has no gratitude. It is the Sun that gives light to the eyes to see. The sun renders blind those who are ungrateful. I shall be the worst sinner. All people will follow me and become sinners. Do you want me to set such a bad example? It is ridiculous to think that I will go back on my word."

begged his pardon. He said, "Oh Rama! I am not against Truth! There is nothing that is not known to you. I had made use of this argument only to support the people of Ayodhya, who love you and want you to return to Ayodhya to rule over them."

### **Essence of Divinity**

Rama always set a fine example for the people to follow. He sent Sita to the forest on hearing an ordinary citizen talking disparagingly about Sita being taken back by Rama even after she had been in the custody of his enemy, Ravana, for some months. Rama did this out of respect for popular opinion. Rama has established such an ideal for society to follow at all times. That is why He is hailed as the noblest of all Purushas, Purushottama. In justifying his action in following the command of his father he explained to the Rishis elaborately the essence of divinity. In the Gita Krishna says:

*"Kavim Puraanam Anusaasithaaram  
Anoraneeyaan samanumaredyaha  
Sarvasya dhaathaaram  
Achinthyaroopam  
Aadithyavarnam Thamasah parasthaath."*  
Ch. VIII/9

("The Being who is wise, ancient, the ruler, smaller than the smallest, the sustainer of all, inconceivable form, resplendent like the sun and beyond the darkness of ignorance.")

There is no poet (Kavi) other than the Lord. All that is in verse form is not poetry. "Trikaala vaakyam kavi", The Poet is one who has a vision of the past, the present, and the future. Man knows only the past and the present. How can one know the future? How is the Divine Poet able to see the future too? Because God is Omniscient and beyond time and space. He is not affected by the passage of time. He is changeless and permanent.

'Puranam' is ordinarily construed as meaning "very old". But here it refers to the Consciousness which is pervading the whole 'body (city or 'pura' of nine gates). It pervades everything. "Anusaasithaaram". (One who enforces the law). When a criminal is punished by a court after being found guilty, he is kept in prison. It is only the body that gets punished. But the real culprit is the mind. No one has got any right or ability to punish the mind which really causes the convict to commit the crime. The mind can travel anywhere even when a person is in prison. The Government or Police have no control over the mind. It is only the supreme power of the Divine that can have control over the mind.

The effulgence of the Lord is equal to that of one crore of Suns. The Lord's face is beaming with the brilliance of the Sun. On being struck by the radiant effulgence in Rama's face, Sabari became ecstatic and described it as that of the blemishless full moon. (Swami jocularly remarked that the faces of present-day men look like a jungle with dense growth of beards and sideburns. Brilliance is absent). Rama's face was spotless because his heart was pure and

only for the welfare of the world (Lokasamrakshana). "Ramo Vighrahavaan Dharmaha". Rama was the embodiment of Dharma. If one follows Dharma, he is protected by the same Dharma. Rama sacrificed all his comforts and enjoyments of royal life and endured the privations of forest life. Rama is to be taken as the ideal for the students. They should respect and obey their parents' words. The Guru, teacher, comes only after the parents.

### **Total renunciation**

It is only when you reach the highest level of "Sarvasangapraithyaagi" (one who had renounced all worldly attachments) that one can attain Self-Realisation. Prahlada had realised "Poornatwam" (complete identity with the Para Brahman, Supreme Power). He was bereft of all earthly attachments. Saint Thyagaraja sang that the same Hari is in an ant and in Brahman (Cheemalo Brahmalo). When you acquire this Abhedabhavam or nonduality, you reach the highest stage. But when an ant crawls over your body, you don't hesitate to kill the ant. You worship the figure of a snake in the belief that God is in it, but when a live snake comes before you, you hasten to kill it. This is indicative of the way of the world.

As long as you are leading the ordinary householder's life, you have to practise morality, respecting parents, loving friends and serving society.

**From Bhagavan's Discourse to students in Trayee Brindavan on 13-5-1994**

## **S. S. S. EHV ON THE MARCH**

The programme of Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values is progressing on a wide front all over the globe. We are receiving reports from many countries about the response from the parents, the educational authorities and above all the children, to Bhagavan's great project for imparting human values to children.

The progress of the EHV movement in India will be reviewed at a three-day conference of "gurus" from all states of the country to be held on July 19, 20 and 21 at Brindavan, Whitefield, Bangalore. In view of the construction work going on around the Mandir at Prasanthi Nilayam, Bhagavan is having the Gurupoornima celebrations this year at Brindavan.

The current issue of "Sai Reflections", the quarterly magazine of the U.K. Sai Organisation, carries an interesting report by June Auton, National EHV Co-ordinator, on the progress of EHV in the United Kingdom. The report reveals how the training courses for EHV teachers in London and several other centers have helped to produce a large body of well trained teachers who can run EHV classes in their different areas and the journal contains accounts of what the trainees have done to organise classes for children with the co-operation of parents and school authorities at various places. Here is an account by a trainee from Wales (Sara John) on how she went about starting an EHV Class after her training course



I left my last E.H.V. training workshop feeling very inspired, but doubting my own ability. However, by the end of the week I decided it would be waste to let this E.H.V. information and inspiration dwindle away over time, so I faced it and made a decision to start.

Then began the flow of energy to help me bring my wishes into reality! I knew I had to start the class on my own and hoped someone would come along to help. I prepared the posters and displays and set mental date on which to start the class. It was going to be for ages 5 to 7 as I have a son who is 7 years old.

The first thing to do was to hire a hall and luckily, after speaking to the Warden of our local community center, I was allowed to hold my class in the main hall, free of charge. The day I had chosen myself was the day available when no other activities were taking place, a Monday. His response to my brief explanation of the Programme was very good and I mentioned Sai Baba, to which he just nodded!

Then, off I went to the local Primary school to see the Headmaster. He again was very impressed and offered his, and the infant teachers' support.

The same afternoon as I was doing my ironing, I was getting a very strong thought in my mind, "if you want help start an adults' class so that they can get to know what E.H.V. is all about." So, that was the next step. On the following morning, I visited the Warden again and he agreed to let me use the hall for another hour on the Monday. I chose a time that was before the children's class so that the adults could help me set things up for them. It was all working so well.

### **Swami's magic wand**

The same day I visited two infant teachers, and they agreed to support me with left over material, the use of their library, and generously gave me 10 pairs of brand new scissors as a donation to start off the class! I felt sure Swami was waving His magic wand and I'm glad to say that I told these people it was Sai Baba's programme and I didn't receive one comment other than, "it sounds marvellous!"

The next step was to inform the parents and children, so the same week I quickly typed out a letter and consent form and made a colourful E.H.V. poster. The school made 50 copies of each and they were handed out to the children of the two classes for ages 5 to 7 years. I was also able to go into the class and explain the programme briefly to the children. Two adults attended the first class and six children came to the children's class! I had no help but the lesson flowed so well, we covered all the lesson-plan. The children were very well behaved and gave wonderful feed-back. They said they enjoyed it and would come again. One Mum reported to me the following day that her daughter had skipped home chattering about kindness, which had been our lesson theme, and wanted to do helpful jobs, so she laid the table for tea.

I felt so encouraged and knew Swami was with me all the way!

I have just completed our second class, which 11 children attended with two parents sitting in. The adult class has increased to 3 people and they are very impressed with the programme. We really enjoy ourselves and even after two classes a closer relationship is developing.

I experienced a purifying atmosphere in the room during all the classes, and this is what I found during my own training workshops with June Auton and Pat Moran. They have inspired me so much and I always think of them when I am in my class; it adds a touch of strength and determination. The encouragement I have received from them and from my family and friends has increased my confidence greatly, but I really give all the credit to our Swami for all this development, who has to put His finger on the button.

***"If you take one step towards me, I take hundred steps towards you."* —Baba**

***RASHTRAPATI IN BRINDAVAN:***

### **President's Call to the Students**

The devotees at Brindavan had an unexpected but welcome outpouring of Divine Grace by Bhagavan, who blessed them with a discourse when the President of India, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma visited Brindavan to pay his respects to Bhagavan. To the pleasant surprise of the large gathering that had turned up on Sunday, 5th of June, for participation in the day-long bhajan session, Bhagavan entered the Santhi Vedika in Sai Ramesh Mandap together with Dr. Sharma at 5 p.m. After listening for a while to the bhajans, Bhagavan asked Anil Kumar, Principal of the Brindavan Campus of the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, to introduce the President and request him to address the gathering.

The President, in his address, hailed Bhagavan as the great Acharya, who is a shining example of the term *Acharya*. *Acharya*, he said, means not only one who teaches but one who practises (*Acharana*) the teachings. Students who have joined the Sai Institute were singularly fortunate to be in close proximity to the Divine Master. The Divine Preceptor personifies the ideal Acharya, while others come, talk and preach but few live up to their precepts. The Vedas declare that the mother, the father and the teacher are to be respected as God. The parents of the students would have the satisfaction of having done their best for their wards by having put them in the Sai Institute. "I am sure you will do your righteous duty in the world, as by Divine inspiration the moral values are rooted in you."

The President went on to say the teaching of our country is different from that of many others in that we are asked to pray: 'May noble thoughts come to us from all over the world!' The root of our country's philosophy is that everyone should think of himself as part of the universe

the results thereof." ("Karmanyeva-adhikarasthe Maa phaleshu kadaachana"—The Gita.)

Narrating his own experiences in a reminiscent mood, Dr. Sharma said that he was Minister of Education and Chief Minister of his State, Madhya Pradesh. When he was in power, people used to flock to him and praise him saying that he had all virtues in the world. But, when he was out of power, after the ouster of the Ministry, and was an ordinary M.L.A. he used to live in a small house and walk to the Assembly. When people asked him whether he did not feel bad, he used to tell them that he never aspired for results and wanted to do only his duty as enjoined in the Bhagavad Gita. As a matter of fact, he felt that he had peace of mind after quitting the Chief Minister's post. "As an M.P. or M.L.A. you have the satisfaction of doing your duty to society", he said.

### **The lesson of harmony**

Referring to Mahatma Gandhi, the President said: "The mighty British Empire had to bow down to Mahatma Gandhi because he was one who practised what he preached and engaged himself in selfless work for the benefit of society. All of you know that he was killed because he was preaching human brotherhood. You recited in your Bhajans the names of Allah, Jesus, Krishna, Rama, without distinction. As a matter of fact, no religion teaches hatred. The teaching of Bharat is that there should be harmony not only among all religions, but also harmony of body, mind and soul in each individual.

"Some have asked me: 'Why do you call Him (Baba) God?' I quote from the Gita which says that God incarnates, when there is decline in moral values, to establish righteousness, protect the good people and destroy the wicked. This is exactly what Baba is doing now. He reminds human beings of their reality and helps them to imbibe moral values. Baba emphasises the importance of recognising that the body is transient and the Atma is the permanent Reality."

### **Bharat—the world's teacher**

Speaking about the greatness of Bharat, the President said: "Our scientists have proved that they are second to none in the world. Contrary to the belief that India is only famous for its philosophers, our medical doctors, scientists, and other professionals have proved their high mettle everywhere even in the so-called highly developed countries. In January 1994, I attended the International Conference of Cardiologists held in Puttaparthi under the guidance of Bhagavan Baba, where leading American doctors acknowledged that our cardiologists are among the best in the world. Now, the Westerners are admiring the intellectual brilliance of Indians. I told them that India has been traditionally the teacher for the world. One may ask why such a country is lagging behind today. We cannot escape our responsibility. Our generation has to admit that it has failed in its duty to uphold the holy and sacred culture and tradition of Bharat. If the root of a tree is damaged the whole tree will perish. It is our duty to preserve the root, which consists of our culture and moral values. We look upon you students to repair the damage and restore this country to its pristine glory with the inspiration and excellent spiritual and moral guidance from the Great Divine Acharya whom you have as your guide."

God and faith in their Motherland, with faith in one's self as the base. He appealed to the students to work in cooperation just as in a football team all players have to coordinate to achieve success. He called upon the students to emulate the example of their Supreme Master and follow His words which are simple, so that they may play their part in the establishment of moral and ethical values in the world. He appealed to them not to yield to the temptation of seeking selfish gains but to work for the common welfare of the nation and the world. He requested Bhagavan to give His message for which all were eagerly waiting. (Bhagavan's discourse is published separately.)

## **Indian Ideal of Education**

*Sadhu Vaswani was one of the prophets of modern India. He represented in his life and writings the quintessence of Bharatiya culture and spirituality. The following article on "Indian Ideal of Education" reflects his profound understanding of the ancient Indian Gurukula system of education and its relevance to our own times:*

Two things our students need, *knowledge and feeling*. *Knowledge* of India: and a *feeling* for India. And by feeling I mean aspiration to serve her and, if need be, suffer for her. India needs *Indian education*.

The Indian ideal of education may be expressed in the few simple words: *Education is fellowship!*

The forms of fellowship are indicated in Aryan books. One is *fellowship with the Guru*. And by "guru" is meant not an "infallible superman" but an elder brother, a soul who can help in drawing out the powers of the pupil. The guru was the great purifier: his presence purifies the pupils. The guru was not a taskmaster: he was an elder brother in the school-family named the ashram. The emphasis in Indian systems of culture was not on text-books or buildings or school functions, but on fellowship between the teacher and the pupil. The truth was recognised that every student was a soul: and the teacher-the guru-was the one who, by his life and less than his teaching, drew out the soul of the pupil.

Education is a problem in consciousness. It is a problem in soul culture. This aspect, training of the soul, the *Atman*, is much neglected in many of the modern schools! India has, through the ages, recognised the truth that every student is a soul, that beyond every one lie experiences of many lives, that a teacher must be a man of moral power and spiritual intuitions in order to be able to help the student to evolve by disciplining his vehicles (kosas).

These "vehicles", "kosas" are five. There is *annamaya kosa*, the kosa of matter, the physical vehicle. There is the *pranamaya kosa*, the kosa of prana, the "vital" vehicle. There is

kosa of Vijnana, the vehicle of Higher Reason. There is the *ananda-maya kosa*, the kosa of ananda (joy). And when that vehicle is well developed there is that Self-realisation which involves emotional experience of Unity with All.

Emotion for India, for humanity is what the current system has not developed. This emotion will not come until the students have fellowship with some great Teachers. Such a fellowship will draw out the pupils' personality. In the old culture-centres called ashrams, the guru sat on the ground and students sat with him and he, drawing out their hidden powers, impressed on them the truths recorded in the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Gita, -the truths of life! The bond between the teacher and the pupil was not that of textbooks: it was the closer bond of mind and heart.

Many "national" schools and colleges were started in different parts of the country. Gujarat, in recent years, even started a "national university". Have they solved the problem of education? Money, buildings, external equipment will not solve the problem. The problem will not be, solved until you get the teachers of the guru-type. Fellowship with the Guru, the Teacher, was the centre-point of Indian education in the past. In the knowledge, which the students had through such a fellowship there was that beautiful humility which we miss in the current system. There is pride of knowledge today; how many have the humility of true culture?

A feature of Indian education in the ancient ashrams was a beautiful blend of discipline and emotion. What nobler discipline than *Brahmacharya*? And discipline flowered into emotion. In the current system of education there is little room for culture of emotion of the ideal. In our schools and colleges students receive information but not much training of their emotions. The sense of the beautiful, the wonder-sense is not much developed. Yes, wisdom grows out of wonder-sense. Our students receive "knowledge" but do not have opportunities to rejoice in Truth!

So, many of our schools and colleges are situated in localities dominated by crowd-vibrations. The ancient ashrams were situated in places blessed by nature's beauty. Fellowship with nature was regarded essential to education. Indeed there is no culture of the soul without this fellowship. To commune with Nature is to grow not simply in physical but, also, in moral health. It is to grow in beauty and to know it intimately; the true moral sense is connected with a sense of beauty. To be pure is to be beautiful. Discipline gave form and nature's communion gave colour to the student's life in ancient India. Therefore did that life become truly beautiful?

Out of this feeling for Nature grows that love for the country which is the very heart of true patriotism. To love India is to love her hills and rills. The very dust of the Motherland becomes sacred to him who has fellowship with Nature.

And to him the records and traditions of his country's past have a meaning which makes his daily life rich and strong. What a thrill comes upon me as I read in the records of long ago that

of the East, the place of Buddha's birth and the Mahabodhi tree and the Dharma! And mine eyes are touched with tears as I read that Huen Tsiang, that Prince of Pilgrims, -came to India "to pay worship to the Bodhi-Tree" where the Buddha had attained Nirvana, that he returned to China with 657 volumes of Indian culture and later translated some of them into Chinese, thus carrying Indian culture to his people! India was then a Teacher of the Nations.

## **How Anthony Found Truth**

A new student joined the Bal Vikas class. His name was Anthony. He was 13 years old. He probably came to Swami just in time.

Anthony was coming from the wrong side of society. It was the same story: the father had left the family, the mother did not have much resources and he also had other small brothers.

It was not easy to be poor and disadvantaged in a welfare nation.

So Anthony found a way to survive: telling lies. He was saying that his mother owned a good flower shop and that his father was a fireman. These were small lies, they were his dreams. He wanted to be a fireman when he had grown up. He wanted very badly to be respected, loved, to enjoy all the big gifts that life is giving when you walk in Dharma.

As no one taught Anthony how to get these gifts, he imagined he had them. One day there was a fire in the classroom. Some kid set fire to the rubbish. The teacher called him: "Anthony, as you know everything about the fire brigade, how does the fire extinguisher work?" Now, everybody was looking at that small boy wearing dresses not very clean.

Anthony felt inside a big determination. With a punch he broke the glass case, took out the extinguisher and in two seconds he extinguished the fire.

That little success helped Anthony to change his life. He got a little more confidence in himself, so the other kids loved him more.

One of his friends was Francis. One day Anthony took Francis to the Bal Vikas class and you can imagine what happened. Anthony asked: "Who is that man dressed in orange, with all that hair?"

Francis: "He is Sathya Sai."

"What does it mean?" Anthony asked.

The two boys looked at each other in their eyes. One minute of silence followed and then Anthony said: "I don't want to lie anymore, I will not lie anymore, no more"

When Anthony found the love of our beloved Master then he found himself.

**From the Bal Vikas Group, Faenza, Italy**

*There is no living being without the spark of love; even a mad man loves something or somebody intensely. But, you must recognise this love as but a reflection of the Premaswaroop (the Embodiment of Love), that is your reality, of the God who is residing in your heart. Without that spring of Love that bubbles in your heart, you will not be prompted to love at all. Recognise that spring, rely on it more and more, develop its possibilities, try to irrigate the whole world with it, discard all touch of self from it, do not seek anything in return for it from those to whom you extend it.*

**—Baba**

### **Divine Grace: Boundless Insurance**

In 1976, during my travels through Europe, I would spend each evening reading Dr. Sandweiss' book, "The Holy Man and the Psychiatrist". Through Sai Baba's grace, though at the time I was unaware of this blessing, I must have tapped into the divine well of love and felt a direct communication. From that point on I have continued to read, study and practice Sai Baba's teachings.

Though I did not understand, even as a young boy, I felt a longing or yearning within me. Many times I misinterpreted that longing as something I needed or wanted from the world rather than my soul's yearning to be at home with God. It wasn't until much later in life I learned it was the original spark, implanted in our hearts ages ago that sought this spiritual wholeness. Sai Baba has nurtured that spark into an eternal flame that burns in the core of my being. Although I don't always succeed in my practice, over the years my being and my response to life's myriad changes are slowly being transformed. Practising Namasmara (reciting the name) has helped me to keep Sai Baba in my mind and heart and assists me in not always reacting but often responding lovingly to the happenings in my everyday world. For me, life without Sai Baba would be an empty and lonely existence.

About one year after my visit to Europe, this body was diagnosed by the medical profession as having an incurable and deteriorating heart ailment. Since that time there has been four major surgeries, two of which, were on the heart. Yet, our Lord has kept this body alive and

activities.

My practice of Namasmaraṇa began consciously when for the first time the heart went out of its normal rhythm and pulse was erratic. I looked up at the painting I had done of Sai Baba, felt His love and presence, and began repeating His name. Also I felt that if this body had to die, I wanted to do so with Sai Baba's name on my lips. This happened many years ago. Since that time there have been many episodes of heart problems and for the past few years it has remained in an irregular rhythm. On the occasions when the heart goes beyond its usual dysfunction, it becomes a call to repeat Sai Baba's name. However, that is not the only time; as part of my practice, when I am "awake", not walking around in an "unconscious" state, I repeat the name. My heart opens with love at thought of our dear Swami, and to repeat His name is as natural as breathing. Sometimes I simply repeat His name to myself, on the in and out of my breath; other times, when alone, I sing his name.

Recently, again, the heart went into Ventricular Tachycardia (VT). This of course, can lead to death of the body. I could sense the presence of Yama (Death). My wife tried to help me to my feet so that she could take me to the local hospital. I could not get up from bed. I felt nausea, weak and very little ability to move. She called the 911 emergency number for help. In a very short time the ambulance with the para-medics was there, taking the body's vital signs and preparing IV's before transferring me to a hospital. I heard one of the medics say, "I can't get a pulse". I surmised the body was still alive but I had been concentrating on repeating Swami's name silently to myself. I was not asking to be saved from death, but trusting to be freed from fear, to be given courage, compassion and love, to be open to the Source within so that I could be a conscious participant in God's unfolding creation.

Then suddenly, something happened. I couldn't repeat the name Sai Baba. It was as if the engine had shut off. I knew that the room was full of sound and turmoil but I experienced it as though the volume had been turned down. There was a deep silence within me. My eyes fastened on to a photograph of Swami that is hanging in our bedroom. I could hear the para-medics talking on their radio to the hospital. Occasionally my wife would say something and I could sense her fear. All of this was a background, a sort of hum, to the tremendous silence that pervaded my entire being. I felt no fear, had no doubts, no holding. It was moment to moment acceptance, being fully present to each nuance of the inner music of my being. I felt no resistance within me; no tightening when needles were put into my arms. If there was pain there was no need to react to it. It was as though my sense orientation had been shut off. Very often over the next several hours I would reassure my wife that everything was really fine. Whatever the outcome it was truly in Sai Baba's hands. Baba has said, "The grace of God is like insurance. It will help you in your time of need without any limit."

In retrospect, it seems as though the ego did not exist; it appeared as if the true Self was simply living and expressing itself in this body. This state of tranquility lasted for nine days in the hospital: I felt embraced in Swami's love. As a matter of fact, there were many times throughout those days when I was not always "awake" or "aware"; my responses came from a



describe such grace? I cannot say it was Sat-Chit-Ananda but it was the nearest to what I imagine that state to be. It was a beautiful condition and a state of harmony and peace within. Yes, this body may have died but I felt embraced in the Lord's arms and could not have asked for more grace.

—**Sidney H. Steve**

### **Teach me, Oh Lord!**

Light of God within my heart I  
Teach me how to be.  
Please, Dear Lord, let me start  
Breathe your breath through me.

Allow the knowledge of my soul  
To pour forth to eternity.  
Being, Awareness and Bliss the goal:  
Make it my reality.

Sparkling light of the divine  
Shining out to all.  
Oh, Dear Lord, you are mine.  
Let me be your all.

Oh, Dear Lord,  
Hear my plea,  
Breathe your breath through me.  
See through these loving eyes,  
Wondrous sights of Thee.  
Inhale the fragrance that is you,  
I'll willingly receive.  
Hearing only sacred sounds,  
With others who believe.  
May the thoughts of this mind  
Be pure, loving and free.  
May the soul within this heart,  
Realize its divinity.

**Wendy Cameron**

*Is something wrong with me?  
 Is something wrong with you?  
 From the toddlers that we were  
 To these giants we grew.*

*The past is gone and far away,  
 The present is with us.  
 It is the present we care about  
 Though it is not in our hands.*

*The present seems to slip away.  
 And become the past.  
 Without, warning it leaves us  
 You can't catch Time - it moves so fast!*

*That present, we try and remember,  
 When it has become the past;  
 With tenderness we think of it  
 Though it is gone and past!*

*With fear we attend to the future;  
 With the Unknown, use are lost.  
 The future is exciting or disappointing  
 And unpredictable till the last.*

*Past is Unforgettable  
 Present is never there.  
 Future is a wonderful dream  
 Hope it comes true, then and there!*

**Radha (Aged 10), U.K.**

*I am the embodiment of love: Love is My instrument. There is no creature without love; the lowest loves itself, at least and its "Self is God". So there are no atheists, though some might dislike Him or refuse Him, as malarial patients dislike sweets or diabetic patients refuse to have anything to do with sweet. Those who preen themselves as atheists will one day, when their illness is gone, relish God and revere Him.*

**Baba**

## Spiritual Orientation to Education

Teachers! Embodiments of love! Educationists! Students!

You see light from a bulb. You enjoy the breeze from a fan. You experience the cool air from an air-conditioner and warmth from a heater. But what makes them all work is one and the same electric current.

Likewise, what you hear, what you see and think all appear to be externally different sensory experiences, but it is the intellect that enables the impressions received through the senses to be experienced.

Right education leads to refinement of conduct. With refinement of behaviour, one's life gets sublimated. Good intellect alone can lead to happiness which is the source of peace.

Proper education brings about association with good people. The company of the good is peace itself. Good education redeems one's life and ensures liberation as a consequence.

*When one receives education that is based on truth and eternal values, he will be able to achieve liberation without having to go through the process of submergence in worldly life (Samsara). Therefore, come forward to get the benefit of such education (Poem).*

### Practice of humility

"Vidya dadathi Vinayam" Education confers humility. Humility does not mean mere bending of the head. Only an attitude of mind free from egoism, ostentation and attachment can be called humility. Today neither teachers nor parents are able to teach such humility to the children because they themselves have not cultivated that attitude. The water you can draw from a tap depends on the nature of the water in the tank. Today teachers and parents have not filled their minds with sacred divine feelings. How can they be expected to infuse the children with such feelings? Here is a piece of burning charcoal. If you take proper care of it, it will keep burning. But if you neglect it, it will soon get covered up with ashes. In the heart of every human being, there is the fire of wisdom (Jnana-Agni). That fire signifies a pure heart. Today we are not able to see that fire because the heart is enveloped by the ash of worldly desires. When the ash is blown away; the fire will be visible. Men tend to forget the noble and ideal sentiments in their hearts because they are covered by worldly material and sensual desires.

### Spiritual knowledge

Sri Krishna declared: "Among various kinds of knowledge, I am Knowledge of the Spirit." (Adhyatma-Vidya Vidyanaam) Bharat has given birth to countless noble souls who possessed such spiritual knowledge. People today have forgotten the message of such noble beings. Today,

boys and girls.

A sculptor converts a block of stone into a beautiful idol. Language expresses the feeling in appropriate speech. Character takes a man on the righteous path. It is the teacher who moulds the children into exemplary human beings.

### **Greatness of teachers**

The ignorant and the blind declare that a man, who cannot earn a living otherwise, becomes a teacher. On the contrary, the teacher is really the one who teaches others how to live. *"Those good men and women who teach children how to act righteously in the future ahead of them, and promote the spirit of equality and affection, are alone real teachers"* (Poem). Today we treat teachers as mere employees and slight them. Teachers, in fact, are the people who indicate the royal road for human life. Teachers illumine the nation by promoting great ideals. They are responsible for the blossoming of ideals in the young. They awaken in children the integrated awareness (Prajna) which is subtle and hard to recognise. They draw out the latent potentialities in the students. If they are encouraged to make the effort, students can accomplish anything.

Teachers are beacon-lights in idealism. It is only when the light of the teacher shines effulgently that the light among students can shine. The light from a teacher, can light several lamps.

Teachers! You have to strive ceaselessly to impart to your students your sacred thoughts, your exemplary conduct and your ideals. Teachers are like guide-posts. It is only when you play this role well that you will have done your duty by the boys and girls to divinise their lives. Although secular education may appear necessary for mundane existence, the importance of a spiritual basis for it should be recognised. However, the responsibility for imparting a spiritual orientation to education rests not only on teachers, but also on the parents as well as the authorities.

### **Three qualities**

In this context, students have to cultivate three qualities. "Sarvaloka hithe rathah" One must cherish the well-being of everyone in the world. "Sarva Jnana rathah" One must be interested in all knowledge. "Sarva sadgune rathah" One must foster all good qualities. Without good qualities, without seeking the welfare of the country and without 'good thoughts centered on God, how can one be a true human being?

It is only when the individual is good that society will progress. When the society improves the nation will progress. The welfare of the individual, society and the nation is based on the observance of human values.

nations by its spiritual wealth, ensuring their peace and security. It proclaimed the great message: "Let all the people of all the worlds be happy".

### **Lessons from nature**

Students should be taught to use properly all the talents and qualities given by God to them. Without good qualities life is worthless. By their bad qualities students today misuse their knowledge. They should cultivate humility which can confer many benefits.

They should learn the lessons which Nature provides by way of selfless service. Every element in nature—the earth, water, the sun—demonstrates the selfless service it is rendering to man. Man, who is a child of Nature, has become a stranger to compassion and other natural qualities. By falling a prey to all kinds of desires, man has strayed away from the right path. He has not only to acquire knowledge, but wisdom. He has to combine good qualities with good practices. Book knowledge has to be translated into good deeds.

### **Unity and divinity**

Teachers! You have the responsibility for reshaping the future. There is a big difference between the conference you have held here and conferences elsewhere. At other conferences, the tendency is to regard them as occasions for picnics and sight-seeing. You, who have come here at great expense, from long distances, should demonstrate your unity and divinity. Do not entertain any differences of race, religion and community. Foster the Caste of Humanity, the Religion of Love and the Language of the Heart. Teach your students that -it is the same Spirit (Atma) that dwells in all beings. You must emulate the example of the ancient Rishis who were the preceptors in the Gurukulam. You must ensure by your conduct the esteem and respect of your students, who are highly intelligent. To mould the students into good citizens is a spiritual sadhana. A bad teacher will spoil the lives of many generations of students.

### **Gurus' dedication**

In fact, our teachers are very good persons. They undergo considerable trouble in rendering service. Many ladies, who have to attend to their daily chores at home, are carrying on their educational work out of their devotion to Swami. They are treating it as a spiritual exercise. No other institution in the world can claim to perform the kind of selfless and dedicated service which the members of our Samithis, our Seva Dal and Bal Vikas teachers are rendering (Cheers). Whatever their difficulties, they are coming here at their own expense and bearing their food expenses. The Sathya Sai trusts do not provide any funds for them, nor do they seek any aid from the trusts.

Whatever trouble you, may face, you must learn to feel happy in any circumstance. If you are stung by a scorpion, you must console yourself that you were not bitten by a snake, and when you are bitten by a snake, you must console yourself that it has not proved fatal. Even if you are not able to own a vehicle, be happy that you have got your legs intact to enable you to walk. Even if you are not a millionaire, be happy that you have enough resources to feed yourself and your family. This is the way to experience joy even while in adverse circumstances. Ceiling on

more and more wealth and turn your effort to realise the Reality within. In pursuing this effort, you must avoid waste of food, money, time, energy and knowledge as all these are forms of God. Unnecessary talk should be avoided as this results in waste of energy and reduction of memory power.

Besides observing the ceiling on desires, students should also practise the discipline of seeing no evil, hearing no evil, thinking no evil and doing no evil. Only when children are taught these good disciplines in the formative stage, they will grow as good persons.

By leading a life without discipline, students will practically be like cars without brakes which will spell danger to the occupants. Sense-control is an essential requisite for students who are in the vulnerable stage of succumbing to the temptations of sensual pleasures. You must teach them how to talk softly and sweetly while adhering to truth. Some mothers complain that their children don't listen to their advice and retort: "don't talk, I know". For this situation, the mothers alone are to be blamed because this is the result of their having allowed indulgence to their children in the earlier stages. From childhood, good things should be taught to them. When they send their wards to school, their responsibility does not cease. They should take care to ensure that not only they study properly, but develop good behaviour, respect for parents and elders, speaking the truth and avoiding unrighteous actions. (Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the Bhajan song, "*Bhajan Bina*").

After the distribution of Prasadam, Bhagavan again addressed the Bal Vikas Gurus to inform them that they should consider this as their own home and declared that the Central Trust would bear the expenditure on the food served to them during their stay here. He directed the All-India President to refund the amounts already collected for food from the delegates.

### **From Bhagavan's discourse to the Valedictory session in Sai Ramesh Hall on 21-7-94**

*AVATAR VANI*

*NATIONAL BAL VIKAS CONFERENCE*

## **Role of Teachers, Parents and Governments**

*Embodiments of Divine Love! Teachers! Students! Educationists!:*

*Despite all the knowledge one may have acquired, if one has no concern for the welfare of the world, all that knowledge is worthless. Without good qualities, all knowledge is useless.*

*Without refinement in daily actions, vast scholarship will not confer renown.*

*Conformity to rules, without morality, will not enhance one's worth.*

*the limits?*

*Going astray from (Dharma) righteousness, if you preach Dharma to others, will you be deemed human at all?*

*If you have not cherished fear of sin and not entertained the love of God in your thoughts, what have you achieved so far?*

*Leading a truly human life, be human at least from now onwards (poem).*

*Embodiments of love:*

What we need today, is not a new system of education. Nor do we need a new social system. Such changes will not serve to solve the problems we face. We need today men and women who are pure in mind and heart. In a society lacking in purity of mind and integrity of character, noble-minded human beings will be few. Without spirituality, there will be neither purity, nor morality nor integrity. Where there are no men and women of noble character, the state will not flourish.

No country in the world has so many races, creeds and languages as the sacred land of Bharat. Bharat shines forth as a multi-racial garden with its many races and creeds and languages and cultures. The different creeds and cultures are like so many flowers in a garden. The varied manners and cultures contribute to the many-faceted brilliance of the nation. The magnificence of this diversity is beyond description. Bharat is like a multi-petalled lotus.

Bharat is the home of people who cherished Love as the way of the Spirit and Truth as the breath of their life. Unfortunately, lost in the pursuit of worldly, physical and material objects, the people have forgotten their basic divinity as human beings.

### **Who is responsible?**

It is in this context that the educational system has to be examined. Teachers have to consider the fundamental features of this system. From early times, the ancient system of education developed a broad outlook and promoted virtues and morals which served to foster noble ideals in society. What are the changes we witness today in the educational set-up? Who is responsible in this sacred land of Bharat for moulding the young children of today into ideal citizens of tomorrow? It is only when this question is properly examined that we will find the right solutions for our problems. Is the responsibility that of the parents? Or is it that of the teachers who enrich the intellects of the students? Or that of the national leaders who profess to strive for the progress of the nation? Or is it that of the administrators who are in charge of educational institutions? Or is it that of the writers who are producing the literature for the students and the public? The question may be asked whether all of them are discharging their respective duties properly. Let them examine their hearts and furnish the answer. Only then we shall find the solutions to our educational problems.

Among students discipline has almost totally declined. What is the means to restore this discipline on right lines? Is any one trying to find out the cause of indiscipline or the means to remedy the situation? Without seeking to find out who is responsible for this indiscipline, it is wrong to blame the students. They are not to blame.

The truth is: The students are not being taught the greatness of the culture and ideals of Bharat through suitable books and writings. Are we teaching to our students the exemplary lives of those who struggled for freedom and gave even their lives for the sake of the country? Are we imparting to our students inspiration from the lives of great leaders like Bala Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, Bipin Chandra Pal and Netaji Subhash Bose who asserted the nation's right to freedom. Are we teaching to our students the message of great men who proclaimed the supremacy of morality and character? We do not impart to our students the lessons of our great epics like the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Are we teaching to our students the story of Sri Rama, who sacrificed his all to fulfill the promises of his father? Are they told about the sacrifice of Dharmaja who went into exile and lived on roots and leaves to uphold Dharma? Do they learn about the devotion of Sravanakumar, who did not spare himself in the service of his parents? Are the students taught anything about Ekalavya, who was prepared to offer anything desired by the preceptor as the debt he owed to him? Are we teaching our students the story of Prahlada, who rejoiced in chanting the Lord's name and demonstrated the infinite power of the Divine in coming to the rescue of the devotee? Are we imparting to them the great message of the Bhagavad Gita, which is relevant not only to Bharat but to the entire world? Are they receiving the message of the Buddha, who proclaimed the truth that there is no greater virtue than refraining from harming others? Are they taught the significance of the compassion of Jesus? Are they told about the message of Prophet Mohammed? Are they taught the hymns of Nanak which glorify the unity of all faiths? Do they learn about the courage and sacrifices made by great heroines like Jhansi Lakshmibai, Padmini and others?

### **Develop patriotism**

It is because such examples of noble conduct are not being taught to our students that their sense of patriotism is on the wane. Love of the country is turning into indifference. We have to develop in the students deep love for the country. Students should be taught how to use in a worthy and ideal manner their talents and abilities. Students today, without developing good qualities, are wasting their lives by bad association and giving free rein to their energies. Character alone is enduring. Students are going astray because their virtues are not cultivated.

### **All are to blame**

Who are responsible for this? In the home, the parents are responsible, in schools and colleges, the teachers, and outside, the Governments which have failed to provide a proper system of education and the administrators who have not recognised their obligation to train young people on right lines. The responsibility thus rests on all of them and not on any single agency. In the homes, the parents should teach the children to cultivate good qualities and noble ideals. Bookish knowledge alone is not enough. It is superficial and not practical. Students need also general knowledge and common sense.



The teachers, for their part, should impart to the students knowledge and skills which will enable them to lead ideal lives. Students today are getting involved in all kinds of petty agitational movements. Morality and discipline are not to be found. Educational institutions are growing in numbers but the quality of education is declining. The reason is that proper text-books are not made available to the children.

*"Morality and character are confined to books. The hearts are filled with foul things. The hands are used for selfish purposes. This is the 'progress' made in education today.*

*"One repays with harm the good done to him. One betrays the man that feeds him. Students mock at teachers: This is our progress" (poems).*

Students should cultivate human values. The teachings of great and noble souls should be taught to them. Education should not be to get degrees to earn a living, but should be a preparation for the good life. Education should be for elevation. Teachers should teach students discipline, observance of humility and respect, and instill in them the spirit of service to society and the sense of fellowship.

### **What is secularism?**

Differences of caste and creed should be eradicated from the minds of students. They should feel the sense of human unity, with faith in God. All religions teach essentially the same truths. Hence no religion should be despised: Because of the Government's policies, a wrong attitude has been developed towards religion. The concept of a "Secular State" is bandied about. Secularism really means that you should have equal respect for all religions and beliefs. No one can be asked to renounce his faith in the name of secularism. There is only one caste, the caste of Humanity. There is only one religion, the Religion of Love. There is only one language, the language of the heart. Imagine how our students would be able to serve the nation in the future if these basic truths were taught to them. Hence, at the outset, teachers should set the example. Parents should exemplify ideals. The Government should be exemplary in its actions. It is because teachers, parents and rulers have failed to set the right example that today our educational system is in shambles.

Teachers should combine practice with precept, like the physical instructor who demonstrates the exercises the students should perform. In the hermitages of the ancient preceptors, this was how, the Gurus taught their disciples.

### **The body and the mind**

The distinction between the body and the mind should be understood, in this context. The body can stand still easily, but cannot run so easily. In the case of the mind, to keep it still is difficult; but it can be always fleeting. From the body arise the six enemies of man—lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride and envy. Man today is a victim of these enemies. But from the mind, many good qualities can emanate. Good qualities, good feelings, adherence to truth, devotion, discipline and discharge of duty are the six qualities that emanate from the mind. These are the

primal author of the Dharma-shastra (the Code of Conduct for all mankind). These are the qualities that have to be cultivated and practised today. They are the property of man along with his mind. A good mind is a God-mind. The degeneration in education is indicated by the change in addressing a student as "good boy" in olden days, to "Bye-bye" at present.

Teachers! Inspire your students-by, your example. Give no room for anger, jealousy or hatred within you. Teach the children the three P's—Purity, Patience, Perseverance. Armed with these three qualities, they can protect the nation better than any army or atom bombs. When Truth and Righteousness are protected, the nation will be secure. Truth is God. This is true for all countries, everywhere, without regard to nationality or creed. Both Truth and Righteousness transcend barriers of space and time.

Students have to be taught the path of spirituality. They have to acquire faith, which generates love. Self-confidence is the basis and Self-Realisation is the roof. That is the ultimate destiny of man—the full realisation of his human potential by practising human values.

### **Head, Food and God**

When all concerned—from students to educational authorities function in this spirit, they can achieve all that they want. Teachers should not be content with merely teaching the children. They should contact the parents and ascertain how the children are behaving, at home. Most Bal Vikas Gurus are working in rural areas. It is not enough to relate stories and teach songs and bhajans to the students. They should tell them about health and food. For instance, in areas where fluorosis is rampant, they should teach the children how to treat the contaminated water before drinking. The teachers should teach them how to purify their heads and food to realise God. The unity of head; food and God will make them ideal citizens of Bharat.

Unity is vital for all, wherever they are and whatever their country, religion or sex. Love should be the unifying force. Utilise the three days of the Conference for exploring all problems relating to your work in small groups and come to practical decisions.

### **Bharat's spirituality**

Teachers! Promote the sense of human unity among all people, without regard to race, religion or caste. Make Bharat the leader of the nations. The entire existence of Bharat is based upon spirituality. If spirituality goes, Bharat will cease to exist. If Bharat goes, the whole world will go (Cheers). Faith in God is the life-breath of Bharat. With this faith, Bharat can face any challenge. Imbue the children with confidence and courage. Unify them through Love and Love alone.

Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the bhajan, "*Prema mudita rnanase Kaho! Rama! Rama! Ram.*"

**From Bhagavan's discourse in the Sai Ramesh Hall, Brindavan, on 19-7-94**

# Purity in Thought Leads to Divinity

## *Embodiments of Divine Love*

For the -development of the human personality, the development of the mind and the refinement of the heart are essential.

All actions of man originate in the mind. The mind functions through thoughts. Hence, thoughts are the root cause of man's actions. Humanness is the outcome of thoughts. When the thoughts are pure, the mind is also pure. With a purified mind, man's conduct becomes pure. Thus, for the purity or impurity of one's actions, thoughts are primarily responsible.

## **The mind and the body**

It is easy for man to stand but it is difficult for him to run. But, in the case of the mind, staying still is difficult, but running is easy. This is the difference between man and his mind. The mind runs about swiftly. This is based on the power of the thoughts. When a stone is cast in a well, a series of ripples start from the point where the stone fell. From there, the ripples go up to the edge of the well and cover the entire well. In the same manner, when the stone of thought is cast on the lake of the mind, the ripples started by it fill all the senses and limbs in the body. When the thought is a pure and sacred one, the ripples emanating in the mind fill all the senses and limbs in the body, from head to toe, with pure reactions. This pure thought entering the eye purifies the vision. The same thought, entering the ear, makes it listen to sacred sounds. Entering the mouth, this pure thought brings about purity in speech. Permeating the hands, the sacred thought' induces them to engage themselves in sacred acts. The sacred ripples from the mind entering the feet induce them to go on pilgrimages. If the thoughts are impure, they travel in ripples to take senses and induce them to indulge in unholy acts.

Hence, the well-known saying, "The mind is made up of thoughts and aberrations." It follows that people should not give room for bad thoughts, bad associations or bad relationships.

## **Value of good company**

All that is good or bad in man is based upon his good or bad behaviour. This conduct is traced to the mind, which itself is dependent on thoughts. Therefore, to have good thoughts you must cultivate good company, good thoughts appear small with beginning like one's shadow at noon. But as the day advances, the shadow lengthens. Likewise, the influence of the good thoughts also grows as time passes. In due course it acquires a magnificent form. It attains a highly sacred place. It confers divine bliss and redeems one's entire life.

Thus, the company of the good (Satsang) is supremely important. Good company, by promoting good thoughts, leads to the highest achievements in life. Bad company, on the contrary, is like the shadow caused by the morning sun. At dawn, the shadow produced by the sun is long. As the morning progresses, the shadow gets shorter and shorter. Ultimately, it gets

seem to be large. But as time goes on, the gains vanish. Human values get destroyed.

The power of thoughts is immense. Thoughts survive unchanged the death of .a min. Therefore, everyone should foster noble thoughts. Bad thoughts should not be allowed to enter the mind. Bad company should be avoided as much as possible. The reason is: Meditation is important for Yogis. For those who wish to sacrifice, wealth is important. For devotees, singing (poem) is important. For the sick, medicine is essential.

The company of the sick will make you sick. The company of Yogis will make you a Yogi. Through yoga, you realise the Divine. Through yoga you control the mind. Hence, the importance of "Satsang".

What is "Satsang" (the company of the good)? Does this refer to the company of persons performing bhajans or to, a group of devotees? or does it refer to association with persons engaged in social, service activities? No. "Sat" refers to that which is everlasting. What is it that is permanent? It is Divinity. "Satsang" means cultivating the company of the Divine. Where is the Divine? It is within each body. The body consists of limbs (Anga). These limbs are associated with vices like lust, anger, greed and pride (this is "Sangam"). Within this "Sangam" is "Jangam" (the Life-Force). The Life-Force exercises the power of discrimination to determine what is right and what is wrong. Today, this discriminating faculty is not used properly, with the result man becomes a victim of the evil forces of "Sangam" (lust; anger, etc.).

### **Sat-sangam**

"Sat-Sangam" really means the company of "Sat", God. In another sense, good company means the company of good thoughts, good feelings. So "company" does not refer to individuals.

For friendships or enmity one's thoughts are the root cause. Who is an enemy? Who is a friend? One's thoughts are one's friends or enemies. Hence it is said: the mind is the cause of mankind's bondage or liberation.

### **Samadhi**

What does "Samadhi" mean? Is it a state of trance? No. Is it a state of emotional utterance? No. Is it absorption in one's self? No. When people refer to a man in trance or in unconscious state as one experiencing Samadhi, they are thoroughly mistaken. It maybe a case of hysteria or of epilepsy. It may be the result of some strong emotion, or one caused by excitement. The true meaning of "Samadhi" is: it is a state of union with "Sat". "Sama"+"Dhi", (Sama=equal, Dhi=mind), equal mindness is Samadhi. The proper term is "Samadhi", not "Samadhi". To treat alike pleasure and pain, heat and cold, darkness and light is true "Samadhi". This is the quality of "Sat". It has no pleasure or pain. It is all pervading. (Bhagavan recited a poem in which the Gopikas describe Krishna as the unknowable infinite Divine, who is inscrutable and whose ways are baffling).

Vaikuntha or in Swarga (Heaven), or in Kailash. Not at all. The Lord has nothing to do in these places. The Lord is in Naraka (Hell). As the denizens of Hell are perpetually suffering and calling out to God, the Lord remains there. It is among those who seek peace that the Lord dwells. A hospital is needed to tend the sick. Where there is no ailment there is no need for a hospital. Likewise, the Divine doctor goes to those who are in pain and distress. "Vaidya Narayano Harih" (Narayana or Hari is the doctor). Therefore, where there is humanity there is the Divine.

### **Descent of the Divine**

The Divine descends to the earth in human form, declare the scriptures, to allay the sufferings of those who are sick of body or of mind. Man today seeks to have a vision of the supra human transcendental being. This is sheer folly, because, as long as one has the feeling that he is a human being he can aspire to see God only in human form and is not entitled to see His transcendental form. When one transcends the sense of his humanness, he acquires the privilege to envision the Transcendental Divinity. That is the reason why Rama and Krishna came as Avatars in human form. To claim that when you close your eyes and meditate you see an effulgent light is only a delusion. There are innumerable things that are not visible to your naked eyes and which are beyond your ken. How do you expect to see them or know them? You know only the human form. So, at the outset, try to understand humanness. You must understand the Life Principle that animates the human. From the Life-Principle you should seek to enquire into the nature of the Divine.

Deha + Atma is Dehatma (body + Spirit). Jiva + Atma is Jivatma (Life + Spirit). Param (the Supreme) + Atma is Paramatma (the Supreme Self). Although Deha (the body), Jiva (the individual) and Param (The supreme) are different terms, Atma spirit is common and is equally present in all the three. The Atma (Spirit) is all-pervading. That is termed "Being" ("Sat"). It may be likened to sugar which retains its sweetness in whatever way it may be used. "Chit" (Awareness) is subject to change and movement. Even if it is carried to a high level, it tends to come down. When you mix sugar in water, you have neither sugar nor water, but only syrup. When "Sat", which represents the Divine, and "Chit" (which represents the Life Principle) come together, you have "Ananda" (Bliss). This is Sat-Chit-ananda. It is like an ocean in which a myriad creatures come into existence and disappear like waves. Their names and forms vary, but essentially they are the same as the ocean. They are all living beings which have emerged from Sat-Chit-Ananda.

When I begin my discourse with the words, "Divyatmaswaroopulara" (embodiments of Divine Atma) I intend to convey that the same Divine Spirit is in every one of you. Just as the ocean, the wave and the foam contain the same water, the Spirit that is present in the body, in the individual being and in the Supreme is one and the same. To experience this spiritual oneness, your way of life should be holy. This can be accomplished only by entertaining sacred thoughts which lead to good conduct.

Rama and Krishna are worshipped in the forms painted by Ravi Varma. If the Kodanda (Rama's bow) and the flute (in the hands of the Krishna figure) are taken away, only the simple human figures remain. The human being is referred to as "Nara". "Ra" means that which is perishable. "Na" means "Not". "Nara" refers therefore to that which is imperishable in man, the Atma (Spirit), "Narayana", a manifestation of the Divine Spirit. Consequently, sorrow should be alien to him. He should shed no tear.

Deem yourself as divine. Live with this firm conviction. The divinity in every being should be revered. You have to recognise unity in diversity. "Beings are many, but breath is one". This may be, experienced by everyone in the process of inhaling and exhaling. (Swami demonstrated how with every breath, everyone repeats the mantra, "So-Ham". "He am I or "I am God").

Do not give room to any bad thoughts. The body is a temple of the Divine and no evil thoughts should be allowed to enter it. Man should strive to reach the sublime, regardless of difficulties and troubles.

Embodiments of the Divine! Develop good thoughts and feelings of sacrifice. Cherish divine spiritual thoughts. Cultivate friendliness. To hail God as father and mother and not to have fraternal feelings towards one and all is treason to God. You should cultivate unity as the children of God and live in harmony in the company of the good and the godly.

Share the nectar of love that is in you with one and all. Do not bear ill will towards anyone. Speak sweetly to everyone. Chant the Lord's name which will help you to cross the ocean of mundane existence.

(Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the bhajan, "*Hari Bhajan bina sukha santhi nahi!*")

**(From Bhagavan's discourse in Sai Ramesh Hall On 26th June, 1994)**

***BRINDAVAN SAMACHAR***

## **National Conference of Bal Vikas Gurus**

The Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas movement, which was launched by Bhagavan Baba in 1969 to promote the moral and spiritual development of young boys and girls through an extra-curricular educational programme, celebrated its silver Jubilee at Brindavan at a three-day conference, inaugurated by Bhagavan on July 19.

of India, was accomplished .by the blessings of Bhagavan Baba with conspicuous success, despite numerous initial handicaps.

The sprawling complex of a big factory, which had been under lock-out for more than a decade, was converted into a township with huge sheds for the women delegates and military tents for the men, with all amenities such as lighting, water supply and sanitary arrangements provided on a war-footing with the "active workers" and Sai Seva Dal members working round the clock for nearly two weeks. It was nothing short of a miracle that the long unused premises of the factory were converted into a temporary residential complex throbbing with intense activity and divine vibrations as the delegates came in batches from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup>. Special arrangements were made for catering to the delegates by running an excellent canteen in the same residential complex.

The registration of the delegates being over on the 18<sup>th</sup> the delegates assembled very early on the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup> for the inaugural session of the conference in Sai Ramesh Hall, Brindavan.

### **Inaugural session**

Bhagavan came to the over-full Sai Ramesh hall at 8.20 A.M. in a procession, led by students chanting Vedic hymns accompanied by Sri Arjun Singh, Union Minister for Human Resources Development, and Sri Khursheed Alam Khan, Governor of Karnataka. As soon as Bhagavan and the Chief Guests took their seats on the exquisitely decorated dais, the guests were garlanded.

The All-India President of Sathya Sai Organisations, Sri G. V. Sathyanarayana, in his welcome address, expressed his gratitude to Bhagavan, on behalf of all those assembled, for His gracious permission to hold the conference in His Divine Presence in Brindavan. He extended a hearty welcome to the Chief guests, the delegates, the invitees and devotees who had gathered in their thousands. He requested Bhagavan to inaugurate the conference by fighting the lamps on the stage. Bhagavan lit the lamps amidst thunderous cheers. Sri Sathyanarayana then called upon Mrs. Sarla Shah to present the report on the activities of the Bal Vikas.

Mrs. Sarla Shah described the progress of the Bal Vikas movement since its inception in 1969 over the past 25 years. She said that from a strength of 15,000 students taught by 2500 Gurus in 1969, it -has now expanded to 1,00,000 students with 8000 Gurus working in 4000 centres all over India covering almost every district in the country.

At her request, Bhagavan released the Silver Jubilee Souvenir issue of the "Bal Vikas" magazine.

### **Karnataka Governor's tribute**

Sri Khursheed Alam Khan, Governor of Karnataka, in his address to the conference, said; "I do not think any other conference in recent times has set for itself such a purposeful and

and love are tangible in the entire gamut of activities of the Sri Sathya Sai organisation. We need a revolution to set right the narrow religious bigotry and fundamentalism which are showing up today. The moral aspect of education has to assume importance and the teacher as well as the mother are essential to provide today's children with a sense of direction. In view of this, it is to be hoped that the Bal Vikas type of education and the recommendations of this conference will be shared with all educational institutions for the spiritual and cultural regeneration of the country."

### **Sri Arjun Singh on Bharat's Heritage**

Sri Arjun Singh, Union Minister for Human Resources Development, said, "I will not be presumptuous enough to make a speech, for the very attempt in the presence of Param Poojya Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba will be a wasted effort. In fact, I have come to hear from His divine lips the course that we in India should heed and follow, if we earnestly desire to raise the moral, spiritual and ethical stature of our country to its great heights, since time immemorial.

"We are all proud of our great heritage. We are proud India has been a peaceful country. There is no record at any time of armies of our country sallying forth to conquer any other country. However, from time to time there have been great gurus and great spiritual leaders who gave us the benefit of their wisdom and this advice travelled to the farthest corners of the world and created an impact on the world community. Thus did India conquer the hearts and minds of others in the world.

"While we gather all resources to give the toiling people a better life, this can be done only when we come to the core of the problem, viz., the human being. Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba has brought this to the fore of His thoughts and programmes on education, by stressing the need to understand man as the focus of education. The integrity and integration of the human being is the need of the hour. The challenge can be faced only with the commitment and faith generated by Bhagavan Baba."

Continuing, Sri Arjun Singh said, "A conference of Bal Vikas gurus should remind us how the guru occupies a very important place, in the very psyche of our nation. The guru is needed and we have to depend on him even to tell, us who is God. As Bhagavan Baba has said Good teachers and good students make a good nation."

Bhagavan Baba then blessed the vast congregation of devotees, besides the thousands of gurus, with His inaugural address in which He insisted on the need for men and women with sacred hearts and purity of mind to spread the message of life based on human values. (Details of the discourse are published separately).

After the inaugural function, State wise meetings of delegates were held in the Alembic Campus and some of the delegates visited the Exhibition that had been arranged in the College campus, to depict the varied activities of the Bal Vikas movement all over the country. Special



human values put up -by the children and Gurus reflected their artistic talents.

On 20th July, after Bhagavan's Darshan in the morning, there was an open session of delegates at the Sai Ramesh Hall. Meetings of the Conference Committee and State wise meetings of delegates were also held. On 21st July, after darshan in the morning, Committee meetings and co-ordinators' meetings were held to finalise the recommendations of the conference.

### **Valedictory Session**

The valedictory function at the Sai Ramesh Hall in the afternoon was attended by - a mammoth gathering of devotees, besides the six thousand delegates. The entire open space in the Brindavan Compound presented the sight of a sea of heads.

Bhagavan arrived at the Hall in procession accompanied by Nadaswaram music and Vedic chants. Sri Veerappa Moily, Chief Minister of Karnataka and Sri Mallikarjun, Minister of State for Defence accompanied Bhagavan Baba. The stage was specially, decorated with floral drapings. A huge rotating wheel, behind an impressive figure of Dattatreya, was the cynosure of all eyes.

Maj. Gen. S. P. Mahadevan spoke about the noble objectives of the conference, whose success was entirely due to Bhagavan Baba's Grace. He requested Srimati Gita Ghosh to present the recommendations of the Conference.

Srimati Ghosh read out the recommendations of the Conference, which included proposals to revitalise the organisation by establishing a development cell to oversee the implementation of the programme of bringing out the inner significance of the epic stories and teachings of all religions, and to strengthen the efforts already being made towards educating the children to blossom as excellent citizens for rendering unselfish service to the country. She mentioned that the second Sunday in the month, of September every year will be celebrated as Bal Vikas Day.

### **Karnataka C.M.'s assurance**

Sri Veerappa Moily, in his address, said that he was very much impressed with the strides made by the educational institutions and service organisations of Baba which shine as a unique example for others. He said that Bhagavan Baba represented the confluence of all religions just as the ocean is a confluence of all rivers. He commended the example of Bhagavan's educational institutions which turned out persons with intellectual acumen and good character. He concluded his speech with an assurance that he would take steps to introduce the value-based system of Sai education in all the schools in Karnataka.

Bhagavan, in His Valedictory address observed that humility was the hall-mark of true education. He exhorted the Sai Vikas teachers to teach the children the lives of great and holy persons such as Rama, Prahlada, Madalasa and others. (Details of the discourse are given separately)

After distribution of Prasadam, Bhagavan declared that the Bal Vikas Gurus had come to their own home and hence they would be treated as guests of the Central Trust. He directed the refund of any money that might have been collected from them for their food.

**AVATAR VANI**

**GURUPOORNIMA SANDESH**

## **Experience the Fullness of Love**

*Does life consist in working for a living, eating and sleeping wasting one's time in meaningless gossip? Was precious human birth given by God for this purpose? No. At least from now on lead a truly human life and achieve fulfillment*

*At the tip of the tongue dwells the Goddess of Prosperity  
At the tip of the tongue remain friends and kinsfolk  
Bondage resides at the tip of the tongue  
Death lies in wait at the tip of the tongue. (Sanskrit Sloka)*

*Embodiments of divine love!*

Through the power of speech (Vaak) one can acquire a kingdom or great wealth. Friends and relations can be got through speech. Through speech one gets bound and loses his freedom. Even death is brought about by speech.

Speech is the life-force of human beings. Speech is the backbone of life. It is all powerful. Jayadeva addressed his tongue as follows:

Oh tongue! You know all about the sweetness of speech! You enjoy truth and goodness; Chant the sweet and sacred names of the Lord: Govinda! Damodara! Madhava! Don't indulge in reviling anyone. Speak sweetly and softly."

"Anudvegakaram Vaakyam Sathyam Prithihithamcha yath" (says Krishna in the Gita. "Let your speech be truthful, pleasing and good and free from resentment. Unfortunately, because such sacred and sweet speech has become scarce, society is riddled with bitterness and discord. The permissiveness of a crazy civilisation has destroyed discipline and morality and turned society into an inferno. Society today is divided in a myriad ways and there is no peace. On account of differences of caste and creed linguistic and parochial loyalties and desires of various kinds, violent conflicts have turned the social scene into a graveyard.

Human life is vitiated by selfishness and the pursuit of ephemeral pleasures, forgetting what is eternal and true. Selfishness is rampant. Even affection for parents and children is tainted with selfishness. Man today has become a plaything in the hands of selfishness.

especially in the fields of electronics, synthetics, atomic power and exploration of space. On the other side we witness political and economic crises, caste and communal conflicts and students' agitation.

Today, moral values are steadily declining among men. In the moral, ethical and spiritual spheres, men's attitudes are deteriorating alarmingly. Even well versed scholars and, eminent public figures are caught up in the coils of bitter controversies because of narrow-minded thinking. Unity among the people is being shattered by the ideological and sectarian differences among persons who are well educated and intellectually eminent. Intellectuals who promote discord are on the increase, but there are few who promote unity in diversity. At the root of all these tendencies is the fact that mankind has still not got out of the animal stage.

Men have to realise that essentially they are divine in origin. The individual selves have come from the ocean of Sat-Chit-Ananda like waves from the ocean. It is only when this truth is realised that men can experience true bliss.

To transform the world from its present state, there is no need for a new social system or a new religion or creed. What is essential is a body of men and women with sacred ideals. When there are such godly souls the country will enjoy divine dispensation. But such godly persons can survive only in a society in which there is purity of mind and good character. For these two to blossom, the basis is morality. But morality cannot flourish without spirituality. Hence the mansion of the good society has to be built on the foundation of spirituality, the pillars of purity and character with morality as the roof.

The reputation and glory of Bharat have been founded on spirituality from ancient times. Bharat achieved this name and fame because of noble men, women of great virtue and exemplary children. Their ideals still shine today. Harishchandra, Nala and others are still remembered for their adherence to truth. Heroic women like Savitri, who by her devotion and determination brought back to life her dead husband from the hand of Death, and Sita, who faced all ordeals in Lanka as a captive, ensured the welfare and prosperity of the country by their exemplary character.

Today morality and character are at a discount. Money alone counts. But money and all that it can give will not confer peace. Peace can be got only when man manifests his inner divinity. The Divine is the Indweller in every being. Hence no one should have ill-will towards any body.

Man, however is dominated today by selfishness. His thoughts, his looks, his words and actions are all tainted by selfishness. He is a slave of his senses. In short, humanness is in ruins.

The first requisite is sense-control. Man is today enveloped in evil qualities like jealousy and hatred. Man has to manifest compassion, which resides in the heart.

developed doubts about Rama's prowess and later realised that Rama could not have commanded the allegiance and devotion of men like Lakshmana and Bharata if he was not all-powerful. Bhagavan went on to say:) From this one episode, you have to understand that if Sai did not have unique power, would He be able to attract persons from America, England and other countries? If there is no power in Sai how do you imagine devotees from many countries to come to Him? (Cheers). Are they such innocents? Or are they witless persons? Not at all. They are all persons of great intelligence. Intelligence alone is not enough. They have to be filled with divine feelings.

It should be realised that the divinity in human beings cannot be measured in terms of worldly goods. It has to be measured in terms of Love. Mankind has to understand this Love Principle.

When there is Love, there will be no hatred. Without hatred, there will be no threat to peace in society. To ensure peace, society has to promote Love. This means that the mind has to be filled with loving thoughts.

The moon is the presiding deity for the mind. Today, it is Full Moon day (Poornima). What does Poornima (full moon) signify? It means the completion of the full circle by returning to the starting point. One half of the circle is represented by worldly life. It is like the letter "C". This is equated with science, which is incomplete knowledge. The full circle (represented by the moon) represents the state of the mind when it is filled with Love.

"Gurupoornima" is observed today.

"Guru" means "Big", "Guru" has also another meaning. "Gu" means darkness and "Ru" means "dispelling". "Guru" means one who dispels darkness (the preceptor who dispels the darkness of ignorance), "Gurupoornima is the day on which one celebrates the dispersal of the darkness of ignorance from the mind.

Hence, people should fill their minds with the all-embracing Love Principle. To experience the fullness of Love, you have to fill your hearts completely with Love. That will be the result of total devotion.

But today devotion is not total. The benefit also is partial. Part-time devotees cannot expect total reward. The Lord confers full grace on those whose hearts are totally filled with devotion. Spiritual aspirants may follow any one of the nine paths of devotion and realise the Divine. Among these, the attitude of friendship towards God is one to be cherished because God is the only true and enduring friend for everyone.

In the process of achieving oneness with the Divine, the first stage is for everyone to consider himself as a messenger of God. Every Indian should propagate Baba's message of spirituality. All of you should take note of this supreme fact. If spirituality goes in Bharat,

based on Bharat.

It is because spirituality was being forgotten that Bharat became a prey to all kinds of ills. Love has virtually disappeared. Humanness has decayed. Humanness can exist only when the minds are holy. Man is called "Manuja", which means one who is descended from Manu, who gave to mankind the Dharmashastras (the Code of Righteous conduct). The courts today do not follow the code of Manu. Justice has become a creature of time, circumstances and money. Dharma transcends the limitations of space, time and circumstances. Today we have forgotten Manu.

We have also forgotten Kautilya. He was the author of Arthashastra (the laws of economics and statecraft). Our economy today is in utter disorder. Kautilya's teachings have to be relearned.

Failing to uphold the ideals of great men like Harishchandra, who sacrificed everything for truth, the people today are becoming slaves of the senses.

Teachers! Teach your young pupils the ideals of Bharat's great sages, heroes and heroines, who upheld the highest values and set an example to the world. They should be taught to behave as ideal sons like Sravana Kumar. One good son can redeem a whole family. Ekalavya exemplifies supreme devotion to the Guru. Prahlada should be held out as supreme example of total faith in God. Teachers should instill such devotion to God in the young.

In the name of secularism, governments should not interfere with the practice of their respective religions by the citizens. No one should criticize the creed of others. The divinity that is adored by all religions is one and the same, though different names may be used. In the name of religion, violent conflicts are encouraged. Children should be taught to respect all religions.

Teachers should also make the children realise the true purpose of education. Education should be a preparation for righteous living and not for earning money. Good qualities are more valuable than money. (Swami related the story of Sathyabama, who was made to realise that the name of the Lord and a Tulsi leaf offered to Him were more valuable than all her jewels when weighed in the balance against Krishna).

Teachers should practice the precepts which they teach to the children. If they teach the children not to quarrel or not to smoke, they should also refrain from such conduct.

Teachers! You have put up with many inconveniences and difficulties during the past three days out of your devotion to Swami. You regarded this as a spiritual exercise. The body is, intended to serve as an instrument for realising righteousness. There is no gain without pain. Sacrifice is the means for attaining immortality. Love and Sacrifice are like two eyes for man. Whatever sacrifice you make, treat it as an offering to God. Then work will be transformed into worship.

AVATAR VANI

## "Cherish the Sweetness of Sacrifice"

*The cosmos is governed by the Divine  
The Divine is controlled by Truth  
That Truth is subject to noble beings  
The noble are Divinity itself*

*Embodiments of divine love!*

The entire Cosmos, consisting of animate and inanimate objects, is dependent on God. The Divine is governed by Truth. That Truth is governed by noble beings (Uttamaadheenam). The noblest being is Divine. Every human being is inherently noble. It is this nobility that constitutes his divinity. The Divine manifests Himself in human form. There is no need to search for the Divine as a distinct entity somewhere else. Man must strive to realise the Divinity within him.

From the earliest times, the sages looked upon human life as sweet (madhuram). This sweet life is associated with Madhava (the Divine) and not anything else. We must see that this Sweetness is properly cherished.

Only when this sweetness is safeguarded will man be true to his human nature. Without this sweetness, man ceases to be human.

To experience this sweetness the spirit of sacrifice is essential. This nectarine sweetness is the outcome of sacrifice (Tyaga). As the Vedas declare: "Not by deeds, or progeny, or wealth is immortality gained. It is realised only through sacrifice". Whatever good deeds one may do, whatever wealth one may acquire, without sacrifice the Divine cannot be experienced.

It is out of the feeling of sacrifice that the nectarine sweetness arises in man. That sweetness is Divinity itself. Krishna is extolled as Lord of Madhura, who is all sweetness ("Madhuraadhipathe! madhuram! madhuram!"), When the Lord is described as the "Master of Madhura", what is this sweetness? The heart is sweet, the feeling is sweetness. The love (one feels) is sweet. The action (of the devotee) is sweet. The bliss (Ananda) is sweet. The Atma is sweet. This bliss-filled sweetness pervades man from head to foot.

Unfortunately, man today makes no effort to recognise the sweetness that is in him. All his thoughts, feelings and desires are directed towards the external world. Not even a small fraction of it is turned towards the heart within.

Bharatiya culture contains illustrations of this sweetness. There is nothing in the world sweeter than the love of a mother for the child. For the well-being of the child the mother is ready to sacrifice her all, including her life. Such nectarine sweetness is manifest only in the mother who is the embodiment of the Divine. Hence, the Upanishadic injunction: "Matru devo bhava!" (Esteem the mother as God")

Likewise, the heart of the father who fosters the child, and develops his personality, is also sweet. The Upanishad, therefore, enjoins everyone to treat the father as God. Mother and father are equal to God.

Therefore, at the outset, one has to honour one's parents. The mother is the visible manifestation of God. If ignoring the divinity of the mother, who is visible and adorable, one seeks to worship what is invisible, it must be regarded as a sign of ignorance. God exists in subtle form. He is invisible and is infinite and immeasurable. The mother is a visible and tangible proof of Divinity. When a child is born, the first person it beholds is the mother. The mother bears patiently many travails for the sake of the child. It is sweet to love such a mother. You may have love for God. But if you have no love for the mother who is physically present before you, how can you love the invisible Divine?

People tend to worship stones, but do not revere living beings. Worship of inanimate idols has been in vogue from ancient times. But people are forgetting to revere their living parents. One's first and foremost obligation is to revere one's parents who are in flesh and blood, who are verily your life itself.

### **Rama's example**

In the Ramayana, there is the following illustration: Before leaving for the forest, Sri Rama approached his father, Dasaratha, and said: "I am not sorry I have to go to the forest. Nor does it pain me that you have given this command to me. I am ready to sacrifice everything. I have to uphold your plighted word. Of what use is a son who does not uphold the word of his father? I derive the greatest sweetness from carrying out my father's word of honour."

It follows from this that children should respect and carry out the words of parents. That alone testifies to the true quality of a son.

Love is the primary source of sweetness for man. There is nothing greater in this world than love. Life acquires sweetness when one reveres one's father and mother. Here is another example from the Ramayana

Immediately after Rama broke Siva's bow, Emperor Janaka declared that he would offer Sita in marriage to Rama. Janaka brought Sita to the assembly Hall. Rama, however, without any hesitation, but in sweet firm words, declared that he would not agree to the wedding without the approval of his parents. Rama said that he owed his body to his parents and that he would abide by their wishes. He declared that till his parents arrived (in Mithila) he would not even set his

rejoiced in setting an example to the world of ideal conduct for all to follow at all times. Sage Vishwamitra also waited for the arrival of Rama's parents.

### **Vasishta and Rama**

(Alluding to another episode in the Ramayana, Bhagavan said:) Sage Vasishta accompanied Bharata to meet Rama in the forest. Intervening in the argument between Bharata and Rama (over the issue of Rama's return to Ayodhya to rule over the kingdom). Vasishta said: "It is your right and duty to rule over the kingdom. You are the eldest son of Dasaratha. You are endowed with all the talents. You are well versed in the scriptures relating to Dharma (the code of Right Conduct). You have won the affections of the people. You are committed to the well-being of the people". Vasishta appealed in this manner to Rama to assume the reins of rulership.

Speaking sweetly, eschewing harshness of any kind, Rama replied: Guruji! Without honouring the plighted word of the father, if I disobey the command of my deceased father, I will be rendering my life worthless. My primary duty is to carry out my father's injunctions. I may even transgress the command of the preceptor, but I will not go against the command of my father."

Thus, carrying out the commands of his father, Rama spent fourteen years in exile and demonstrated to the world the joy and fulfillment to be derived from such an exemplary life.

### **Sweetness in life**

Human life should be sweetened by honouring one's pledged word. Sweetness in life consists in setting an example in righteous living to those around one. There is sweetness in doing a good turn to one who has done you a good turn. Gratitude is sweet. These qualities constitute the sweetness (madhuryam) in man.

You should be grateful all your life to one who has helped you. You are the "big" man that you are today because of all the love and care bestowed on you in your early years by your parents. Therefore, to experience the love of your parents you should show your gratitude to them. This is a debt you owe to them.

Alas! In this Kali age children show no regard for the parents. This is the disastrous sign of modern times. In any circumstance you have to show respect and love for your parents. You owe everything to them, from your flesh, and blood, to the food you consume and the garments you wear. To remember with gratitude the parents who are no more is an act of sacrifice.

### **The joy of sacrifice**

It is a pity that people today are not aware of the supreme greatness of sacrifice. There is sacrifice in every aspect of life. The joy to be derived from sacrifice is incalculable. One has to learn the supreme value of sacrifice from one's own parents who sacrifice so much for the sake of their children. It is your duty to keep your parents happy as long as they live.



People today become scholars and acquire great wealth. But all that they achieve as a result is conceit—the arrogance of study and riches. People cherish the sweetness of wealth and not the sweetness of love. Love alone constitutes true wealth. There are no riches above love. Through love you must develop the spirit of sacrifice. Fill every one of your actions with love.

Human life should be filled with love and sweetness, which are shared with others. Otherwise, it ceases to be human. There are four types of human beings: the Divine in the human, the demonic human, the human man and the animal man. The four qualities of the divine, the demonic, the human and the animal are present in human beings in varying degrees, "Brahmaratho Daivah". The man who is installed in human is divine. This implies that the man who is wedded, to truth, who performs righteous actions, who renders help, to others, who thinks about the well-being of others, who indulges in acts of charity and beneficence, is filled with Divine qualities. He is immersed in, the Knowledge of the Brahman.

"Sathyadharmaparo marthyah" He is a human being who adheres to Sathya and Dharma (Truth and Righteousness). A true human being should uphold truth and right conduct. If truth and righteousness are safeguarded, the nation will be safe and secure. It is not the army or bombs that will protect the nation. Only Truth and Righteousness will protect the nation.

"Madhyapaana ratho dushtah" The demonic human being revels in intoxicating drinks. Eating meat and drinking liquor are demonic vices. Those indulging in drink lose all sense of propriety, have no compassion or love and become demons.

"Jnanena soonyah pasubhlssamaanah" One who lacks wisdom is equal to an animal. "Jnana" is the capacity to discriminate between right and wrong, the permanent and the transient. Animality in man is indicated by the absence of this "Jnana". A real human being has to have this power of discrimination. He should know what to say, when and to whom, and he should know how to behave towards elders, towards friends and different kinds -of people. A person who is ignorant in; these matters is only an animal. "Jnana", in its deeper sense, means "Atma-Jnana" knowledge of the Self. This is absent in modern man. One who is selfish and self-centred is manifesting his animal, nature. Only when self-interest is coupled with concern for others can one be truly human. Without manners one cannot be a man. Without good behaviour one is not a boy. Without discipline one cannot, be a devotee.

### **The source of beauty**

A previous speaker had said that the hand-kerchief lent beauty to Bhagavan Baba. This is absurd. The true nature of beauty was, described by the poet Mallamma in Kannada. She said that to a pond the lotus lends beauty. Waves lend beauty to the ocean. The moon imparts beauty to the sky. For a devotee, the Vibhuti on his forehead confers beauty. For human life, virtue confers beauty. Without virtue, life ceases to be beautiful. Virtue implies conduct which evokes the approbation of others it must be exemplary and confer delight on others. It should not cause harm to others or appear ludicrous. It should bring a good name.

should achieve before embarking on any activity. It's this context, the Ramayana furnishes a lesson for all. Dasaratha, without any concern for the future, granted two unconditional boons to Kaikeyi in return for the help which she rendered to him. Out of thoughtless love for her, he gave two boons saying that she could have what she wanted, whenever she might choose to ask. She chose the time and the boons she wanted. She asked for the exile of Rama and the crowning of Bharata. The lesson to be learnt from this is that when you give your word, you must be aware of all its Implications. Promises made thoughtlessly lead to grievous situations. One has to stand by one's word.

Truth endows one's life with sweetness. Loving words sweeten life. Let your speech be always sweet, whatever the circumstances. Just as sugarcane has to go through crushing and other processes before you can get candy from it, the body has to go through certain ordeals to manifest its sweet nature. These are termed "Samskaras"—the good thoughts, good feelings and good actions which bring about refinement. Love is essential for this refinement. Hence, love is the means to realise the nectarine sweetness of life.

(Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the bhajan, "*Prema muditha manase kaho! Rama! Rama! Ram*")

**From Bhagavan's discourse in the Sai Ramesh Hall, Brindavan, on July 3, 1994**

## **Gurupoornima at Brindavan**

Occasions when Bhagavan celebrates Gurupoornima outside Prasanthi Nilayam are few and far between. This year's celebration at Brindavan acquired additional significance because of the presence of nearly six thousand Bal Vikas Gurus from all over India, who had come to Brindavan for the seventh All India Conference, which synchronised with the Silver Jubilee of the Bal Vikas movement initiated by Bhagavan in 1969.

Sai Ramesh Hall was specially decorated with floral draperies and festoons for the occasion. The hall which had been extended on both the wings to accommodate a larger number of devotees was over-filled by a large number of overseas devotees, besides the Bal Vikas Gurus and the devotees from Karnataka and the other States.

The day (July 22nd) began with Omkar, Suprabhatam and Nagarsankirtan in the morning. From early hours of the morning, thousands lined up for entry into the Sai Ramesh Hall. A large size cut-out figure of Dattatreya, with the wheel of Time (Kalachakra) rotating from behind was installed near Santhi Vedika. Two cut-outs of Shirdi Baba and Sathya Sai Baba with two rotating wheels behind the figures were placed on either side of the Dattatreya figure to remind the devotees about the divinity of the two Sai Incarnations. The Stage was gaily decorated with floral

wearing a glittering yellow robe, arrived at the Hall in procession, headed by Veda chanting students and Nadaswaram music. After quick round of the huge gathering, Bhagavan took His seat on-the Santhi Vedika. He shone as the Guru of Gurus conferring his benediction on the vast gathering who had thronged to pay their homage to him on Gurupoornima day.

The students greeted Bhagavan by chanting Guru Gita and other devotional hymns followed by a programme of devotional songs with orchestral accompaniments for nearly an hour. Special prasadam for the occasion was distributed to the thousands of devotees. In the afternoon, Bhagavan, wearing His usual red robe, arrived at the Sai Ramesh Hall with students chanting Vedic Hymns heading the procession. Prof. Anil Kumar announced that Bhagavan had blessed two distinguished devotees from the U.S.A., Dr. Goldstein, Head of the Sathya Sai Centre in America and Mr. James Sinclair, top Industrialist, to address the gathering.

Both the speakers affirmed their total faith in Bhagavan Baba as Divine Incarnation and related incidents from their own experiences to vindicate their faith. They reflected the feelings of millions of devotees of Bhagavan all over the world. Mr. Sinclair recounted his experience of Bhagavan's physical presence at his home in Connecticut on two occasions even before he came to know Him. Later, when he visited Puttaparthi, Bhagavan, at the first Interview, astounded him by mentioning that He had visited Mr. Sinclair's home twice.

Bhagavan then delivered His Gurupoornima Message (details of which appear elsewhere). The function concluded with the distribution of Prasadam again.

## **Chinese Students Adore Baba**

Bhagavan Baba's message is going out to new areas all over the world in a variety of ways. For instance, in mainland China, which is now passing through its post-communist phase, Bhagavan's message is being conveyed by an English teacher, Mrs. Deidre West, who is teaching English literature to students at a training institute of the Sichuan University.

Writing about the keen interest the Chinese students are taking in the life and message of Bhagavan Baba, Mrs. West writes: How is it that Mainland Chinese students, having chosen the subject, "The Best thing that ever happened to me" or The person whose character I greatly admire," from a list of titles in their composition examination, should then write about Sri. Sathya Sai Baba? The answer is that it is purely by Swami's grace, by His all-inclusive Love, as He draws people towards Him, and makes them aware of His presence in their hearts. In this instance it may be said that, using me as His instrument, He motivated me to present His simple, yet profound teachings to students whom He had already chosen and prepared to receive them. Feeling confident that, since coming to know of Baba, the main purpose of my work in China, far more important than teaching English, was to share something of what I had learned of Him, I quite fearlessly presented sayings of Baba at the very beginning of the first lesson or lecture with every group of students or teachers. I simply referred to Him as "The Great World Teacher" and mentioned something of His work in the areas of education and health and of His service to the poor.

The sayings made such a strong impression that I was soon asked, "Who is Sai Baba?" The opportunity then arose to give books, show videos, answer questions and relate experiences.

In teaching compositions, it was quite easy for me to introduce the Human Values and to get students to write narrations of stories illustrating the human sub-values, or to write stories from their own culture for the purpose.

The two compositions given below were written by students in their examination, choosing the titles from about a dozen options. They had received sayings of Sai Baba and an introduction to Sathya Sai Education in Human Values in lessons and lectures and had also seen videos, read books in Chinese and English and held informal talks. Both girls are studying at Sichuan Teachers' University, Chengdu, Sichuan Province, S.W. China.

### **How Baba Changed Her Life**

The following composition was written by Li Xue on the subject "The Best thing that ever happened to me."

On the road of life, you may encounter an evil person, asking you to go with him, doing bad things. You may also come across a sage asking you to go with him, sharing his wisdom,

There's really something that can change your life for better or worse. So I always think it is not necessarily true that it's easy to change rivers and mountains but hard to change a person's nature.

There's the best thing that ever happened to me, having changed my life, changed my personality greatly. Thinking of it, I am so grateful that tears always run down my cheeks. That is a kind of great love—Baba's Universal Love like a guiding star, leading me to come back from wrong thinking and wrong doing, like a steady, silent and peaceful flame, purifying me, giving me warmth, covering me with love.

"Start the day with love, fill the day with love, spend the day with love and end the day with love." This was the first time that Mrs. West had introduced Baba to me. Simple words, simple sentences, but what deep meaning there is. I was lost in deep thought—"Who are you and what are you, Baba?" With Mrs. West's kindness and help, I read books, watched the films about Baba, listened to her talking about Baba. Having been very impressed, I decided to choose this road for my life and I entered a new world, a world full of truth, peace and love. In this world, there is always a voice, reminding me to watch my words, actions, and thoughts, character and heart, sweetly and silently.

I was apt to be angry, for I could not forgive others when they did a wrong thing. "Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." I learnt to be thoughtful, to consider other's situations and difficulties which made them behave like that. "Never mind" every time when I say it, their smile of relief makes me so moved.

I had a shortcoming before of talking ill of others. "Search for your own faults, the faults you see in others are your own faults instead." I stopped criticizing others. "If you do not like someone, do not mix with him." I keep good company, sharing their goodness. Life becomes wonderful because of them.

Once I hoped the people I dislike would come across troubles and I felt so happy to see their bitterness. "Do not gloat when your enemy falls; when he stumbles, do not let your heart rejoice," says Baba. What I thought and did is so wrong. We are One. Hurting other is hurting myself. Love people, instead of hating them.

Life is full of hardship and bitterness. I used to doubt the meaning of life. Is there any reason to go on suffering. Now that it has made us distressed and disappointed, why should we continue our lives? Baba says. "You should have muscles of iron and nerves of steel. Then your resolution will itself generate the necessary confidence, and that will win over opposition." Yes, life is hard. But take it as a test given by Baba, endure it, bear it and you could be very strong in your mind.

The generation gap is inevitable. I argued with my parents only about simple things, very rudely, impolitely sometimes. I felt very much regret for what I had done when I read: "The

for your very existence and for all this joy and adventure in the physical and spiritual spheres." I should be patient, explaining the reason to Mum and Dad, not quarrelling. Respect my loving parents, even though their opinions are wrong sometimes.

"See good, do good and be good," Good people make happier homes, prosperous communities and peaceful nations; good nations make a good world, full of peace, truth and love.

Thank Baba for coming when I am young, an age when a person is impressionable. Thank Baba for coming as a guiding star, leading me to the light and goodness, not only helping me get rid of my shortcomings, but reaching me how to give my love to others as a good person.

"Make your Life a rose that speaks silently the language of fragrance." I am trying my best to do so.

**Thank Baba and love Baba, BNS**

### **"The Person I Most Admire"**

The following essay on "THE PERSON WHOSE CHARACTER I MOST ADMIRE", was written by Huang Shi Yao.

The person whose character I most admire is Sai Baba after I watched the video, read his books and heard about him from Mrs. West. Sai Baba's life is Seva to man's world, nothing for himself.

Sai Baba has a lot of followers. Millions of followers follow His right and left side. The people respect Him. He is worshipped by people. He is not only a Superman but also an Avatar.

Puttaparthi was a poor place before Sai Baba was born. Now, Puttaparthi has become a busy little town because Sai Baba came into being. The followers come to Puttaparthi from four sides.

Sai Baba's heart is full of love Let me admire His Selfless Love. Sa Baba's Idea is big and profound. He said, *"Right is Right, even if nobody does it. Wrong is wrong, even if every body does it."* I like this. I also like Sai Baba's sayings: *"God is Love, Love is God."*

I use Baba's Verse to finish my paper:

*"When there is righteousness in the heart,  
There is beauty in the character  
When there is beauty in the character,  
There is harmony in the home  
When there is harmony in the home  
There is order in the nation*

*AVATAR VANI*

## **"Devotion is Pure Love for God"**

*What harm can Kali do to one  
Whose heart is compassionate,  
Whose speech is adorned by Truth,  
And whose limbs are used to serve others?*

*Embodiments of love!*

Any human being who has compassion for others, who adheres to Truth and who dedicates his body to the good of others will experience no serious trouble. The primary reason is one's devotion to God.

Devotion (Bhakti) is not something which man can acquire by himself. It is indeed the inherent principle animating man.

Devotion manifests itself as love. This love is the supreme treasure of man. It is this treasure which enables man to live in this world. But few persons recognise this truth.

Time moves fast like a whirlwind. The allotted span of life for the body is melting away every moment like a block of ice. However, even before recognising what is his duty, man departs from this world.

What is the aim of human life? What is a man's duty? It is to discover this truth that God has endowed man with a body. "Paropakartham idam sareeram" "This body is given for rendering help to others".

We live in society, depending on it for our needs. But, forgetting what they owe to society, people lead selfish, self-centred lives. Service to society is -the primary duty (Karma). Concern -for the welfare of all is devotion (Bhakti) "Let all people be happy". Awareness of this feeling is true knowledge (Jnana).

Without recognising the duty to serve society, without concern for the welfare of society, how can the all encompassing desire for the happiness relates to experiences associated with the physical, the sensory and the natural. It is the identification with the body that accounts for all sufferings and miseries. It is portentous and produces inauspicious results.

Grief and trouble are alien to divine love. Divine love sustains itself and is lasting. Bodily love depends on others and is evanescent.

### **Attachment and love**

Every man should seek to acquire this divine love. The body, however, is an impediment in the way. The entire world is caught up in the vast net of attachment (Anuraga). This attachment is an amazing delusory phenomenon ("Maya"). There is no connection between the body composed of the five basic elements ("Panchabhutas") and the transcendental Self (Atma). But the delusory power of Maya in the form of attachment brings about a link between the two. If this were not the case, what is the relationship between one person and another? Who is a wife and who is a husband? Who is a mother and who is a son? All these relationships have been brought about by "Anuraga" (Attachment born of desire) and not by love. There is no attachment between mother and son before the child is born. But after birth, maternal affection arises (Vatsalyam). This affection is based on bodily relationship and is by its nature temporary.

### **Disease, diet and medicine**

Divine Prema exists before birth, after birth and continues forever. No effort is made by men to understand this true and enduring love. Attachment to the body is a kind of disease which has to be treated by three kinds of remedies. One is observing dietary restrictions while taking the medicine. If diet regulations are not observed, the medicine alone will not cure the disease. Diet control without the medicine will be equally ineffective. Both diet control and medicine are equally necessary for curing the disease. With regard to the disease of attachment to the body, one has to abide by divine injunctions and practise love for the Divine to get rid of the ailment. Observing the Divine injunctions without love for God will not be efficacious. Equally, devotion without observance of the Lord's commands will be useless. Love is the medicine and God's injunctions are the diet restrictions. It is by the presence of both that Divinity in man can be made to manifest itself.

For all the troubles, chaos and discord present in the world today, the root cause is attachment to the body which breeds selfishness and self-centeredness. Concern for the body is necessary up to a point. But excessive attachment to the demands of the body is harmful, because the body is essentially fragile and liable to break up any moment at any place. The body of course, needs to be protected and allowed rest and recreation. But all these should be only for the purpose of enabling it to discharge one's duty.

"Discharge of duty, is Yoga", says the Gita. What is this duty? It is assumed that duty relates to one's professional or occupational responsibilities, as lawyer, doctor, etc. This is not duty at all because these actions are performed for selfish reasons, to earn money. The Sanskrit word "Kartavyam" means that you are not free to act as you please and you have to respect the rights of others on the same basis as you expect others to respect your rights. The terms duty or right should not be misused.

### **Devotion and love of god**



observing rituals, going on pilgrimages, etc., But these are not the true Insignia of devotion. The true mark of devotion is pure love of God. Without this pure love, bhajans, worship and the like are artificial exercises and are valueless. They may appear to be devotional acts, but they do not contain the essential sweetness of devotion. They resemble plastic flowers and fruits. A life without love is like a barren wasteland. True devotion knows no differences. It sees unity in diversity. Today, devotion is marked by various differences. Though God is one, He is worshipped in many forms. Can this be called devotion? No. The one God is broken into fragments. On the other hand, man has to unite the fragments and see the One. The Upanishads proclaimed the unity suffusing the multiplicity as the Atmic Principle.

### **God and the devotee**

Today you have a myriad, individuals, but the Spirit that dwells in all of them is one and the same.

"Ekovasi Sarvabhoota antaratma". ("The indwelling spirit is one in all beings"). God is one but is called by different names. It is out of self-interest that God is worshipped under different names and forms by different people.

What has to be recognised today when people talk about devotion is the oneness of the Divine. The love of God should be developed. Love for all other worldly things is bound to change. Only love for the Divine can be unchanging.

The Bhagavatam proclaims the glory of Divine love. Bhagavatam is described as a sacred book on the Divine (Bhagavan). Another interpretation is that the Bhagavatam deals with the greatness of devotees of the Lord. Yet another explanation is that the Bhagavatam describes the intimate relationship between God and devotees.

It is this relationship that should be developed by all devotees. People feel distressed when some one among their kinsfolk is ill. If such is the affection they bear towards relations who are associated with them for brief periods, how much more love should one have towards the eternal Lord?

### **Love all: serve all**

One should regard love for God as the greatest treasure one can have. When you love God, you will have love towards all because the Divine is in everyone. Therefore bear in mind: Love all; serve all. The best way to serve God is to love all and serve all. Your devotion will get diluted if you entertain differences between people.

Devotion to Rama or Krishna becomes meaningless if you do not practise their teachings. The worship of the Lord should be accompanied by leading a Godly life. Only then bliss can be experienced.

serves no purpose unless they lead pure and sacred lives. They should fill their hearts with love of God and share that love with others. There can be no greater demonic quality than hatred towards God.

The Divine is both protector and destroyer. For Prahlada, who was a staunch devotee, the Lord was a protector. To Hiranyakasipu (Prahlaad's father), who hated God, the divine became the destroyer.

God showers His grace according to one's deserts. He is the embodiment of Love. One's bad qualities prevent one from realising the grace of God. The fault lies with the individuals and not with God.

"Hrishikesa sevanam Bhaktiruchyathe" ("Service to the Lord is called devotion"). If you fill your heart with love of God, you will secure all powers. Therefore, live in love. Redeem your lives through love. Let love become your life-breath and the sole goal of your life.

Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the bhajan, "*Prema Mudita manase Kaho! Rama, Rama, Ram!*"

**From Bhagavan's discourse in the Sai Ramesh Hall on August 21, 1994**

*The greatest instrument by which success can be ensured for all your efforts is Bhakti. That will give health, wealth and prosperity too, for it will eliminate hatred and faction and give more power to your elbow when you plough the land. A man with Bhakti will do every act as worship of God and so the act will be done better and more efficiently, without maligning or insincerity. It will also win the grace of the Lord, and so, a Bhakta will be able to raise more crops and enjoy greater health and mental happiness.*

—Baba

***BHAGAVAN BABA AT MUDDENAHALLI***

## **Inauguration of Magnificent Mandir**

Bhagavan Baba was brimming with bliss on August 5th after He had inaugurated a magnificent Mandir in Sathya Sai Gram at Muddenahalli, where an excellent educational complex has come up in a serene valley nestling at the foot of the Nandi hill (near Chikballapur).

Bhagavan set out from Brindavan, after darshan and interviews, in a motorcade which reached the gaily decorated campus at 11 a. m. Rows of beaming young students in bright white

Mandir.

A group of young boys wearing the Punjabi dress performed the Bhangra dance with verve and vigour, while another group of small children, in the costumes of Krishna and the Gopikas, did the Rasaleela dance in front of Bhagavan. Vedic chants by a large number of students lent sacredness to the function.

After the ceremonial inauguration and the lighting of the lamp in the Mandir, Bhagavan and his party of devotees from Brindavan went round the building. Bhagavan was full of appreciation for the devotion with which every aspect of the building had been handled, the excellence of the architecture and the taste with which the furnishings and equipment for Bhagavan's apartments and the guestrooms had been provided. Swami commended the good work of the architect, Sri Madhav Kamath from Mangalore, who had supervised the construction, and the contractor who had done a splendid job with entirely local workers. Bhagavan presented to them shawls and mementoes and blessed them. Swami materialised a gold ring for Sri Kamath.

In an informal talk to the devotees and staff of the school present in the Mandir, Bhagavan observed that Sathya Sai Gram is an ideal training ground for students who can become worthy servants of the nation.

Swami had lunch with those who had accompanied him from Brindavan and moved among the students and staff, conferring His benediction on them.

In response to the earnest appeal of the students and staff, Bhagavan gave a discourse in Kannada in the Bhajan Hall of the new Mandir in which He expatiated on the preciousness of human birth for the realisation of the Divine. Swami observed that a true devotee is greater than God because he could enshrine God in his heart. Commending the supreme greatness of sacrifice (Tyaga), Swami gave a clarion call to the students to lead dedicated lives and serve the Motherland, emulating the example of their teachers.

From there, Swami proceeded to the spot where He laid the foundation for a new dining hall attached to the School hostel.

Bhagavan and party left the Campus at 2.30 p. m. and reached Brindavan at 4.00 p.m. A large gathering of devotees greeted Swami on His return.

### **The Muddenahalli saga**

It would be interesting to recall how the School at Muddenahalli came under the benign guidance of Bhagavan Baba.

ideals in a serene and calm place like Muddenahalli, which is far from the din and dust and madding crowds of cities. Sri Madiyal Narayana Bhat, a dedicated educationist, served as His instrument. In due course, the school at Muddenahalli acquired dormitories, classrooms, playgrounds, and an auditorium. The Campus, named as Sathya Sai Grama, where the educational institutions are located, has the aura of the ancient ashrams and the amenities of modern times. The education that is imparted here is in keeping with Bharat's hoary and sacred culture.

It was on 14th August 1978 that Swami sanctified Sathya Sai Grama by His Divine visit for the first time and took over the Loka Seva Trust Institutions at Sathya Sai Vihar (Alike) in Dakshina Kannada and at Sathya Sai Grama at Muddenahalli under a new Trust—Sri Sathya Sai Loka Seva Trust—in response to the fervent prayers of the founder President of the institutions, Sri Madiyal Narayana Bhat. Since that auspicious day, the educational institutions of the Sri Sathya Sai Loka Seva Trust have grown from strength to strength under the benign and loving care and the watchful eyes of Swami.

The Institutions are served by a dedicated and highly educated band of celibate sevaks numbering 60 at Alike and Muddenahalli. They are men of upright character devoted to the propagation of the lofty ideals of Indian culture. At Muddenahalli, 30 such dedicated karyakarthas are rendering selfless service.

The educational institutions at Sathya Sai Grama attract students not only from all parts of Karnataka but from other states as well. There are classes from Vth Standard to PUC. At present, about 510 students reside in the hostels and about 200 students come to classes from the neighbouring villages. In addition to the prescribed academic courses, the school provides moral and other exercises to promote the physical, mental and spiritual development of the students.

### **Bhagavan's visit to "Sai Darshan"**

*There was an air of intense excitement at 'Sai Darshan', the Community Hall located on the recently—named 'Sri Sai Darshan Marg' in Indiranagar, from the early, hours of Monday, August 1. This was the day Swami had chosen for his visit to "Sai Darshan" to consecrate the first door of the building, just completed.*

Swami reached Sai Darshan a little before ten in the morning and left around noon after Mahamangalarati. Long before his arrival, over a thousand devotees were seated both in Sai Darshan and the courtyard of the adjacent Kalyanmantap. Swami was received with 'Poorna Kumbha' and led into Sai Darshan.

activities of the centre Bhagavan delivered a discourse in Kannada on the importance of the triple purity of mind, speech and body, for spiritual realisation.

Just before consecrating the first floor, Swami took a few minutes off in his room upstairs to bless his 'Charan' (impressions of footprints) which had been carved out of 'Krishnashila' (dark-coloured granite) by an award-winning sculptor. Much to the surprise and delight of those gathered in the room, Swami actually stepped on the foot-high Charan and blessed the imprint of his feet on stone. (This is now an object of worship in the Mandir every day).

The most interesting item of the day's programme was a play in Kannada presented by the children of 'Sai Darshan'.

Swami evinced keen interest in the arrangements made for the enactment of the play, "Parivartane", ("Transformation"). He saw the improvised green room and blessed the entire troupe both before and after the forty-minute play.

The theme of the play is the transformation of a miserly money lender, Srinivasa Nayaka into Karnataka's greatest saint-composer, Purandaradasa, by a miracle which the Lord did to save his pious wife from ending her life.

The play starts with a scene in which Vishnu orders sage Narada to go to the earth to purify human minds by singing the glory of God through "Namasankirtan". When Narada takes birth in Purandaragada as Srinivasa Nayaka, he remains a miser counting his hoards. Vishnu takes the form of a poor Brahmin seeking help to perform his son's "Upanayana". Srinivasa Nayaka, true to form, refuses help. The Brahmin goes to Srinivasa's wife, Saraswati, who is both pious and generous. She parts with her nose ring, which the Brahmin tries to sell to Srinivasa himself. The latter recognises the nose ring as his wife's and after asking the Brahmin to come the next day, demands an explanation from Saraswati. Contrite and fearful of consequences, she tries to end her life by taking poison, when God's grace ensures that the nose ring (which was in Srinivasa's possession) falls into her cup of poison. This gift of grace proves to be the turning point in Srinivasa Nayaka's life.

From then on, he becomes a singer of the glories of God and is adored as Purandaradasa. Sainly Purandara becomes the lord's minstrel for the rest of his life.

The play ended with a 'Kolatta' dance set to a composition by late Sri. N. Kasturi. The songs in the play were chosen from Purandara's enthralling compositions. The young children played their roles so well that Bhagavan was deeply moved and blessed all of them most graciously.

Swami also presented shawls to the convenor, Sri. Kushalappa, and six others who had contributed in a major way to the construction of the first floor.

Prasad was distributed to all the devotees at the end of the programme.

## **The Divine Blueprint**

When we had an interview with Swami on the 8th February this year, He told us to return to Australia after Sivaratri to clear up some of our personal matters. I took this opportunity to get His blessings to participate in the Australian Sai Conference in April. Swami said that He would speak with me about the Conference later and it happened to be the day He left for Brindavan, 14th March, when my wife and I were among the fortunate few to be called in for interview. It was there that I asked Swami if He would give a Message for the Australian Conference, He promptly said: "Tell them, without discipline, understanding, cooperation and unity, bhajan singing is a waste of time." He also gave His blessings for me to speak at Sai gatherings.

The venue for the Conference was the Lake Hume Resort, a beautiful setting where nature and modern facilities blended. It was one of the finest National Conferences we ever attended. Love overflowed from the hearts of the nearly thousand people from diverse backgrounds who attended. Although our hearts cry out for this expansion, our heads too have to be in tune with the idea. With Swami's help we can get rid of our negative qualities and work together with the power of Love inherent in each one of us. Through the practise of discipline, understanding, cooperation and unity this Love can be strengthened. It was not just a coincidence that the theme of the Conference, "Learning to live as One", and Swami's Message were complementary. It was His Divine Will (Sankalpa).

To realise that we are united in spirit but diverse in expression and thus unique, is by no means an easy goal to realise. We have to follow the illumined path, one that has been tested and proven by the Masters of the past. Bhagavan Baba's Message is Universal and His very advent now is to help us along this difficult journey, and avert the 'Future Shock'. We must be aware of our Essential Unity (Truth), and experience it through expansion of consciousness, from the separate individual 'ego' point of view towards the all-encompassing, Universal One. While accepting us even with our failings, Swami is patiently teaching us to experience our Oneness through Love and Service. Only then we can become His instruments or co-workers. "United we stand; divided we fall" is always true. Nations themselves are going through the inevitable transition towards globalisation. Our realisation of our collective Family hood will be a great contribution. This Earth is a spaceship, perhaps the only one in the Universe, carrying precious human life, and the Avatar has come to help us save it from self-destruction.

### **What next?**

"Without discipline, understanding, cooperation and unity, bhajan singing is a waste of time." This simple Message given by Swami is timely and important, not just for us down-under, but for the entire world. It is meant not only for Sai devotees attending bhajans at Sai Centres or Groups. Every word of His is impregnated with deep meaning. There was no hesitation when He spoke those words. I believe this message does not cast aside the importance of bhajan, which has been there for decades and still is the bedrock. Everyone likes bhajan; it is

"batteries", but should not be an end in itself.

It is very clear that Swami expects us to think seriously about our own transformation. We are so blessed in this age to have with us the Avatar, living amongst us and showing us the way, and even carrying us whenever we need that too. We should not waste this rare opportunity. Let us put our selfishness and ego aside, change our ways and work together by following His Message. Our life then will be His Message and only then will we be able to serve Him well.

Discipline is an essential means to an end, whatever it may be. A high degree of inner discipline is required if our goal is Self-transformation. The significance of the 9-Point Code of Conduct has been underrated even by earnest devotees for many years. Even if some of the Codes cannot be practised due to individual circumstances, their spiritual essence must not be ignored. There is so much in these Codes that, had we cared to practise them with understanding, we might have progressed a long way already! Discipline needs effort and will at the beginning but becomes a habit with practice. We cannot transgress the Laws of Nature with callous indifference and expect results. Whenever our desires and ego overwhelm, we should be able to step aside and scrutinise our motives, thoughts and actions, with utter sincerity. Discipline from outside is no discipline for the spiritual aspirant. Our thoughts and behaviour at all times must be self-monitored and self-enforced. It demands regular practice and belief in Swami's teachings. When we are earnest Swami's grace will always flow.

### **Self-enquiry**

We must obey the rule of law in society and the rule of our heart in our personal conduct. Through self-inquiry, we understand the rule of the spirit. Unthinking habit is not discipline. When inaugurating the 60th Birthday World Conference in 1985, Swami said: "Do not speak of anything that you cannot do or will not do; and do not do anything that you cannot speak about." Swami recommends certain disciplines for our spiritual unfoldment. These include not harming others (ahimsa), speaking the truth and practising what we preach (sathya), regular study of spiritual teachings, selflessly serving others, practising devotion to God, practising detachment from objects of desire, performing our duties to ourselves, family and community well, living within the bounds of morality and meditating on the unity of all creation and the omnipresence of God. Swami says, "Discipline comes to the rescue during crisis when the world flows towards you as a dark flood of hate and derision. Without discipline, the mind of man is turned into a wild elephant in a rut. You have to catch it young and train it so that its strength can be put to good use."

We must have a clear understanding as to why we engage in certain activities and how we should perform them. Whether we work together or live together, when we make adjustments without proper understanding of the circumstances, just to accommodate others, our satisfaction will be short lived and we can even end up with hurt or undesirable outcome. That is why Swami always says, "Understand first before making adjustments." There is no standard solution to similar problems because time, place and people differ. With proper understanding we can adjust our activities to suit the circumstances without compromising on principles or intent. We have to

different background. We must remember that we have been brought together to love and serve each other and expand so that we can see the Sai in each other. Of course, by His grace, we have improved considerably over the years. We also need to understand our relationship with the Organisation and why Swami considers them unfortunate, those who had left the Organisation.

### **Cooperation**

We must remember that we have come to Swami entirely voluntarily, after hearing about Swami and His Teachings. We became enthusiastic and decided to join a Sai Centre and learnt new things and met new devotees. Whenever things were not as smooth as we had expected, we started looking at faults in others and became disillusioned, not realising that we were wearing our own 'coloured glasses'. We have to be watchful, especially at these times, when our desires and ego overwhelm us and we fail to understand the uniqueness of the Sai Organisation and forget the purpose of our joining the various activities. With patience, forbearance and forgiveness we can overcome these traps. No difficulty is beyond our capacity to surmount especially if we have Love and Humility—the ultimate key to freedom. Those times, when we cannot cooperate with others for some good reason, at least we must be disciplined not to work against them or slander them. Swami often says, "Operation... Operation... no Cooperation!" Swami also says, "When you slander others, you are slandering Me in them."

Unity is Divinity. We are One in Spirit and yet we are many forms. We must experience this Unity in Diversity in this vast worldly stage, the ultimate University of Life, and finally graduate into Freedom or Liberation. As long as we constantly identify ourselves with our separate existence, separate groups and our own dreams, we will cultivate feelings of "likes and dislikes", "love and hate" and "ours and theirs". We do not remind ourselves of the Truth that everything around us, including our own separate existence, is transient and that we are essentially One. The universe is filled with this blueprint of Unity, Order and Harmony. Having a common Divine origin, each one of us is a cell in the body of God and have to exist and work according to the Divine blueprint, in Unity and Harmony, to preserve our collective well-being. It is our duty to express this Unity in Thoughts, Words and Deeds and to Love all and Serve All.

—Dr. Sara Pavan, Sydney

### **Faith and Hope**

In countless discourses Bhagavan Baba speaks to us of the essentiality of faith, "the very breath of life." He has described the benefits of faith, assuring us that it removes anxiety, brings peace and joy, guarantees mental quiet, earns grace, wins freedom and true wisdom, and overcomes Karma gaining for us liberation. He has also cautioned us against loss of faith as a primary cause of ill health and the source of confusion and despair. Swami has said he has "come to restore a sense of values and faith in the divinity of man." How do we get this faith and how do we maintain it?



Since we cannot find faith outside in the phenomenal world, we have to look elsewhere. "Repeating the name of God," Swami instructs us, "will induce faith." We arouse it from its sleep inside us and it stirs. Then like children catching glow-worms on a summer evening, the faint glow becomes evidence of something acquired. And if it is faith that we begin to acquire, we grab it and touch it and even play with it, watching it glimmer. Once we have it, however slight, we hold on to it and preserve it by our own effort. "Faith, an individual asset, is acquired and preserved by one's own efforts", He teaches. By using it, no matter how meager our application, we cultivate it and it grows.

As we witness its growth, we foster it by imparting energy to it. By not immediately dismissing the coincidences we notice in our daily activities, in our curious and chance encounters, we give to ourselves the possibility of wonder. We free our minds to wonder whether this event or that happening could really be other than random. In the world of possibilities the unknown can become known. God may whisper to us because He does not have to scream. And we might see His signs because we openly let ourselves notice them.

Accordingly, if the object of our faith is also the source of our faith, expansion is the natural outcome. What we aroused soon has the power to awaken and animate us. Imagine the thrill for the child as glow-worms fly in droves into his glass jar. He would in time leave the lid off because, rather than secure his small prize, he might decide to ally with the larger hosts. Imagine our own delight as we participate in the energy of our expanding faith.

Considering Swami's message that we "get firmly entrenched in faith in the ultimate victory of truth and love," we maintain our delight as we move beyond, expecting to experience triumph always. Even obstacles lose their power over us as we recall his words: "Welcome obstacles, for they alone can toughen character and make faith firmer."

Looking back at the past, none of us can recall painful and disappointing losses and circumstances. We can also, upon reflection, marvel at the fortunate and unexpected events which could not have happened had those distressing moments not occurred. If we could travel back in time to those misfortunes and whisper secret words to our despairing minds, they might be words of encouragement and hope and promise. Perhaps we might find that the plan fulfilled later includes surprising gifts. As we encounter current obstacles, we might listen to the whispers our faith softly provides. And we might hear Him telling us that He will never forsake us for we are His very own.

Walking in the summer night air, noticing the flickering lights in the dark becomes shimmering reminders of faith waiting to thrive. The stillness becomes the opportunity to hear hints that the Father and I are Together Here.

—Jack Feely, Ph. D., St. Louis, Missouri

## "The Conscience of Mankind"

*"In the Kali age, Bhagavan Baba is the Divine Witness and the Conscience of mankind", observed Dr. Michael Goldstein, President of the Sri. Sathya Sai Organisation of America, addressing a vast gathering of Sai devotees in the Sai Ramesh hall on Gurupoornima day, July 22. He concluded with the prayer that "Swami will fill each and everyone of us with a new determination and resolve to seek God, serve God and realise God." In the course of his address, Dr. Goldstein said:*

Our beloved Swami is the embodiment of Sathyam, Sivam and Sundaram. It is no wonder that we love him so dearly. His appearance delights our senses. His exquisite grace and His beautiful voice brings joy to our hearts. We are deeply moved by his profound and universal messages. We are inspired by his noble deeds. But this is not enough. Swami exhorts us to expand the love that we feel for His Name and form to include all of humanity. He instructs us to convert this love into noble, selfless action.

A few nights ago I had the good fortune to listen to a heartwarming talk given by one of the students. When he began to speak, he expressed his gratitude to Swami for the wonderful opportunity to speak in his Divine presence. My heart is overflowing, with gratitude to Swami at this moment. In addition, the young man said that he always felt complete confidence that Swami would never permit him to falter in his talk, that Swami would always provide the necessary and appropriate words.

### **Bhagavan to the rescue**

This brought to my mind an experience that I had some 13 or 14 years ago. It was during an International Bal Vikas Conference held in Prasanthi Nilayam. Swami graciously entrusted me with the responsibility for the overseas delegates. The conference was very intense. As usual Swami brought all of the loose ends together and the objectives of the conference were accomplished. At the end of the conference, it was my responsibility to give a summary of the proceedings and conclusions prior to Swami's closing Divine Discourse. This was my first opportunity to speak in Swami's Divine Presence. The Poornachandra was filled. My name was introduced and I felt a sudden overwhelming fear. I had forgotten my talk. I was disoriented and did not have the slightest idea as to what I was going to say to this large assembly gathered in Swami's Presence. I took Padanamaskar. I was sweating profusely. As I arose I saw that I had moistened Swami's gown with my sweat and tears. I rose to my knees and looked at Swami. Silently I prayed to Him: "Swami! I have forgotten everything and I am filled with fear. Do not permit me to fail you." Swami looked into my eyes for an instant and I knew that He had heard my prayer. He then took his right hand and, like a loving mother caring for her child in need, he slowly and gently wiped the sweat from my forehead with his hand. I closed my eyes. I became serene. When I opened my eyes I remembered my speech and I was filled with confidence. Swami enabled me to do my duty.

self-confidence that Swami instilled has remained with me to this day.

Another point made by the same student a few nights ago is worthy of reiteration. The young man cautioned his fellow students to beware lest they take Swami for granted. He warned us not to be deluded by the proximity and familiarity that Swami so graciously permits us. We must always be mindful of His Divinity.

How can we even begin to understand Swami's greatness, the exalted nature of Divinity? We can only use our limited human minds. We compare Swami to human greatness.

### **Einstein and Baba**

The great scientist, Albert Einstein, gave us insight into the laws that govern the universe. Our Lord, Bhagavan Baba gives us insight into the nature of God's creation and the Divine purpose of our lives. Albert Einstein taught us how to convert matter into energy. Our Lord Bhagavan Baba teaches us how to convert our minds and bodies into perfect instruments of Divine Will. Albert Einstein has given important book knowledge that is needed for scientific progress. Our Lord, Bhagavan Baba, gives us essential practical and spiritual knowledge that is necessary for the spiritual progress of mankind.

In this materialistic time, this Kali Yuga, especially in Western countries, we are taught that happiness is a result of worldly success. We are taught from an early age that worldly success is when our identity, that is, our egos, prevails over our environment and over other people. Ego strength in Western societies is regarded as an essential prerequisite for success. Swami teaches us that this is a terrible mistake, a dire misconception. It is this misconception that results in the endless cycles of happy-sad, happy-sad, and pleasure-pain, pleasure-pain. Swami teaches us that real happiness emanates from within ourselves and is not dependent on worldly events and the thoughts and actions of other people.

### **Plato's cave**

The great Greek philosopher, Plato, compared the world to a huge, dark cave. He said that human civilization was like people sitting in this dark cave. They are chained to the walls of the cave. Their lives consist of watching the reflections on the walls of the cave. They believe that there is no more to human life than watching the reflections on the walls of the cave. Then, says Plato, in every age there are courageous and inspired men and women who are motivated to break the chains that bind them to the walls of the cave. These men and women struggle to reach the entrance of the cave and finally emerge into the light, beauty, and warmth of the real world. Then, inspired by the beauty that they have beheld, they return to the cave to help their brothers and sisters to discover the truth.

Swami is the inner voice that motivates us to turn inward and seek our Divine Heritage, to break the chains that bind us to the wall of the cave. Swami is the strength and the courage that enable us to persevere in our struggle. Swami is the light, beauty, and warmth of Divine Reality.

sisters.

### **"Swami's children"**

During his Divine Discourse at Gurupoornima a few years ago Swami gave us great insight into the nature of the Poorna Avatar of the Kali Yuga. He explained to us that during the Treta Yuga, Sri. Rama took up arms and fought Ravana and the evil Rakshasas. Evil then existed in a different land. During the Dwapara Yuga good and evil were represented in the same land. Sri. Krishna advised the noble Pandavas to vanquish the evil Kauravas. During the Kali Yuga, good and evil, exist within each and every human being. The Lord, the Kali Yuga Avatar, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is the Divine Witness and the conscience of mankind.

As I look out over this sea of people, my fellow devotees, my brothers and sisters, I am deeply moved by all of the unsung heroes, the goodness and humility of all the wonderful teachers attending the conference and the hardworking members of the other wings of the Sri Sathya Sai Organisations. We are truly Swami's children.

Let us all strive to appreciate the value of this great Blessing that Swami has given to us. Unique among all of God's Creation, we have the ability to recognize that we emanate from God, we can commune with the Lord by turning inward and identifying with our conscience, and ultimately, we are capable of merging with the Lord.

I pray that Swami will fill each and every one of us with a new determination and resolve to seek God, serve God, and realize God.

## **Science and Spiritual Knowledge**

*"Many describe science today as a powerful acquisition, but, science holds before man a great opportunity, that is all. It cannot be as great a power as it is imagined to be. If it is devoid of character it brings disaster."*

*(Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. XI. Ch. 22)*

When I studied Sathya Sai Baba's views on science and spirituality, it was, a relief to find that they confirmed those that I had arrived at myself through many years of researching these matters. But Baba also redefined the relationship by aid of deep new insights all stated very pithily too. My interest here is to show how Baba's critique of science highlights some of the shadows science casts and the limitations from which it suffers.

It is held that 'truth' is the sole aim of science, which at the same time insists on neutrality towards all other values. But is not truth without goodness a sort of contradiction? It may not be logically contradictory but it is a clash between two values. Science is held to direct itself towards the common good. Yet it often contradicts this by excluding from its assumptions and

of humanity, peace of mind and rightness of action. Scientific neutrality towards values is maintained as its policy supposedly in the name of 'objectivity'. In fact, the pragmatic justification underlying natural scientific research has rather been technological invention, which itself has definitely been used for ill as well as for good.

### **Narrow and incomplete**

Baba points out that, though science is sacred and gives great opportunities, it is also a danger and is being—used for harmful ends. Science has contributed many goods to the world; many material goods, much know how and also a few less tangible good qualities. However, more than enough has been written to boost one-sidedly the positive image of science today. Wherever the Western lifestyle is an ideal, science has assumed the role of the holy cow; a sacrosanct provider that exists only for the material good of the world. But anyone can see that science has also had many unforeseen consequences often very dangerous and socially destabilising ones, and also that scientists have released many ills upon the world too, even, if often unwittingly.

### **Baba's universal vision**

Sathya Sai Baba has mentioned science's claim only to describe very precisely how things happen, and to reject any questions of why, i.e. the reasons and purposes inherent in or 'behind' what they study. Because of the (unproven) materialistic assumption that is built into the theory and method of science, the urge to know is limited to externals and the cosmos is regarded only as the physically observable universe. This is seen, for example, in the excessive public promotion of physics, astronomy and molecular biology, with billions of dollars for vast cyclotrons, space telescopes etc., all supposedly to answer the riddle of the origin of the universe and life, but most absurdly presumptuous of all, to claim thereby to know the very mind of God. Somehow one had hoped for something more!

"What is the cosmos and why? Can I know what or who I really am and for what purpose I am here?" Something much more than the mere theoretical riddles of black holes and the Big Bang is certainly provided by Sathya Sai Baba, something more near, dear and real than that! His universal vision is backed up by sublime knowledge of the deepest of mysteries, including the creation of matter and of human souls. In December 1973, for example, he said during a discourse:-

*"The energy with which the most elementary and subtle particles are bound with each other is Divine. The individual separation of these individual particles is absolutely precise and cannot be altered by anyone. Any separation or merger would mean non-existence of Creation. This Divine Energy is God."*

### **Question of values**

Perhaps even more vital is the question, "How can I know what is right and wrong?" Partly out of the uncertainty caused by supposing mistakenly that the sciences are in fact neutral in respect of every possible value, (i.e. 'value-neutralism'), academic institutions will not willingly

itself supports, implicitly at least, certain types of idea system against others and is certainly not free from intellectual and cultural fashion. So science is necessarily involved in values, despite its own underlying ideology.

It is obviously true that no one can absorb every theory and sub-theory, or know the vast host of empirical details of science. It is further widely held that science is so vast that no one can have a complete overview of its scope. This latter, however, is a mere myth of scientism, a self-defensive argument to fend off criticism that strikes at some of the basic assumptions of the sciences. I studied for many years before I found out to my own satisfaction that no theories in any science, however sophisticated and apparently flawless at first, were capable of more than what amounts to mere cross-sections of the fullness of reality and mostly only of temporary validity. Even then one had to disregard entirely of the mental and inner quality of human life, particularly as it is when perceived from heightened states of consciousness.

While the paradigms and parameters in each of the special sciences also determine the limits of what one may and may never know by their aid, the full design and vastness of creation itself is obviously another matter entirely!

*"Faced with a universe which is fundamentally mysterious, which, he feels must be endless and beginningless, which he feels must be infinite, the scientist has to accept it, though he cannot form a real picture of that kind of universe."*

*(Sathya Sai Speaks. Vol. 1, Ch. 32)*

### **Dubious claims**

The more one seriously inquires into a science, the more questionable many or the theoretical and practical claims are seen to be. Even the clear-headed 'layman' often plainly sees the shortcomings in the achievements and claims of professional scientists and is sometimes better placed to notice the failures of scientific experts to understand or solve the great majority of our human problems. Science's piecemeal 'analytic' approach and its specialisation has the disadvantage of often serving to keep it from addressing or understanding the real causes or the greatest problem's, such as ecological imbalance and pollutions, the evil consequences of much industry and technology, many physical and mental illnesses, social disruption, economic crises and much more besides. The origin of these problems lies in the minds and hearts of each of us. The cause of all this and its continuation is not to be found independently of the thoughts and desires of the individual persons who make up society.

### **Questionable experiments**

Even today, scientists without the metaphysical bent who are sceptical of anything yet unperceived that is of a purely spiritual nature, fail to see how their own initial assumptions (about scientific method or the nature of reality and knowledge) affect their scope to rob them of any genuinely holistic understanding of phenomena, of their place or relations within progressively wider scopes up to and eventually including the overall purpose of life in divinised nature. This shortcoming in vision and sublimity is what also accounts for most questionable

obscene, carried out with the barest minimum of self-knowledge and wholly lacking in spiritual insight.

New discoveries are always showing how wrong the experts were about what is and is not possible, even in subjects which have long been supposed to demonstrate a great degree of precision and predictability. Take, for example, all the expert assurances about the impossibility of accidents in modern nuclear technology before the Three Mile Island and Chernobyl disasters took place. Only a handful of the more intelligent physicists warned against such a likelihood, but were only treated by the established scientific community as outsiders.

Meanwhile, supposedly established theories in what are thought to be sound subjects like the earth's geological evolution, medicine, physics and the astronomical sciences, are full of very doubtful gaps that tend more to widen than to close, while the reappraisal of one dogma after another is frequently forced upon the established scientific punditry by circumstances or chance discovery. In addition comes the pressures on the scientific community seeking work and prestige from many vested or state interests and research-financing bodies, affecting the overall directions of science towards economic productivity and financial profit (sometimes even causing the 'cooking of results'). In all this, science easily becomes less than a servant of truth and the more unconcerned about responsibility towards the greater good.

### **Beyond science**

Social prestige is obviously one of the worldly aims of many scientists and anything that tends to challenge the authority of their supposedly superior knowledge of what is possible or not, is usually either ignored or pooh-pooped. It is hardly surprising that some persons who style themselves 'scientists' have stated that it must be sleight of hand, deception and even 'mass hypnosis'... the latter being a favourite argument of psychologists, who seldom have much actual knowledge of hypnosis of any kind. This vague idea—never experimentally demonstrated or explained in any convincing manner—is often used to write off and defend the mind against anything that surpasses everyday experience.

While Baba has been challenged by scientists to demonstrate his powers, he has stated that he never simply demonstrates them and that they are always only an expression of his love and care for the person who benefits from them. That Baba never challenges anyone is obviously because he has no need to do so whatever. He does not submit to experiments, obviously because he has no interest in 'proving' himself. Besides, why should he waste his time, so precious to devotees, on persons who try to approach him in an imperious, challenging or other offensive manner? It would fulfill no genuine need, as the critic with preconceived beliefs is not motivated by fruitful aims but by mere self-justification. Thus, challenges only rebound on the challenger.

There is not a single scientist in the world today who has been able authoritatively to disprove Baba's super-normal acts. Those scientists who are known to have visited and made first-hand observations, have become convinced of the genuineness of the materialisations, at least, and there are many such who testify formally to this. The others, who lack the firsthand

depend, in the first and last instance, on the proof of observation. Yet the causes of such phenomena, Baba has repeatedly explained, cannot be known by the human mind. Such realities can only be apprehended at all through intense spiritual practice and in a supra-mental state of extremely blissful realisation, which is entirely beyond the pale of outward scientific investigations.

### **Facts and values**

Sai Baba has pointed out that science is itself caught in a changing process and operates within narrow limits, which means not least that it cannot grasp the universe, for as it advances the mystery deepens. Modern philosophy of science has recognised that scientific knowledge is conditional, never absolute. No knowledge about the supposed 'objective' world of physical nature exists that is not itself 'subjectively-oriented' by human mind in some era of time and society. Nonetheless, science expresses certain values in its involvement with society and scientists are for ever airing publicly and via the media their 'evaluations' of what may or may not happen or be achieved, which is more often than not itself a highly unscientific sort of guessing game. When these, as so often, are divorced from spiritual insight, they become a force that can be as dangerous as it is blind.

Through research work in the sociology of knowledge, I found that a large proportion of psychological and social researches was often futile for most intents and purposes. There is an over-reliance on what appear to be objective methods (quantitative statistical analysis). When the object of study is itself the conscious human subject—or many persons in the form of a society—it is qualities and values in life that matter and are unavoidable in any sensible judgments. Social 'scientists', always hoping for the status of 'objective' scientist, and hence for social authority and influence, are loath to recognise this fact and to draw the right consequences. Yet their assumptions are always formed at basic levels by the values of the particular society and beliefs they grew up in or have assimilated and adopted. Consequently the only solution to the dilemma between 'fact' and 'value' is to research both facts and values and to do so only on the basis of good and clearly enunciated positive values. Otherwise, the divorce of theory and practice and of confusing conflicts continue because observers who are only always trying to be neutral can at best only describe fairly neutrally. Yet they do not themselves recognise this fully and so do not assert the good or refute anti-values.

### **Need for spiritual orientation**

Through the systematic study and well-organised practice of positive values, a new type of experience must be gained that goes well beyond the assumptions of 'physicalistic' natural scientism, without thereby becoming a moralistic free-for-all of dilettante theories not using relevant scientific controls. The future of academic scientific culture, if it is to be fruitful, must lie with the re-introduction of the basic and universal values of love, non-violence, peace of mind and good action for the common welfare at the basic level of education and research. A newly spiritualised orientation towards the human being and nature is urgently required.



measurement of physical nature. Only in fairly recent times have basically the same methods been applied widely to the study of human society. Instead of ever describing and measuring past and present tendencies, we require imaginative hypotheses and forward-looking approaches for change in the human or social sciences... with active participation not just to understand but also to positively influence events through one's own action and example. Think if half as much time, effort and money as has been poured into specialist fields like micro-physics or organic biology, were to be invested in bridge-building and active peace research, such as the systematic testing of lasting forms of friendship and fruitful co-operation between people who are separated, estranged, ideologically opposed or in other conflicts, the world would probably be vastly different and much better altogether today:

Human nature combines the outer and the inner, body and soul, matter and mind through action and interaction. Culture, or communication between human beings and groups within an interactive environment, ultimately springs from and relates to the inner world of the spirit and therefore cannot be studied intelligently or fully only on the basis of natural scientific assumptions.

Any researcher has only to refer to almost anyone of Sathya Sai Baba's discourses from 1955 to the present day to find convincing examples of potential improvements in human life and society that cover a vast range of ideas, any one of which may form the starting point for fruitful action-research hypotheses. The systematic study of what improves the quality of life is an essential task, particularly where material prosperity is no longer the dominant problem. Quality can really only be assessed (not accurately 'measured' as if it were a quantity) in terms of people's evaluations, such as what attitudes and behaviour forward tolerance, respect, chivalry and so on in relations between persons of different backgrounds, classes and ages and between the individual and public servant, patient and doctor, and so on through all the variations of humanity.

### **A half-blind Leviathan**

Because science even programmatically eschews its only proper partner, which is spirituality in practice, it has become like a half-blind leviathan stalking on the road of worldly ambitions and preying on anything—be it man or beast, plant or mineral—that it can turn to material advancement and profit. This mostly hastens the exhaustion of resources and extinction of species by those who stand to gain financially.

*"Science without discrimination and a society without morality and integrity cannot bring about prosperity. Therefore you should have discrimination along with science. Along with discrimination there should be humility."*

*(Sai Baba in a discourse: Education and Seva 19/11/87)*

There does exist research which aspires to noble results in practical improvements of the world, which does good. There is also that which desires knowledge through uninvolved, 'disinterested' observation which probably does neither good nor ill as such. Yet the

abused. This occurs, for example, in the ungodly desecration of life in experiments on animals, for which—if really necessary—human beings could volunteer instead.

Scientists should also recognise the meaning of the fact that we all have to die of something anyhow! Our desires must have limits and the extent of our human rights cannot be unlimited, for we also have duties towards God's creation. Then there is the scandal of patenting creatures and plants as if they were human inventions, and so the rich can have economic control over them. The freedom of science has not least of all allowed the aberrations of almost every area of the physical and biological sciences into all forms of warfare. It is high time that such freedom be re-directed dutifully instead. Our duty cannot be other than towards the essential core of high moral principles, including awe and respect for the Creator's will, as expressed in all the world's major religions.

### **When the twain meet**

The vital question that must be answered in every area is: 'How can the aims of education and scientific research be channeled towards the realisation of human values' At the most general level, Sai Baba answers that the transformation of every heart and mind through awareness of the divine cause, nature and purpose of all entities alone can bring peace and happiness to the world. This guiding law must be applied throughout the spectrum of human research and learning. Only when science enters such a symbiosis with practical spirituality can we look forward to a safe and secure global community.

—**Robert Priddy, Oslo**

*[From the author's book, "The Source of Dream" Copies can be had from Sri. Sathya Sai Gooks and Publications Trust, Prasanthi Nilayam]*

### **Visit to Spastics School**

An unexpected but exceedingly welcome benediction was conferred by Bhagavan Baba on the children, parents and teachers of the School for Spastic children at Indiranagar on 6th July.

A large gathering of students, parents, and teachers greeted Bhagavan with ecstatic joy on arrival at the school. Srimati Rukmini Krishnaswami conducted Bhagavan around the various sections of the Institution and explained the plans to improve the Institution and render greater service to the handicapped children. Bhagavan blessed the entire gathering and listened with intense interest to the Bhajans sung by the inmates of the School. Sweets were distributed to the vast gathering.

Bhagavan evinced great interest in the proposal to construct a Diagnostic centre for the School, together with a Hospital to facilitate treatment to the handicapped children. The centre will provide early care and treatment to the spastic children and give instructions to the parents

completed, it would be the first institution of its kind in the country: Bhagavan offered all that was required to carry out the project. The Chief Minister of Karnataka, who was present on the occasion., announced a donation of Rs. one Lakh from the Government of Karnataka.

## **Watch Your Character**

*Baba's A B C*

*Is good for you and me*

*Always Be Careful*

*Avoid Bad Company I*

*If someone treats you badly  
And you're tempted to be rude,  
Remember OM SAI RAM,  
Forbear, don't start a feud.*

*Never lose your dignity,  
Nor spoil your precious name,  
Let excellence of character  
Be your claim to fame.*

*With OM SAI RAM  
Go humbly on your way.  
With JAI JAI KRISHNA JAI  
Remember Baba all the day.*

*Control the senses  
With OM SAI RAM.  
Be master of your mind  
With JAI JAI KRISHNA JAI.  
Guard the door of your thoughts  
With OM SAI RAM  
Admit the pure, the good, the kind  
With JAI JAI KRISHNA JAI.*

*Control your emotions  
With OM SAI RAM  
Be calm amid distress  
With JAI JAI KRISHNA JAI  
Banish pride and anger*

*Jealousy and selfishness  
With JAI JAI KRISHNA JAI.*

*Mix with godly people,  
Support each other's trust,  
Then you'll grow in Baba's grace,  
Free from envy, greed and lust.*

**—D.W.**

*Joy is your birth—right; Santhi is your in-most nature. The Lord is your Self and Support. Do not discard it; do not be led away from the path of faith by stories invented by malice and circulated by spite. Take up the Name of God, any of the innumerable ones, any that appeals to you most and the form appropriate to that Name and start repeating it. From now on, that is the Royal Road to ensure joy and peace, that will train you in the feeling of brotherhood and remove enmity towards fellowmen.*

**—Baba**

# **The Glory of the Krishna Avatar**

## **Embodiments of love!**

It was the middle of the Dwapara Yuga. Unable to bear the - atrocities committed on good people by demonic rulers, the Goddess of Earth prayed to the Lord in many ways. Offering solace to the grief-stricken Goddess, the Lord said: "Devi! You may return to the earth. I shall do what needs to be done. You will be relieved of your burden." Encouraging her in this way the Lord sent Mother Earth back to the world.

Thereafter, the Lord summoned all the Devas (denizens of the celestial world) and directed them to take birth as Yadavas. The originator of the Yadava clan is Yayaati. His eldest son was known as Yadu. The descendants of Yadu came to be known in course of time as Yadavas. Among the Yadavas, there was a chief known as Ahuka, who was a righteous person, wedded to truth. The characters figuring in the Krishna legend belong to Ahuka's lineage.

Ahuka had two sons—Devaka and Ugrasena. Kamsa was the son of Ugrasena. Devaki was the daughter of Devaka. Kamsa had no sister of his own. He had great affection for his cousin Devaki, whom he treated as his own uterine sister.

## **The warning to Kamsa**

In the Yadava clan, there was ogle Vasudeva, the son of Sura. Vasudeva was one of the satraps in the Yadava kingdom. He was known as one who stood by his plighted word. Ugrasena and Kamsa, after a great deal of search, picked upon Vasudeva as a suitable bridegroom for Devaki. Vasudeva already had a wife by the name Rohini. In those times, there were no restrictions regarding polygamy. Because he had no child through Rohini, Vasudeva agreed to marry Devaki.

After the marriage, Kamsa got ready his chariot to take Vasudeva and Devaki to their home. Kamsa drove the chariot himself with a heavy heart, overwhelmed by the prospect of separation from his beloved cousin. Devaki was as dear to Kamsa as his life-breath. At the time of her leaving her paternal home, Devaki was presented with many precious gifts by Ugrasena, besides a retinue of elephants, horses and guardsmen.

While the chariot was proceeding in a grand manner, all of a sudden a loud voice was heard from the sky: "You fool! You do not know what is in store for you. The one who will slay you for all your misdeeds will be born as the eighth child of your sister." After saying this, the ethereal spirit vanished.

The moment Kamsa heard these words, he flew into a rage. He jumped down from the chariot, seized Devaki by the hair, unsheathed his sword to cut off her head. Vasudeva, who was the very embodiment of peace, truth and righteousness, held Kamsa's hands and asked him why he was worried so much over the prospect of death. "Death is inevitable, whether today or in

you hide yourself in a forest. All beings that are born are destined to die. Kamsa! The ethereal voice declared that death will come to you from the hands of the eighth child (of Devaki) and not immediately. There are many years ahead before the eighth child. It is not proper that you should lose your temper. Release the girl whom you had loved as your sister. I shall hand over to you every child that is born to her." When Vasudeva gave his pledge, Kamsa realised the truth of his words and released Devaki from his hold. Kamsa returned to his palace without getting back into the chariot.

Vasudeva and Devaki reached their home with heavy hearts. As days passed by and Kamsa was immersed in worry about the prospect of death, Sage Narada came to him one day. After talking about world affairs in general, before leaving, Narada told Kamsa: "You are verily a fool. You are not aware of your real plight. The ethereal voice said that (Devaki's) eighth child will be your slayer. But you cannot know from which of her children death will come to you. You cannot take a chance with any of them."

From that moment Kamsa's distress and fear increased. He commanded Vasudeva to hand over to him every child. He killed six of the newborn children as they were handed over to him.

When Devaki was enceinte for the seventh time, Srīman Narayana made all arrangements to carry out His promise to Mother Earth. To promote the welfare of the world, to establish Dharma among mankind, to uphold truth and to instill devotion to God in humanity, the Divine process had to be set in motion. The Devas took birth as Yadavas. Vishnu summoned His all-pervading Yoga-Shakti (The Cosmic Energy), and said, "Go forth immediately and enter the womb of Yashoda." Summoning Adishesha (the Divine Serpent) the Lord directed him to go to Gokulam and enter the womb of Rohini (Vasudeva's elder wife). I shall be entering the womb of Devaki."

### **Krishna's birth in prison**

In Devaki's seventh pregnancy, the Lord had the foetus transferred to Rohini's womb and Kamsa was informed that Devaki had an abortion. Krishna made His advent in her eighth pregnancy. Apprehending danger from Kamsa, Vasudeva arranged to send Rohini to Nanda's home. Rohini was a sister of Yashoda.

Expecting mortal danger to himself from the eighth child of Devaki, Kamsa kept Vasudeva and Devaki in a heavily guarded prison. He kept the key of the prison lock with himself.

Devaki gave birth to a son on an Ashtami (eighth day after the New Moon) in the asterism Rohini. The Child that was born was the Lord Himself with all His effulgence and all the insignia of Vishnu. On the child's chest was the Srivatsa mole. The Kaustubha ornament shone brilliantly. Devaki and Vasudeva folded their hands in adoration, blinded by the effulgence of the Divine Child. They felt that their lives had been redeemed by the birth of the Lord, whom they saw with their own eyes. Approaching the baby and caressing his palms and feet, they prayed to

position to protect you. You must use your divine potency to get away from this prison by any means."

Vasudeva sat beside the child and started praying. Immediately a basket appeared before him. Placing the Divine child in the basket he looked at the prison door. He saw that it was open. The ways of the Divine are marvellous and mysterious, felt Vasudeva. He stepped out of the prison. He found all the guards sound asleep. As he came out, there was a heavy downpour. The Yamuna was in spate. He prayed to Narayana to see that there was no impediment in the way of his mission to protect the Divine child. The Yamuna gave him passage. He reached Nanda's house. The same day Yashoda had given birth to a child. Yashoda was unconscious. The child was none other than Mayadevi. When she was born, both Nanda and Yashoda were in a state of trance. Leaving the infant Krishna by the side of Yasoda, Vasudeva returned to Mathura with the other child. When Vasudeva left Nanda's house, the child left beside Yashoda uttered a cry. Yashoda and Nanda did not know whether the new-born was a boy or girl. On hearing the child's cry, Yashoda looked at it and found that it was a boy.

### **Kamsa's nightmare**

Vasudeva took the female child back to his prison. There the child started crying. On hearing the cry, all the guards woke up. They found the prison gates closed. They informed Kamsa about the birth of the child. Kamsa, who had been anxiously waiting for the news, rushed to the prison. Seizing the new-born child from Devaki's hands, he flung it up in the air to slay it with his sword. The child, Mayadevi, spoke from above, "You fool! The boy who is going to slay you is already born. He is growing up in a certain place. You cannot escape your destined end." Saying this, Mayadevi vanished.

From that moment, Kamsa was engaged in finding out the whereabouts of the child that was to be his slayer. He released Vasudeva and Devaki from prison.

Once, Vasudeva and Nanda, as satraps in Kamsa's kingdom, came to Mathura to pay their annual tribute to him. While they were returning, Vasudeva and Nanda were lamenting over their plight. Vasudeva observed that in Repalle (Nanda's place) some inauspicious events seemed to be impending. "In Gokulam also some untoward events are likely to happen. Nanda, do not stay in Mathura for long. Leave the place immediately."

### **Krishna and Puthana**

On hearing this warning, Nanda immediately returned to Repalle. In Repalle, demoniac elements were all the time moving about actively. The first of them was Puthana. She lost her life while giving suck to Krishna. This Puthana in a previous life was Ratnavali, the daughter of Emperor Bali. The Lord as Vamana appeared as an extremely handsome young lad at the sacrifice being performed by Bali. Ratnavali was charmed by the beauty of Vamana and felt how much she would have enjoyed rearing him if he had been her son. As she was having these thoughts, she found that Vamana had placed his foot on Bali's head (after he had measured the earth and the heaven by his two footsteps). Enraged at this sight, she was filled with the desire to

born as Puthana and came to Krishna to feed him and kill him. In the end, she lost her life. The Lord has His own ways of fulfilling the desires of people. Hence, it is essential to have good thoughts and good desires.

When Krishna was three years old he saw an old lady carrying a basket of fruits from the jungle. Krishna told her he would like to have some fruits. The old woman said he could get them only if he paid the price. Krishna innocently asked the meaning of the word price. The woman said that something should be given in return for the fruit. Krishna went in and brought a palmful of rice. The woman placed the rice in her basket and gave Krishna some fruits. She was charmed by the beauty of the child. As she was returning to her cottage, she felt that the basket was getting heavier. When she placed it down in her hut, she was amazed to find that all the rice grains had turned into precious gems! She thought the child must be divine. Otherwise how could the rice turn into gems? Considering herself supremely lucky, she invited her neighbours to see the miracle.

### **Yashoda's fears**

Krishna was pleading with Yashoda that he should be allowed to go to the forest with other cowherd boys. Thinking that if he was put to sleep he would forget his desire to go to the forest, Yashoda gave him milk. Krishna was no ordinary child. While drinking the milk, he pretended as if he was sleepy. He made a pretence of yawning to indicate his drowsiness. In that wide-open mouth of Krishna, Yashoda saw all kinds of things—all the worlds in motion and many deities. She could not make out what it meant. "Is it a dream or Vishnu's Maya? Or is it some phantasy of mine? Or is it real? Am I Yashoda? Have I gone somewhere?" These thoughts racked her mind. "My son is an infant. How can all the worlds appear in his tiny mouth? It must be my imagination." Such doubts arise in the minds of those who are caught up in the delusions of the body complex.

Yielding to his entreaties Yashoda allowed Krishna to go to the forest with the cowherd boys. Almost every day Krishna encountered some ogre or ogress and slayed them. His playmates used to describe to their elders these exploits of Krishna; how he fought with the demons and finished them off

Yashoda, however, used to say: "God is taking care of my child. Otherwise how could he overcome these encounters?" The cowherd boys observed: "When he himself is God, why does he need anybody's protection, oh mother!" Yashoda felt that the boys were naive in their judgment. "Will God come to one's rescue so easily? It is only because of my prayers, my child is protected." With this belief, Yashoda used to perform various rites, when Krishna returned from the forest, to express her gratitude to Providence for saving him from the evil eye and other dangers.

### **How Krishna foiled Brahma**

There was great rejoicing among the celestial beings (Devas) when they heard about the slaying of many demons on earth by Lord Narayana in His incarnation as Krishna. On hearing these



him.

That same night Krishna gave a directive to his mates. "Today do not take the cows for grazing. Let us take the calves. Come with the calves together with your respective musical instruments. We must spend the day with music." Most of them came with flutes on which they could play well, holding a stick in one hand and a flute in the other. Only two boys brought two mud-pots to be used as drums. Playing on the mud-pot is known today as "Ghatavaadyam". This art is as ancient as the Dwapara Yuga.

The cowherd boys gathered on the bank of the Yamuna with calves. Some of them played on their flutes some drummed their mud-pots while Krishna danced to the music. When Krishna stopped dancing, others started dancing. After sometime, Daama, one of the two intimate friends—of Krishna (the other being Subaala), told Krishna that he was feeling hungry and would like to have some palm-fruits from palm trees a little far away. Balaram, who was close by, said he would fetch the fruits. Balaram went near the trees and shook them. All the fruits dropped down. (Swami explained that at the time of the naming ceremony the sage Garg referred to the strength of the baby and said that the name Balaram would be appropriate for him.) At that time, a huge donkey appeared there. All were frightened. The donkey was getting bigger and bigger. Balaram seized the donkey by the forelegs and dashed it to the ground. It died on the spot. The cowherd boys hailed Balaram as a hero and danced in joy.

Biding his time, Brahma created at that moment a huge cave. He took into the cave all the calves, while the cowherd boys were immersed in merriment. Missing the calves, the boys started searching for them, shouting "Krishna! Krishna!" Krishna knew what was afoot and directed his mates to search for the calves in the cave nearby. They all went into the cave. Immediately the mouth of the cave closed in. The boys and the calves were caught inside. They were there for a whole year.

Krishna wanted to teach Brahma a lesson. He took the form of all the calves and all the Gopals imprisoned in the cave. In the evening Krishna and Balaram took the calves and the boys back to their homes. This went on day after day for a whole year. The elders assumed that the calves and the boys were their own. Brahma wondered what was happening? Had Krishna managed to free the boys and the calves from the cave? When he went into the cave he found all of them inside. He was amazed to find that the same boys and calves were inside as well as outside. He then realised the inscrutable ways of the Lord. "How can anyone know you, oh Krishna! You are subtler than the atom and vaster than the vastest in creation. You dwell in all the myriad species in all the worlds, how can anyone know you?" He prayed to Krishna to forgive him and released the calves and the cowherd boys from the cave.

### **Powers of the Lord**

This episode reveals that the Supreme Lord can assume countless forms. He can assume the form of the entire cosmos. That is why the Upanishad declares: "The entire cosmos is dwelt in by God". All are forms of the Divine. How is this possible? By the power of the Will of God.

own movements, while in fact he is motionless on his bed, what is it that is beyond the power of the Supreme Lord? Seeing the Divine in human form people can have doubts whether the incarnation can have such miraculous powers when he has the same body as themselves. They do not perceive the oneness of the Atma. It is difficult to recognise the Divine in the human form.

Not recognising His Divinity, many people reviled Krishna calling him a philanderer and a thief. These accusations do not detract from His greatness. They are born of delusion. Men make the same mistake about themselves, forgetting their inherent divinity and identifying themselves with their bodies. Krishna appeared in human form to teach mankind to transcend their body consciousness.

### **Krishna's divinity**

Krishna's leelas (sports) were intended in one way or another to reveal His divinity. Once Balaram teased Krishna by declaring: "You are not Yashoda's son. You may ask why I say so. This is because Nanda and Yashoda are of fair complexion and you are dark. You are not their child. You must have been born somewhere else." What Balaram said was true and Krishna knew it. But assuming an air of innocence, Krishna went to Yashoda and complained "Mother Balaram is saying that I am not your son. Tell me the truth." Yashoda replied: "Krishna! What does Balaram know? He is an innocent boy. You are very cute. You are highly intelligent. Don't pay any heed to his words. You are truly my son. The colour given by God is permanent. Colour as such is not important. Many people paint themselves in different ways to conceal their identity. All these are momentary. The colour given by God cannot be changed by anyone. God likes the dark complexion. You have got the colour of the Divine."

The Gopikas used to describe Krishna in many ways. Their love for Krishna was entirely spiritual. Their feelings were absolutely pure.

While Parikshit was listening to Suka's narration of Krishna's leelas, many doubts occurred to him. Suka resolved all the doubts. "Parikshit! You are viewing things from a worldly point of view and missing the truth. No one can determine the form of the Divine. He can assume any form at any time. But, when He has to demonstrate the nature of Divinity to mankind, He has to come in human form. But man, because of his polluted mind, is unable to recognise the Divine in human form."

Even Yashoda, despite many occasions in which Krishna demonstrated His divinity, continued to regard him as a human child and frequently thanked the Lord for saving her child from many dangers.

But Krishna tried to change her view by the words He used on different occasions. Once when Yashoda asked Krishna whether it was true, as alleged by Balaram, that he was in the habit of eating mud, Krishna replied: "Mother, am I a child, or a naughty boy or madcap to eat mud? People are mad about me. I am here to cure the world of its madness." From these words Yashoda began to realise that Krishna was no ordinary child but a manifestation of the Divine.

### The ways of the avatar

There are many subtle truths relating to an incarnation which cannot be easily understood. Merely to describe the various sports and exploits of Krishna as a child is only a pastime. God's ways are infinite and inscrutable. No one can determine or dictate to God how he should act. He can transform anything in a moment.

It must be clearly understood that Krishna was such a manifestation of the Divine. The name Krishna has to be properly understood. "Krish" + "Na" Krishna. This means that He is one who cultivates (Krish) the heart. "Karsh" + "Na" is another derivation, which indicates that Krishna is one who attracts ("Karshathi-iti-Krishnah"). Krishna attracts people not only by the matchless beauty of His form. He attracts people by his music, his dance, his sports and his words. Krishna, by His winsome ways, could turn the anger of the Gopis towards him because of his pranks, into an enjoyable joke.

Nor was that all. Krishna, in fulfilling the pledge He had, given to Mother Earth, rid the world of many wicked rulers and sought to establish the reign of Righteousness for the protection of the good.

The Divine incarnates from age to age for the purpose of protecting the virtuous, punishing the wicked and establishing Dharma. Krishna is said to have destroyed many wicked persons. But this is not quite correct. It is their own wickedness which destroyed these evil persons.

Today if the Divine wants to punish the wicked and protect the righteous, there will not be even one wholly righteous person. All will qualify for punishment. It is not a question of destroying the wicked. The task today is to transform unrighteousness (Adharma) into righteousness (Dharma). How is this to be done? Through love alone.

Krishna also changed the hearts of many people through love. It may be asked: Is it not Krishna who killed Kamsa? Not at all. This is the text-book version. In truth, it was his own heated imagination (bhrama) which killed him. He was always haunted by the fear of Krishna. His death was a result and a reaction of that fear.

Men's thoughts determine their destiny. Hence, men should cultivate good thoughts and eschew all bad feelings.

God has no dislike for anyone. He envies no one. He has no ill-will towards anyone. Nor does he have favourites. The grace one gets is the result of one's own feelings. The Divine is beyond feelings and attributes ("Bhaavaatheetham Trigunarahitham"). He is the One, the Truth, the Pure, the immovable ("Ekam, Sathyam, Vimalam, Achalam"). He is the Eternal Witness in all minds ("Sarvadhee Saakshibhutham").

When devotees complain now-a-days why they are being punished by the Lord in various ways, they do not realise that it is not God who is punishing them. Their own fears and fancies

the consequence of his own bad thoughts and actions. One such devotee was Kuntidevi, sister of Vaasudeva (and mother of the Pandavas). She was Krishna's maternal aunt.

### **Kunti's prayer**

Krishna was leaving Hastinapura for 'Dwaraka. He was bidding farewell to all his kinsfolk and taking leave of Dharmaja and others. Everyone silently accepted his decision. The chariot was ready for Krishna's departure. But the Divine can change his mind at any moment. After taking leave of all others he went to Kunti. Kunti told him: "Krishna! All the troubles we experienced were due to our delusions. If Dharmaja had not been lured by the game of dice, would we have been subject to exile in the forest and all the troubles we went through? Hence my children were the root cause of all our troubles. You are always our protector. During all our troubles I always remembered you. In the world people remember God only in times of trouble and not when they are happy. Therefore, Krishna, as long as I have a body, give me always difficulties. However, having had you with us all these years, we are deeply distressed to see you part from us. I have no power to change your mind. I only pray do not forget this aunt of yours".

### **Uttara's appeal to Krishna**

After that, Krishna went to Uttara (Abhimanyu's wife). Hearing that Krishna was leaving for Dwaraka, Uttara ran towards Krishna and fell at his feet. "Lord! Since Abhimanyu's death, I have been trying hard to bear the pain that is gnawing at my bosom. There is a fire burning in my womb. I cannot divine the reason. You should not leave at all for Dwaraka now. You must stay. You have been the protector of my forebears for many generations. You were the saviour of the Pandavas. The child in my womb is the only hope of the Pandava clan. If anything untoward happens to that child, the Pandava dynasty will be extinguished. Therefore, you must not leave." So saying, Uttara firmly clung to Krishna's feet.

Krishna was immediately moved by Uttara's deep devotion. The journey to Dwaraka was given up. Krishna made a promise to Uttara. "I will not leave for Dwaraka till your child is born," assured Krishna.

At that moment, Dharmaja and his brothers, Draupadi and Subhadra praised Uttara's devotion to the Lord. Though young in years, Uttara was pre-eminent in her devotion. This was because when she was enceinte, Krishna entered her womb to protect the foetus from the Brahmastra of Ashwathama. She had a vision in a dream of Krishna entering her womb. From that moment she was ceaselessly chanting the name of Krishna and seeing Krishna in every person and every object.

Because of this, when the child was born, Krishna named him "Parikshit" as he tested everyone till he recognised Krishna.

### **Divine madness**

It's clear that the leelas of God are inexplicable and infinite. It is ludicrous to seek the whereabouts of the Divine, who is omnipresent. Uttara was one who recognised the

plans. People should realise that God responds only to deep and genuine devotion. Verbal supplications will not suffice. The devotee must acquire the yearning that will melt the heart of God. Even butter which is so soft melts only when heat is applied. Likewise, the warmth of Bhakti (love of the Lord) has to be applied to the butter of the human heart to make it melt. It was their intense devotion which made Krishna dwell in the hearts of Gopikas. They became God-intoxicated. Once, when Krishna disappeared from their midst they started searching for him everywhere, among the trees and the bushes of Brindavan, oblivious to everything else. Their appeals to the creepers to tell them whether their Krishna was hiding amongst them might seem "hysterical". But it would be a good thing if such "hysterical" love of God filled people's hearts today. The world will be a calmer and better place.

Some people talk caustically to Sai devotees saying: "you have gone crazy over Sai Baba". This craziness is sublime madness. There are all kinds of lunatics in the mental hospital, many of whom pose difficult problems for the doctors. If some God-mad devotee sits in a corner chanting God's name, what a relief he would be to doctors! If you develop this kind of sublime madness, you will be supremely fortunate indeed! Everyone should be crazy about God. Only then they will get rid of the mad craving for wealth and the things of the world. The craze for money is the cause of all the ills in the world. With the result that the desire for God declines.

Because of the craze for riches, all other evil qualities like pride, greed, envy and hatred have grown among mankind. Wealth is, indeed, needed, but it is the wealth of Divine Grace and the treasure of Divine Love. That alone is lasting. All other things are transient.

Once Yashoda appealingly asked Krishna why he was going to the Gopikas' houses to steal their butter when there was so much butter in their own house. The Child Krishna replied: "Mother, I am not stealing butter but the hearts of the Gopis". (Swami sang a beautiful song relating to this episode). "Their hearts are pure and full of devotion", said Krishna. "Their butter is filled with the devotion with which they churn the buttermilk. Their bangles keep time as they sing Krishna's name while churning. The butter that is got contains the essence of the- Vedas." Krishna asked Yashoda whether this kind of churning was taking place in her house.

In this manner, every word of Krishna was replete with spiritual significance.

The Krishna Avatar is hailed as "Poorna Avatar", compared to all previous avatars.

Vyasa could obtain peace of mind only when, on the advice of Sage Narada, he began to write about the glorious incarnations of the Lord (described in the Bhagavatam). All his earlier writings, including the codification of the Vedas and the writing of the Puranas, could not confer peace on him.

Embodiments of Love! No amount of scholarship will give you peace, unless, you are filled with the love of God.

(From Bhagavan's discourse on Gokulashtami Day in Sai Ramesh Hall,  
Brindavan, on 28.8.94)

AVATAR VANI

GANESHA CHATURTHI SANDESH

## Spiritual Significance of Ganesha Worship

*Hasthasya Bhooshanam Daanam  
Kanthasya Bhooshanam Sathyam  
Srothrasya Bhooshanam Saasthram  
Bhooshanaihi rihi Kim Prayojanam*  
(Poem)

### *Embodiments of love!*

Charity is the ornament for hands. Truth is the ornament for speech. Hearing the scriptures is the ornament for ears. Where is the need for other ornaments?

There is no greater experience than the feeling that one is Atma (Aham Ethath). Aham (I) is defined as Atma, the Self. The word "Ethath" means "all these". It covers all the objects in the Universe which are physical and subtle and also the Sun, Moon, stars and planets. It signifies that you are not the physical body. You say "my body" which implies that you are not the body. What is this body constituted of? It is a combination of the five elements (Pancha bhutas), five Vital Airs (Pancha Pranas) and the five sheaths (Pancha Kosas). The entire universe is the body of the Supreme Lord. It consists of all the moving and static things. In Vedantic parlance, it is deemed to be superior Wisdom (Jnana) when you say, "I am not the body".

### **Drishya and drashta**

One should be extremely fortunate to realise this. Whatever you see in the external world is "Drishya" (that which is seen). The Sun, Moon, stars, the five elements which are constituents of the universe are all "Drishya". You are seeing your body too as you see other things. So the body is also "Drishya", that which is seen by you. Who is then the seer? The seer is "Drashta". The body is the object and you are the seer. Without a seer there is no question of anything being "seen". Some people talk about 'Shoonya' or emptiness or nothingness. Unless this has been seen, how can they talk about 'Shoonya'? Knowledge of the seer and the seen is the great message of Ganapati, whose advent we are celebrating today. 'Ga' means Buddhi or intelligence. 'na' means Vijnana or wisdom. 'Pati' means master. So, Ganapati is the master of all knowledge, intelligence and wisdom. There is also another significant meaning for the word, that He is the Leader of all the 'Ganas' who are celestial beings. He is also called 'Vinayaka', which term means that he is

One who has stilled the mind cannot have any master.

Without understanding this truth, we think of the physical form of Vinayaka with the elephant head and human body. Whenever people want to commence any undertaking or start learning music or the fine arts or any branch of knowledge, they first offer worship to Vinayaka.

### **Siddhi and buddhi**

He is also called Lambodhara, which means 'Guardian of Wealth' (Lakshmi Swaroopa). Here Lakshmi represents all wealth and prosperity and not only Dhanam (money) for which there is a separate deity called Dhanalakshmi, one of the eight Lakshmis. Here wealth means Sukha (pleasure) and Ananda (bliss). What is the use of having all other things when one has no pleasure or bliss? Ganapati is one who gives us spiritual potency and endows us with Supreme Intelligence. These two are termed as Siddhi and Buddhi respectively. Siddhi and Buddhi are described as his two consorts. As He is the Adhipati or Master of Siddhi and Buddhi, He is regarded as their husband in mundane terms. Vinayaka has no desire and hence there is no need for Him to have wife and children. He is worshipped by people in this country since very ancient times. There is historic evidence that the worship of Vinayaka has been in vogue even in other countries such as Thailand, Japan, Germany and U.K.

Adoration of Vinayaka as a principal deity (Prathama Vandana) has been mentioned in the Vedas. Ganapati Tattwa finds a place in the Vedas and Upanishads. Reference to Him is made in the Gayatri also. He is one who instill purity in body, and fearlessness in the mind. It is said: "Thanno Dantah Prachodayaath", giving importance to his tusk.

Some people, out of ignorance, comment upon the big animal form of this Master Deity and question how one with such a huge form can ride on a small mouse (Mooshika) which is depicted as His vehicle. "Mooshika" is symbolic of the darkness of ignorance, while Ganesha signifies the effulgence of Wisdom that dispels the darkness of ignorance.

### **Steam-cooked offering**

Even the offering that is made to Ganesha has great significance because it is prepared with gram flour and jaggery or pepper and enclosed in an outer covering made from flour paste and then cooked in steam without using oil. This is supposed to be a healthy and delicious food item according to the Ayurvedic system. Modern doctors also recognise the importance of such steam-cooked idlis (Rice cakes) which they recommend as post-operative diet for patients as it is easily digestible. Jaggery too has the property of controlling gas formation and this food item gives relief from eye troubles and prevents gastric disorders.

In the ancient traditional mode of observing these festivals, great emphasis was laid on good health as the pre-requisite for spiritual pursuits with a healthy mind. For achieving the four goals of human life, Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha, (Righteousness, Wealth, Desire and Liberation), one should have basically a healthy body. If you want to earn wealth by righteous means and cherish desires which lead to liberation, you should have sound health.

Vinayaka is also called Vighneshwara as He removes all obstacles coming in the way of devotees who pray to Him sincerely. He is worshipped by students with books so that all that is contained in the books may get into their heads.

Now-a-days people are only after money (Dhanam). Whatever scholarship one may attain, whatever power and position one may enjoy, one cannot be happy without the peace of mind that is got by pure devotion. One may have immense physical strength, one may pursue the path of meditation and penance, one may acquire profound knowledge, but all these attainments will be of no avail unless one acquires knowledge of the eternal—Sathyam, Jnanam, Anantam, Brahman.

### **The elephant symbol**

The symbolic significance of Ganesha's elephant head has to be properly understood. The elephant has profound intelligence. For example, yesterday Sai Geetha, (Bhagavan's elephant) came running when it heard the sound of Swami's car approaching. Though many cars were following Swami's car, Sai-Geetha could unmistakably identify Swami's car from an uncanny recognition of the sound of the car. That is why it is termed 'Gaja Thelivi' (elephantine intelligence). One having a sharp brain is described as having the intelligence of an elephant. It has 'Medha Shakti'. Moreover, the elephant has large ears and it can hear even minute sounds. Shravanam or hearing the glory of the Lord is the first step in spiritual Sadhana for which ears should be sharp. After hearing one has to ruminate over this and put it into practice (which are termed as Shravana, Manana and Nidhidhyasana). The elephant takes the praise and blame equally (Dooshana and Bhooshana). When it hears something bad, it moves its body this way and that way and shakes off the unwanted things while it retains good things quietly.

Only Vinayaka teaches the lessons that are essential for mankind. You should not stop with installing the idol and doing Puja for a few days. You should make efforts to become a Nayaka or Master over yourself. You have, the nine-fold path of devotion. Shravanam (Hearing), Kirtanam (Singing His glory), Vishnunamasmarnam (Thinking of and chanting the name), Padasevanam (Serving at His feet), Vandanam (Obeisance), Archanam (Worship), Dasyam (Serving Him as a servant serves the Master); Sakhyam (befriending God), Atmanivedanam (Surrendering body, mind and soul). The elephant signifies combining of the first and the last, that is, Shravanam and Atmanivedanam, so that all the other paths in between are covered fully.

When a man is born he does not have round his neck any necklace of pearls or gems or any possessions. But he is endowed by Brahma with the garland of the effects of his past actions, good or bad, which hangs invisibly around his neck. If you do good you will enjoy good results and if you are bad you will not escape suffering the consequences thereof.

### **The lessons of sacrifice**

The teaching of Vinayaka is one of sacrifice. You may not heed the contents of the Puranas, but you should not miss the vital principles which they convey to mankind.



When Vinayaka was writing the Mahabharata to the dictation of Sage Vyasa, the latter laid down the condition that Vinayaka should go on writing nonstop whatever Vyasa said. But Vinayaka also stipulated a condition that Vyasa should never stop his dictation but should go on without a break. While he was writing, Vinayaka's pen broke and he did not hesitate to break one of his tusks to use it as a pen. That is why he is called Ekadanta or one with a single tusk. This is a shining example of the spirit of sacrifice that Vinayaka exhibited for the welfare of humanity. That is why the Vedas proclaim that it is only by sacrifice one can attain immortality.

Love and sacrifice (Prema and Tyaga) constitute Bhakti (devotion to God). There is nothing superior to this. Atma Jnana (knowledge of the Self) is essential. This was the main teaching of Adi Sankara throughout his life, as He was preaching and following the Vedic dictum: "Ekathma Sarvabhoota Antharathma". "Ekam Sath Vipraa Bahudha Vadanthi" ("The one Atma is present in all beings". "The one Truth is described in many ways by the wise"). He was also preaching that Jnana or Wisdom was nothing but "Advaita Darshana" ("Vision of Non-duality"). But, during his last days, Sankara realised that Bhakti was greater than Jnana. In his famous "Bhaja Govindam", Adi Sankara emphasises that only the path of devotion will help you to get over the cycle of birth and death.

### **The greatness of bhakti**

There is no path superior to that of Bhakti. Bhakti does not mean doing puja, bhajans, going on pilgrimage to holy shrines, etc. Bhakti means diverting the pure and unsullied mind towards God. People do not know the real meaning of 'Prema' (Love). The love you have for other beings is only temporary. God is the only one that is eternal. Love of God is Bhakti. All other love may be termed as Anuraga, which results in bondage, while love of God leads to liberation.

One may raise a question whether it is possible for everyone to realise the goal through the love of God. One may not achieve this instantaneously, but can do so progressing step by step. By Bhajans and other forms of worship one may advance towards the goal of final emancipation. There is no meaning in saying that one is searching for God. It is God who is searching for a true devotee. This is as true today as it was in the past. God is neglected by people when He is easily attained. What is easily obtained at home is not relished so much as what you get outside, though it is not wholesome. In olden days, people going on pilgrimage to Tirupati used to climb the hills step by step chanting the name "Govinda, Govinda" as they climbed each step. Thus the pilgrimage was performed with sincere devotion and Namasmarana. But, these days people go by buses and cars, gossiping all the while, and indulging in unholy pursuits. The tonsure ceremony in which one shaves his head completely and offers his hair to the Lord of Tirupati signifies your giving up your Tamo-Guna (ignorance and lethargy) which is symbolised by the hair on the head. The hair is black. Giving up the hair indicates giving up Tamo Guna. You have to assimilate Satwa Guna.

their inner significance, but give up not only their hair but also waste a lot of money and return home without being any the wiser for the trip.

You may install idols and worship them. But do not forget the inner significance of all worship. All external activities are necessary only to help you to get into the spirit of non-duality and experience unity in diversity. Love and sacrifice are very important. Where there is pure, unsullied, selfless, sacred and sublime love there is no fear at all. Giving and not getting is the underlying principle of Spiritual Sadhana. Your heart is full of love, but you are using it only for selfish purposes and diverting it towards God. God is in the heart and not in the head. The heart is (premamayam) full of love. On these festival days, you should remember that God is one, and all religions uphold the same principle of "One God, who is omnipresent." You should not have contempt for any religion, as each is a pathway to God. Fostering love towards your fellow beings, receive the noble love of the Divine. This is the goal of life.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with singing two Bhajan songs: "*Prema Muditha*" and "*Bhajana Binaa*".

**(From Bhagavan's Discourse in the Poornachandra Auditorium on 9-9-1 994)**

*Bhagavan at Muddenahalli, 18-09-94*

## **Prema Swarupa at "Prema Deep"**

A hearty welcome from the students of the Brindavan Campus and the students and staff of the Muddenahalli School awaited Bhagavan as He drove into the beautifully decorated Campus at Muddenahalli from Prasanthi Nilayam.

Swami left Prasanthi Nilayam at 8.30 a.m. and reached "Sai Gram" at 11.00 a.m. He was received by a group of Vedic chanters, while a large gathering of students and devotees had lined up the entire route from the entrance to the School up to the gates of the new magnificent Mandir, which had been superbly decorated for the occasion. The students from Brindavan, who had arrived early in the morning, went round after breakfast to have a view of all the buildings and the new Mandir at Muddenahalli.

Bhagavan and the Brindavan students had their lunch in the Community Hall, after which Bhagavan addressed the students and others in the main prayer hall of the new Mandir. Bhagavan, in a brief discourse, dwelt on the meaning of true Bhakti and explained how Bhakti (devotion) led the devotee through Anurakti (boundless yearning for God) and Virakti (disinterestedness in worldly things) to Mukti (liberation or merger in the Divine).

ornament for the sky, the lotus for the pond and waves for the ocean, but the absence of waves was the ornament for the mind. True devotion differs from the ocean in that it can exist only in a mind without waves.

Bhagavan had been requested to give a name for the new Mandir, and He chose the name "Prema Deep" in preference to many others that had been suggested. He said that the new Mandir was a striking expression of the love which all those who were responsible for its construction have for Bhagavan.

Bhagavan later addressed separately the Staff of the Muddenahalli School and gave suggestions as to how the proposed Centre for training life-long dedicated Sevaks should be started there.

Bhagavan and the students left Brindavan at 3 P.M. and reached "Trayee Brindavan" at 4.30 P.M.

*Love is God; God is Love  
Live in Love; This is the way to God*  
—Baba

#### ***BHAGAVAN IN PRASANTHI NILAYAM***

### **Ecstatic Welcome to Swami**

Banners galore .....

*Pranams to our Beloved Lord!  
Your home is where our heart is!  
Welcome Home!  
Our Sai! Our Heaven!  
Happiness at Last!  
We prayerfully waited!  
Happy days are here again!*

A rapturous welcome was accorded to Bhagavan by all the students and staff of the Primary and Secondary schools and the Institute and all the devotees in Prasanthi Nilayam, who had been yearning -and praying for Bhagavan's return after a lapse of nearly six months. Bhagavan's arrival was welcomed by one and all like a cool shower by parched fields thirsting for rain.

Bhagavan was equally happy to see the loving faces of so many children, who had sent to Brindavan a stream of letters pleading for His return to their midst soon. One of these letters was a 40 feet long scroll, signed by hundreds of students, attached to a model of Swami's chair in the

this long scroll and observed how much the letter testified to the love and adoration which the children in the Primary school have towards Bhagavan.

Bhagavan started from Brindavan at 10.40 a.m. on the 8th, accompanied by a motorcade of over fifty vehicles packed with overseas devotees. From the moment Bhagavan reached Kodur, at the turning towards Prasanthi Nilayam from the National Highway, Bhagavan was greeted by large crowds of villagers who had been pining for His return for months. At a number of places, arches and banners had been put up to welcome Bhagavan.

From the moment it was known that Bhagavan would be coming to Prasanthi Nilayam, the students got busy planning arches and banners to welcome Bhagavan, besides placards attached to wayside posts expressing their love for Bhagavan. The first of these arches was erected at the point at Manallakunta where the road from Kodur turns towards Puttaparthi. The banner across this arch carried the greeting: "**Pranaams to our beloved Lord.**" A second banner, put up at the turning taken by the bypass road to Yenumalapalli, carried the message: "**Your home is where our hearts are**".

From there, the whole of the Vidyagiri road up to the Nilayam gate was lavishly decorated with flags and festoons. In addition to various banners and arches, poles were erected on both sides of the road to carry colourful festoons made up of flowers, mango leaves and palm leaves. The Vidyagiri arch near Gokulam blazoned a banner with the greeting: "**Welcome Home.**" The boys had erected an arch near the Hostel with the sign: "**Our Sai ! Our Heaven**". The banner in front of the school read: "Happiness at last!"

Two ceremonial pillars were erected near the Institute gate and the Primary School gate in the shape of a "Jyoti Kalasam" with the inscription "**We prayerfully waited**", written in Telugu and English on top of each of them. The last banner, spread over the arch marking the end of Vidyagiri, proclaimed: "**Happy days are here again!**"

Bhagavan was given a hearty reception near the Kothacheruvu turning by some of the teachers. From there more than ten out-riders on scooters escorted Bhagavan's convoy up to the Mandir. Throughout these nine kilometers, people from local villages gathered on both sides of the road with various musical instruments to welcome Bhagavan.

At the Mandir Gopuram, Bhagavan was greeted by a group of Vedic chanters, while two dance groups (Bhangra and Stick dancers) danced in front as Swami proceeded towards the Mandir. When Swami got down from His car, all the boys assembled in the western wing of the new lofty Mandap, sang a welcome song. It described how they had waited prayerfully throughout these months of separation from the Lord and how the whole of Prasanthi Nilayam had blossomed again with Bhagavan's arrival.

Bhagavan conveyed His benediction to the thousands of students and devotees who had gathered in the new mandap even before Swamis arrival. The children of the Primary school

AVATAR VANI

## Let Truth Prevail

*God creates the entire Universe from Truth.  
Finally everything merges in Truth.  
This pure and unsullied Truth  
Alone pervades everywhere. (Poem)*

### *Embodiments of love!*

Without Truth, the world cannot exist. The entire world rests on Truth. Everyone has to seek this Truth. It is because man has forgotten this Truth that there is no peace and security in the world.

Truth is the eternal witness and it cannot be hidden by any one nor can it be altered. It is independent and cannot be affected by time and space. In ancient times, the people flourished as they followed Truth unflinchingly. They were prepared to sacrifice everything for the sake of Truth. Harishchandra sacrificed everything, his kingdom and family too, to uphold Truth. He is still revered as Sathya Harishchandra.

God and Truth are not distinct. God is the very form of Truth. It is the duty of humans to keep Truth as the ideal and adhere to it at any cost. Truth is the abode of God. It is the basis of all knowledge and wisdom.

The Vedas are based on Truth. All real enjoyment of happiness, wealth and comforts is based on Truth. But, for the sake of transient worldly pleasures, sacred Divine Truth is forgotten. The ancients used to shun untruth as a poisonous snake. In the modern age, people are drawn to falsehood and not Truth. They make no effort to realise that they are themselves embodiments of Truth.

Just as the eyes, ears and other limbs are parts of the body, every individual is a part of society. Society is a limb of humanity. Humanity is a limb of Nature and Nature is a limb of God. Man has to realise the integral relationship between himself and God.

Sin is not something outside man. Man's actions determine whether they are good or bad. They are based on thoughts arising in the mind. Through sublime thoughts one can reach the highest state of Sakshatkara (direct perception of God). For attaining this state of Realisation, one need not undertake penance in a forest. It has to be realised within oneself.

mind is infested with bad thoughts, one indulges in bad deeds. When one follows Truth, he can become Divine. One cannot visualise Truth or God until he achieves harmony in thought, word and deed.

### **Embodiments of the Divine Atma**

As long as you disregard Truth, you cannot have even a trace of Bliss. Time is fleeting. You have to start enquiring into the purpose of this human life now itself. It is not for leading an animal existence. The goal of human life is progress from the human to the Divine.

Today while Science is making rapid strides morally man is going down. Selfishness and self-interest dominate every one of man's activities. It is only by sacrifice that man can manifest his humanness and rise to divine heights.

The unlimited proliferation of desires is the root cause of man's misery and ruination. If you follow two main principles, you can reach the goal of human life: "Sarva jiva namaskaram Kesavam Prathigachathi". The reverence shown to all beings reaches God. "Sarva jiva thiraskaaram Kesavam Prathigachathi" Similarly, insult to any beings amounts to insult to God. If you hate anyone, it means you are hating God. You must understand the Omnipresence of the Lord.

In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna declares that sacrificing the fruits of your actions is the best and easiest way of realising God. There is no sacrifice (Tyaga) these days. People are interested only in Bhoga (worldly pleasures) which leads to Roga (disease).

Sacrifice is the means of attaining liberation. You should, therefore, serve society, help the poor and needy in distress, and thus manifest the human quality of compassion. By doing seva to people, you are doing seva to God. Even Adi Sankara, who was supreme exponent of Jnana Marga (the path of knowledge), in his later days came to realise that the path of devotion (Bhakti "Marga) is the best path for mankind to realise God.

Instead of talking about a hundred precepts, you should practise at least one of them. Persons who are drawing high salaries are agitating for more and more, but they should undertake some self-examination as to whether they are doing enough work to justify the salary they draw. You must understand that it is the people's money that you are enjoying. You should have your conscience as your witness and judge in deciding whether you are doing right or wrong. God is watching all your actions. You must do things to satisfy God from whom you have come and to whom you have to return.

People tend to make even the worship of God as a business proposition now-a-days. Even spirituality is commercialised. Seek to be a good man. You can then become a Godman. Never become a bad man. This can be achieved only by chanting the name of God constantly.

Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the Bhajan: "*Bhajan bina sukha santhi nahi*".

## **Ganesha Chaturthi and Onam Celebrations**

Although Bhagavan's brief ten-day visit to Prasanthi Nilayam, after six months absence was somewhat disappointing to everyone, including the large community of loving students so very dear to the Lord, Bhagavan, out of the abundance of His love, compensated them all by the blissful celebration of two festivals in ten days Ganesha Chaturthi and Onam.

In eager anticipation of Bhagavan's participation in the Ganesha Chaturthi celebration on September 9th, the students and devotees got busy decorating the Mandir premises, which had acquired an imposing appearance by the erection of the lofty mandap with its two spacious wings on the east and west, covering the open ground in front of the mandir. It was a thrilling spectacle to see the children and the women devotees filling the vast space on the western side, now covered by granite slabs. The floor on the eastern wing is still to be fully covered with slabs, but even so several hundreds of students and devotees occupied it, waiting eagerly for Bhagavan's darshan on the auspicious morning of Ganesha's Janmadinam.

The entire Mandir area was redolent of beauty and holiness, with multi-coloured flags and festoons all over and ornamental draperies at several places. A new bronze idol of Ganesha had been installed in the small arch of the lower verandah of the Mandir. The Vinayaka idol, which used to face the Gopuram, has been shifted from there and the railings have been removed from the circular ground which was in the middle of the Mandir compound.

The day's programme began with Nadaswaram music early in the morning at the Mandir.

Precisely at 7 a.m. Bhagavan emerged from His Sanctum and was greeted with cheers by the vast gathering. After giving darshan to the devotees, Bhagavan came to the Mandir, where the students had arranged for a programme of devotional music, to the accompaniment of the Institute orchestra. The students recited the Ganesha Panchakam and sang some songs in praise of Ganesha and Bhagavan Baba.

Bhagavan broke a coconut in front of the Ganesha idol and blessed the prasadam (sweets) to be distributed to the gathering.

In the evening, there was an overflow gathering of students, staff and devotees in the Poornachandra Auditorium, eager to receive Bhagavan's Ganesha Chaturthi message. The stage had been specially decorated for the occasion, with two large-sized figures of Ganesha on either side of the stage.

a lecturer, Dr. Sainath, and an MBA student, Amar Singh, would address the gathering before Bhagavan delivered His discourse. Both the speakers hailed Bhagavan's return to the Prasanthi Nilayam as a blissful home-coming and expatiated on what Bhagavan meant for them.

Bhagavan then delivered His discourse (published separately).

The day's function ended with Arati to Bhagavan.

### **Onam celebrations**

To thousands of Keralites, who prayerfully look forward to the celebration of their most cherished festival of Onam in the presence of Bhagavan Baba at Prasanthi Nilayam, this years celebration was of unique significance. This was the first time it was being celebrated in the new enlarged Mandap, which seemed as if it had been specially constructed for the Onam celebration. Bus-loads of Keralites, men, women and children, started pouring into Prasanthi Nilayam from the 14th itself.

There were some doubts in July whether the celebrations could be held in Prasanthi Nilayam because of the construction work going on at the Mandir. Early in August Bhagavan decided to have the celebrations in the Prasanthi Nilayam irrespective of the work going on there, in response to the earnest appeals of the students and devotees in Puttaparthi and the, devotees in Kerala.

A large contingent of Seva Dal members had come from Kerala and by the morning of the 15th the Mandir premises had been redecorated with festoons and flags and special floral banners and posts carrying bunches of coconuts. The Kerala style was conspicuous in the decorations, which included a widely dispersed array of colourful umbrellas.

On 15th evening, there was a short cultural programme in the Poornachandra Auditorium. It included presentation of a dance drama on the life of Dhruva, followed by a series of dance sequences by different groups of Bal Vikas children from the Sathya Sai Gurukulam at Srisailam and a few other schools in Kerala. Bhagavan watched the programme from the aisle in the Auditorium.

On the morning of the 16th, Onam day, the celebrations began with Nadaswaram music and the playing of Panchavadyam (five different musical instruments) by players from Kerala.

Bhagavan arrived at the Mandir at 7:10 and lighted the lamp which was embellished with flowers.

Different groups of Bal Vikas students from the various districts of Kerala presented a variety of folk dances in front of Bhagavan, watched by the large gathering of devotees from Kerala and other areas.



pens to all children from Kerala. With the distribution of prasadam and Arathi to Bhagavan, the morning programme ended at 8:30 am.

The afternoon programme in the Poornachandra Auditorium began with invocation by a group of Kerala students. Sri Natarajan, President of the Kerala State Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, welcoming Bhagavan and all others present, expressed the deep gratitude of Keralites to Bhagavan for permitting them to celebrate Onam in Swami's presence for the 26th year in succession.

Mr. Justice Balakrishna Eradi, who was the President of the State Organisation when Onam was first celebrated in Prasanthi Nilayam in 1968, recalled with gratitude what Bhagavan's Grace meant for him and described the significance of Onam for the people of Kerala. Two Bal Vikas students spoke In English on how the Bal Vikas movement had transformed them. One young primary school student dressed in dhoti and angavastram like a Bhagavatar, gave a Harikatha performance in Malayalam on how Arjuna's conceit was deflated.

Prof. Mukundan, editor of Malayalam "Sanathana Sarathi" spoke on the significance of Swamis Message to the world today.

Bhagavan then delivered His Onam Message (published elsewhere).

After the discourse, there was a short cultural programme in which Bal Vikas students presented an invocation dance and scenes from the life of Thyagaraja based on some of his famous Kirtanas.

On the 17th morning, Bhagavan gave Padanamaskar and Vibhuti Prasadam to all the Kerala devotees during the morning darshan.

Bhagavan left for Muddenahalli, en route to Brindavan, on the 18th after morning darshan and bhajan in the Mandir. The huge gathering of students and devotees felt heavy at heart at the departure of Bhagavan, but at the same time they were aware of the reasons for Swami's return. The stupendous job of constructing the new Gopuram and the new domes on the Mandir had to be completed well before the Birthday Celebrations in November.

Bhagavan waved His hands to shower His benediction cwt all the devotees after Arathi was offered to Him.

Bhagavan and party spent: a couple of hours at Muddenahalli before leaving for Brindavan around 3 p.m. The students from the Brindavan campus had arrived in Muddenahalli early in the morning as instructed by Bhagavan before His departure from Brindavan. Bhagavan and the students from Brindavan had their lunch at Muddenahalli before leaving for Brindavan. Swami was back in "Trayee Brindavan" at 4.30 p.m.

## Onam: the Message of Sacrifice

*Trees yield fruits for the benefit of mankind without any selfish motive.*

*Rivers carry water for helping others.*

*Cows yield milk for the good of others without any trace of selfishness.*

*The human body is given for the purpose of helping others.*

*(Sanskrit poem)*

### *Embodiments of love!*

The entire cosmos is a stage for the play of the Divine. There should be no feeling of hatred among human beings because both in the individual and the society the Divine Consciousness is present. This Divine Consciousness which is termed as Chaitanya is not without purpose. The primary purpose of human birth is to manifest the Divinity within. When man is filled with ego, he indulges in wicked thoughts and actions, while he will do good deeds when he is *conscious of* the Divinity within. Human life is made up of virtue and vice, hatred and love. The root cause for all troubles is Raga and Dwesha (attachment and hatred). This has plunged humanity in misery since time immemorial.

Good and bad always co-exist, without pain one cannot have the enjoyment of pleasure. Without darkness one cannot feel the value of light. Man should learn to enjoy the dualities of good and bad, pain and pleasure, in moderation. Food consumed in excess causes indigestion. If it is inadequate it results in starvation. Man can even have ego in a limited measure. If he balances his feelings he can have peace and happiness.

Kasyapa and his two wives, Dithi and Adithi, were the parents of demons and demigods (Asuras and Devas) Indra, the king of Devas, went to war with the king of the Asuras, as it was common practice in those days for one king to invade the kingdom of another to acquire additional territory. Mahabali vanquished Indra in the war and proceeded to annex the territory of Indra and occupied his capital Amaravathi. Kasyapa had gone to the Himalayas to do penance. Lamenting over the defeat of her son, Indra, Adithi was in great grief. When she was wailing, Kasyapa came to her. Instantly, he was able to recognise the cause of her grief by divine insight, which he had acquired as a result of his penance. He consoled his wife Adithi saying that nothing happens in the world without God's will and people should go on doing their duties. He asked her to pray to Lord Narayana and taught her a Vrata (ritual) to be followed strictly, known as Payovrata. It has to be observed from the twelfth day of the bright half of Kartika (Suklapaksha Dwadasi). She observed the vrata as prescribed. A devotee's sincere prayer will never go to waste. Since she carried out the vrata with a pious heart, Narayana appeared before her and informed her that He would Himself take birth in her womb and help Indra. Adithi was very happy and true to the word of the Lord, she gave birth to a son of uncommon effulgence on the

as a child He demonstrated His Divine power by doing marvellous deeds.

Mahabali was performing an Ashwamedha Yagna (horse sacrifice). He had previously performed a hundred such yagnas. He declared that he would give anything that anyone sought from him during this yagna. Vamana came to the Yagasala. As He was approaching them, the sages assembled there perceived the extraordinarily effulgent form of the young lad. Mahabali went forth to receive the Brahmin boy with all traditional honours and gave him an eminent seat befitting the status of a holy person. Bali told him: "Master, it is my good fortune that you have chosen to honour me with your presence. Whatever you desire, I am here ready to fulfill the same". Vamana smiled and said: "You need not give me anything very great. It is enough if you give me that extent of land covered by three foot-steps of mine."

On hearing him, Bali's preceptor, Shukracharya who could have vision of the future, told Bali that the one who had come to seek a gift from Bali was not an ordinary Brahmin boy but Lord Narayana Himself who had assumed this form. He advised Bali not to promise the lad anything. But Bali was a king who would never go back on his word and told his Guru that he would never break his promise. He was determined to give Vamana whatever He wanted since breaking one's word was a sin and lie had to keep, his pledge. Shukracharya insisted that he should not fulfill the demand of Vamana as He had come to deprive Bali of all his possessions. He said Vamana was not really in need of anything as everything was in his hands.

Bali, however, determined to honour the word given to Vamana, begged pardon of his Guru for disregarding his advice. Earlier, while Bali was embarking on the war with Indra, he had prostrated at the feet of his preceptor, Shukracharya, and on his advice he performed the Viswajit Yagna from which he secured very powerful weapons. It was only because of Shukracharya's help that he was able to conquer Indra. On this occasion, Bali was not prepared to heed the advice of the same preceptor. Shukracharya cursed Bali, saying: "As you have not heeded 'r your Gurus words you will be reduced to ashes." Bali was firm and replied: "I am prepared to face any consequence, but will not go back on my word".

So saying, he told Vamana to measure the three feet of land as desired by him. All attempts of Shukracharya to dissuade Bali from offering the land desired by Vamana proved futile. Bali told his Guru: "Prang (life) and Mana (honour) are the two eyes of a person. Even if life goes, honour should be protected. Granting that the person that has come now is the Lord Himself, I should be the most fortunate one as the Lord, who gives everything to mankind, is seeking something from me".

Bali was an example, of supreme sacrifice. He sacrificed all his possessions and himself too to God. Bali said: "The hand of the Lord, which gives Abhaya (graceful benediction) to all, has been stretched to take something from me. The Lord's hand is below while my hand, is above. This must be the fruit of my penance in several births. I am prepared for anything." This was the spirit of Bali. Bali was also a very good ruler who was much concerned about the welfare of his subjects. He was the son of Virochana and grandson of Prahlada. They were both

people who have perished without belief in God.

Prahlada was happy and appreciated the good fortune of his grandson Bali when Narayana himself sought a gift from him. He blessed Bali that he had kept up the noble tradition and name of the family. It is only by sacrifice that one can attain immortality and not by any other means.

Shukracharya's anger was growing because of his selfish motive that he should continue to be the preceptor of the Asuras. He did not want Bali to give the gift sought by Vamana as he was sure that the last vestige of power of the Asuras would be destroyed by Vamana. Earlier when a fierce battle was raging between Indra and Bali, Indra used his Vajrayudha (thunderbolt) against Bali. The latter fainted. There was one Asura, Namuchi by name. The Vajrayudha could not be effective against him. An ethereal voice said, "Namuchi is very powerful. As he has Brahma's boon, nothing will affect him. Only a weapon that is neither wet nor dry will be effective". Indra looked at the ocean and recognised that the foam was neither wet nor dry. He applied the foam to his weapon and attacked Namuchi. Namuchi fell down.

Indra is hailed as the chief of the gods. In the Purushasookta, it is said that out of the face of the cosmic Purusha emerged Indra. Indra is one who is the Lord of the senses. In man, the mind is the master of the senses. No one can estimate the power of the mind. Brahmastra and Vajrayudha are not more powerful than Ekagratha or concentration which is mightier than any weapon. For this, sense control is essential. There is always a battle raging in the body between vice and virtue and only the one that has Ekagratha can come out victorious.

Bali is the symbol of sacrifice (Tyaga). He controlled everything by his spirit of sacrifice. The Gayatri Mantra begins with the utterance: "Bhur-Bhuvas-Swaha." These represent the three worlds which are in the body itself. "Bhu" represents Prakriti or Earth, which is the physical body. Mind is Bhuvarloka. Prajnana is Suvarloka. Body represents materialisation as it is made up of the five physical elements. The mind is 'Vibration' and 'Prajnana' is 'Radiation'. If you enquire into their inner significance, all the three are in your body itself. The battle between Bali and Indra represents the mind battling to control the senses. When the mind is controlled one attains Divinity. This is the spiritual state. Bali performed many sacrifices to attain this state. 'Bali means tax. You pay taxes to the Government for Electricity, water, drainage etc. What tax did Bali pay? He gave all his possessions, body, mind and soul, to the Lord. The Lord's first foot covered this world and the second foot covered the other world. How huge the Lord's feet should have been to cover the whole world? How can such a huge foot be kept on Bali's head for the third step of land? The inner significance of this action is that Lord entered Bali's body, mind and soul. Once the ego or body consciousness is surrendered, there is no bar to one's realisation. It is the body consciousness that stands in the way and makes you forget God. Vamana opened Bali's eyes to help him realise the Divine. The imprisoned man had to be freed. Bali offered his body, mind and soul to the Lord.

Kerala is a sacred land where Bali performed this action of supreme surrender to the Lord. He had good relationship with his people and they loved him in turn, and had faith in him. That

a boon from the Lord that he should visit Kerala every year, on this day of Shravana asterism in the month of Shravan. This day is celebrated as Onam by Keralites. They have been following this faithfully since ancient times. This day is considered most important for the people of Kerala. They prepare many dishes and eat together on this holy day.

We should appreciate the spirit of sacrifice of the devotees from Kerala who sacrifice the comforts of their homes and the company of their near and dear ones and make a pilgrimage to this place to celebrate this festival in the immediate presence and company of Swami. They do not mind the inconveniences and lack of comforts here. They reflect the spirit of sacrifice demonstrated by Mahabali even today. It is my blessing that you should enjoy this and should never give up your love of God. God's love is permanent while all other love among human beings is only transient and temporary.

Because this faith is imprinted strongly in the minds of Keralites you are making your trip to this place leaving your own native place with your unstinted devotion to Swami. It is my wish that other states should emulate your example. People may brand Kerala as dominated by communist doctrine but I am sure the people of Kerala are filled with pure devotion to God, whatever may be their political affiliations.

***I bless you all to cherish this pure love and devotion always.***

Bhagavan sang the two Bhajan songs - '*Bhajan Bina*' and '*Prema Muditha*', at the conclusion of His discourse. The entire gathering joined in the singing with great devotion.

**(From Bhagavan's Discourse in the Poornachandra Auditorium on 16-9-94)**

### **President's Call for Faith in God**

An unexpected but welcome benediction was conferred by Bhagavan on the thousands of devotees, who had gathered in the Sai Ramesh Hall on Sept. 4th for the usual akhanda bhajan on Sunday morning. Bhagavan came to the Santhi Vedika with Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, President of India, and gave a discourse after the President had addressed the gathering.

Prof. K. Anil Kumar introduced the President to the audience and extended a hearty welcome to him on behalf of all the devotees assembled. He requested the President to address the gathering.

The President, in his short speech, said that he came there to charge his spiritual battery because he looked upon Bhagavan as a source of great inspiration and he always carried Baba's message to the people in general. He said that the words of the Bhajan song which was being

Bhagavan that all religions are different pathways to the same goal of self-realisation and all names pertain to One God who is Omnipresent. The path preached and practised by Bhagavan is the path of love. It is 'ahamkar' (egoism) that stands in the way of God-realisation. He said: "All of us are experiencing the incarnation of the Divine in Baba, who is engaged in restoring Dharma, true to Krishna's declaration in the Bhagavad Gita."

The President spoke about the uniqueness of the Super-Speciality Hospital established by Bhagavan and said that one Member of Parliament was trying to set up a hospital in Haryana near Delhi on the same lines. He added that people come to Bhagavan in large numbers seeking mental peace and spiritual enlightenment. If one thinks of Bhagavan and does his duty, shedding his ego, Bhagavan will undoubtedly grant the results with His Grace. He exhorted everyone to carry the message of Bhagavan and put it into practice.

*"We are flowers of the same creepers. Our minds are the flowers that grow on the creeper of the heart. The flowers may be different but the creeper is the same. We are the children of the same race! We all belong to the race of humanity but not to the race of birds and beasts. Since we belong to the illustrious race of humanity, we must conduct ourselves in a sublime manner. We are the waves, born in the ocean of Satchitananda. Since we are born of the same race, we should radiate the oneness of humanity without harbouring hatred against any one."*

**—Baba**

## Turn Your Vision towards the Divine

*Wherever the mind wanders  
There you see the three worlds;  
Where the mind is absent  
There is only a void*

### *Embodiments of love!*

Wherever the mind moves, there the three worlds can be perceived as one. Wherever the mind is not present, there nothing seems to exist. From this, it is clear that the mind is at the root of all perception and is the cause as well as the witness of all that is perceived.

The term "Manishi" (man) is derived from the word mind. All the three worlds are contained in man. In this vast cosmos, among innumerable living beings the human being stands foremost. Although it has been proclaimed that in all living beings the Divine exists as the Indwelling Spirit, not all living beings can recognise this truth. Only a human being has the capacity to recognise it. This unique ability invests human birth with its rare quality, as proclaimed by the Vedas.

### **The Human and the Animal**

Moreover, in every living being, there are five sheaths—Annamaya (food), Pranamaya (Vital), Manomaya (the mental), Vijnanamaya (Awareness) and Anandamaya (Bliss). But while other creatures are not aware of the existence of the power to discriminate between the transient and the permanent, man alone can recognise the existence of this faculty. The second unique faculty with which man is endowed is Vijnana (the ability to acquire the highest knowledge). This knowledge is not limited to the physical, but embraces also spiritual knowledge. This faculty is radiant in man. Now, to the third faculty: Every living being including man is born with "Moha" (attachment). But man alone has the capacity to realise that he can attain liberation by getting rid of this "Moha".

Thus there is a significant difference between human beings and all other living creatures. But the veil of Maya (illusion) envelops man and makes him go astray. What is this Maya? It is the combined expression of the three gunas—Satwa, Rajas and Tamas (the pure, the emotional and the lethargic). The Vedas have declared that it is only when man overcomes the three gunas that he would be able to get rid of Maya (the illusion) which makes one see the unreal as real).

What is "Moha"? There are three kinds of acquisitions—wealth, wife and progeny—which serve to promote "Moha" (delusion). When attachment to these triple possessions is given up, "Moha" will go and liberation ("Mukti") will be easily secured.

### **Boundless desires**

in one effort, he seeks success in another, and so it goes on. But, what is the hall-mark of a true human being? Human life is bound up with gains and losses, ups and downs. Man has to face them. Incidentally he has to suffer blows of one sort or another. Only he is a true human being who overcomes these challenges with fortitude.

What is the reason for the vicissitudes in a man's life? The cause is to be found in man's desires. Doubtless, desires are inescapable. One man, for instance, seeks to achieve some ideals.

Another may seek to do well in his studies and secure a good job. Yet another may desire to acquire a good name and bring up a good family. There is nothing wrong in such desires. But what we are witnessing in the Kali Age is the limitless growth of desires. As a consequence, man falls into bad ways. There should be limits to every desire. There should be a limit even to the pursuit of power and position. It has been well said: "There can be nothing great without restraints" ("Nassreyo niyamam vinaa"). Without such restraint man is bound to go astray.

### **Durga, Lakshmi, Saraswati**

The Vedas declare that wherever the mind wanders, there the three worlds will be perceived. What are these three worlds? All are familiar with the pronouncements in the Gita and in the Gayatri Mantra. The three worlds are: Bhu, Bhuvah, Suvah (the Bhuloka, Bhuvarka and Swarga). These three are present in man: Adibhoutic, Adidaivic and Aadhyatma. These were worshipped as three Goddesses by our ancients: Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati

Every form is that of Durga—the deity that is associated with Energy (Shakti). There is infinite power within man, power that is beyond comprehension and which is Divine. But he makes no effort to recognise it. If man did not have this power, how could he have gone to the moon? What is the power that makes the earth revolve round itself? It is not any machine or mantra. The power is within the earth itself. This energy, present in man and in other objects, has been characterised as cosmic energy. What is this cosmic power? The sun derives its energy and effulgence from this cosmic source. It is the same cosmic source that accounts for the power of the human mind and the marvellous power of the eye to see the most distant stars.

### **Cosmic energy in man**

With this power of sight; man is able to see the entire creation. There is no greater power than this. Thus, man is endowed with all powers. But this boundless power is being recognised and exercised by each one according to the level of his development. The same electrical energy is used for a variety of purposes: for heating, lighting, operating a fan, etc. Likewise, the divine cosmic energy in human beings is used by different persons for varied purposes. This energy is latent in all beings. Because of his ability to manifest this divine, boundless Cosmic energy, man is described as a manifestation of the Divine ("Vyakti"). Humanness consists in the manifestation of what is hidden and invisible in man.

**"Bhu", "bhuvah", "suvah"**



permeates the physical world ("Prakriti") of matter. This is known as "Bhu": There is another power which animates this material substance. This is the power of vibration. It is termed "Prana Shakti", the Life Force. It is this Life Force which activates every part of the human body. This is termed "Bhuvah". Lakshmi symbolises this power. Lakshmi is the embodiment of that power which enables a human being to see, to hear and to do many things. Lakshmi represents the power to see what is good, to hear what is good, to speak sweet words, to entertain good thoughts and to do good deeds. The Lakshmi Principle accounts for all the good, happy, auspicious happenings in the world.

The third form of energy is symbolised by Saraswati. She is regarded as the Goddess of Speech ("Vaak-devata"). Lakshmi is "Pranaswaroopini"—the embodiment of the Life Force. Durga is "Shakti-Swaroopini", the embodiment of physical energy. These three in their unified expression represent the Atmic principle.

### **"Sankranti", "Sivaratri", "Navaratri"**

Today is an auspicious festival day for Bharatiyas. There are three sacred 'festival nights' for Bharatiyas: Sankranti, Sivaratri and Navaratri. Each of these has its special significance. "Sankranti" enables man to turn his vision towards the sublime. It is the day when the apparent northward motion of the sun begins (Uttarayana Kala). The day is considered auspicious for man to embark on his journey towards the goal of a purposeful, sacred and blissful life. The North is described as "Himachala". From ancient times, the Himalayas were regarded as the abode of the Divine (Easwara). "Himachala" symbolises a heart that is pure and cool as ice (Hima) and steady as a mountain ("Achala"). The message of Sankranti is that people should direct their vision towards "Himachal" in this symbolic sense. It does not mean looking at the north with the physical eyes. It calls for enquiring into the truth of the Spirit with the inward eye of wisdom (Jnanadrishti). Sankranti signifies this internal vision.

The next is Sivaratri. Darkness prevails at night. But during Sivaratri, the night is not dark but full of light. That light is experienced by contemplating on the glorious form of Siva, meditating on the Divine, reminding oneself of unity with the Divine and attaining a state of pure holiness.

Then comes Navaratri. This festival is intended to make man realise his true worth as the most precious object in creation. All things in the world derive their value from the labour and skill of man.

### **"Raga" and "dwesha"**

Navaratri means "nine nights". What does the nine signify? There are nine "Grahas" (planets according to Astrology). The human body has nine openings. If a deep enquiry is made, it will be found that mankind is dependent on the planets (grahas). Although astrologers speak about nine planets, in reality, there are only two "planets" that matter. They are "Raga" (attachment) and "Dwesha" (hatred).

their hunger. Man, however, does not act this way. He has limitless desires: He wishes to accumulate riches to last for generations *so* that he may live in comfort.

In Bharat, there is no need for anyone to starve. There is enough for all. But some hoard food in excess. This mal-distribution accounts for food shortage. The accumulation by the few is responsible for scarcity for the many. Hence, equitable sharing and distribution are essential. This must be brought about by social action inspired by a sense of justice.

Students should get rid of the idea that education is for earning a living. They must realise that they owe a duty to their Motherland and the world.

**"Students should realise that true education should inculcate in them the following qualities: Good thoughts, good speech, good actions, respect for truth, discipline, devotion and dedication to duty." (Poem)**

Students today are lacking in discipline. They must cleanse their minds of impure thoughts. They must pledge themselves to serve the nation.

In the worship of the deities during Navaratri, every day, one of them should be worshipped, not externally but with one's heart and soul. Bodily actions are ephemeral. The body derives its value from the spirit within. Hence it should be regarded as a sacred temple.

### **The vision and the world**

Today, students develop many undesirable qualities like pride, envy and hatred even before they join college. With such polluted minds they view the world in dark colours. This may be illustrated by an episode from the Mahabharata.

One day, Krishna summoned Duryodhana and Dharmaja and asked them to make a study of the people in the kingdom. He asked Duryodhana to find out how many good people existed in the country. He asked Dharmaja to find out how many bad people were there in the kingdom. Duryodhana went round and reported that he could find no good man anywhere. If there was any good man, that was himself, he -said. Dharmaja reported to Krishna that he could find no bad man anywhere—in their Dharmic, kingdom. He could find some badness only in, himself.

The inner significance of this episode is that one sees only a reflection of one's self in the outer world. It is the vision that accounts for the difference, just as the colour of the glass one wears alters the colour of the world one sees through it. Change your outlook and the world will appear differently. Hence everyone should fill his mind with good thoughts.

During the Navaratri festival, for the purpose of eradicating one's demonic tendencies, the deities were worshipped with Kumkumam (sacred red powder). The red powder is a symbol of blood. The meaning of this worship is offering one's blood to the Lord and receiving in return the gift of peace from the Lord.

### **Body, mind and atma**

There are four kinds of tendencies in man: the animal, the demonic, the human and the Divine. Of the three constituents of man—the body, the mind and the Atma—when man ignores the mind and the Atma and identifies himself with the body, he manifests only his animal qualities. When the body and the Atma are forgotten and only the mind alone is predominant, one becomes demonic. When the body and the mind are forgotten and one is immersed in the Atmic consciousness, one becomes Divine.

If, in this manner, one explores the potentialities in man, it will be found that they include everything. Man, therefore, has to know himself. There he will find everything.

Arjuna saw the Cosmic Form of the Lord (as described in the Gita). All the worlds were seen in that cosmic form of Krishna. That Lord resides in every human being. He is nearer than one's closest kith and kin and is dearer than anyone else. He is the sole saviour and refuge of man.

Therefore, the Navaratri festival is observed, by contemplating on God for ten days, cleansing one's self of all impurities, to experience the Divinity within. The penultimate day of the festival is dedicated to what is termed "Ayudha Puja" (Worship of weapons). The weapons to be worshipped are the divine powers in man.

When the Divine is worshipped in this way, one is bound to progress spiritually. On the contrary, the usual practice now is to treat the Divine and the devotee as separate from each other. This is wrong. The Divine is omnipresent and is in everyone and in every object. This truth has to be realised from the message conveyed by the process of inhaling and exhaling that goes on in everyone 21,600 times in a day. Each act of respiration proclaims the message "So-Ham" ("I am He"). With every breath, the message is proclaimed: "I am God".

Realising this oneness, all actions should be done as an act of dedication to the Divine. What bliss can be experienced in such a state of mind!

It is essential to celebrate festivals in this sacred spirit. It is not enough to do this for only ten days during the Navaratri festival. It should become the rule all through one's life, even as one draws one's life—breath till the end.

Students today strive to achieve wealth, strength and friendship. But in addition to these three, they should also strive to develop divine qualities. Only then, they can lead ideal lives.

Students! Embodiments of Love! Bharat has been from ancient times teaching many esoteric truths to the world out of its abundant spiritual wealth. You must pray for the welfare of all the worlds and not only for your own personal good. I expect all of you to pray for the happiness of all, with your thoughts centred on God.

Leela on "The Rama Katha" after His discourse).

**From Bhagavan's discourse on Vijayadashami day, October 14, 1994, in Sai Ramesh Hall, Brindavan**

*Avatar Vani*

### **Divine Potencies in Man**

*Oh man! If the Divine Lord is not  
visible to you,  
Just as the stars cannot  
be seen in daylight,  
Because you are blinded by ignorance,  
Do not deny His existence.*

*Embodiments of divine love!*

From the most ancient times, men have been engaged in the search for God. The questions, "Who is God?" and "What is the means to realise God", are not of today. They have been there from the earliest times and have agitated mankind ceaselessly. A few yogis, who comprehended the nature of the Divine and who felt that the purpose of human existence is to seek the Divine, undertook various spiritual exercises to discover how to achieve this objective.

The purpose of human life is to realise the Divine. It is, in this context, that human birth becomes the rarest among all living beings. The ancient sages, recognising this truth, pursued different kinds of penances to experience the Divine. Some of them, feeling that the task was beyond their powers, gave up the quest in the middle. Some others, recognising that this was the sole purpose, of human life, persevered in their efforts with determination. When man sets his heart upon achieving anything, there is nothing impossible for him. But, immersed in worldly pleasures, man becomes a prey to weakness and forgets his Divine nature. Few care to enquire into the real value of these mundane pleasures or their ephemeral nature.

What is the difference between man and birds and beasts? Can eating, drinking, sleeping and ultimately dying, be the be-all land end-all of human life? All these are common to animals and human beings. What, then, is the difference? Although man is endowed with intelligence, discrimination and wisdom, without endeavouring to know the truth, man regards physical phenomena as the only reality, the Divine as remote from him, and forgets the main goal of life.

### **Experience of the seers**

The ancient sages, however, regarded realisation of the Divine as their main goal and practised various austerities. There after, they went out into the world and proclaimed: "Oh man! We have experienced the effulgent, all-pervading Supreme Divine". ("Vedham etham Purusham

darkness, beyond the mind and the senses, in our hearts".

Man is a combination of the body, the mind and the Spirit (Atma). He is thus the embodiment of these three. But, forgetting the mind and the Atma, when man identifies himself solely with the body, he reduces himself to an animal. When he forgets the Atma and the body and identifies himself with the mind alone, he becomes a demon (Danava). When one forgets the body and the mind and adheres only to the Atma, he gets divinised.

### **Body, mind and spirit**

The body is the instrument of action. The mind is the instrument of cognition. The Atma is steady and unwavering. Corresponding to these three are Karma (action), Upasana (ritual worship) and Bhakti (devotion). What is the difference between Bhakti and Upasana? In both of them, Prema (love of God) is inherent. Bhakti and Prema are synonymous. Contemplating on God, forgetting the world, living in a state of bliss (Ananda) is Prapati (total surrender to God).

### **Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati**

Bharatiyas have been celebrating the Navaratri festival from ancient times as a mode of worship of Devi (the Divine as Mother). They worship Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati during these nine days. Who are these three? They are three forms which have fascinated (bhraminchina) man. Their esoteric significance is represented by three potencies (shaktis). They are: Karma, Upasana and Jnana. These potencies have been given other names.

The concept of total surrender (Prapati) is related to Self-Realisation (Oneness with the Divine). God, in fact, dwells in every human being as the Atma. The body is the sacred abode of the Atma. Hence the scriptures declare: The body is the temple of God in which the individual Spirit dwells as the Ancient One. Just as the diamond is found in clay and not in a rock, the Spirit (as consciousness) resides in the earthly body. The body is of the earth, earthy. The Atma is consciousness. Humanness is the coming together of the mundane and the spiritual Consciousness. It is a combination of good and evil. It is a mixture of the transient and the eternal. Hence, for what is auspicious (shubha) or inauspicious (ashubha), for truth (Sathya) or falsehood (Asathya), for the perishable (Kshaya) and the imperishable (Akshaya), the prefix "a" accounts for the difference. For instance, untruth (Asathya) is that which is not true (Sathya). The transient (Anitya) is that which is not permanent (Nitya). By understanding these distinctions, men have sought to realise the Divine.

### **Misuse of the body**

The human body is precious. Man today is not realising what he owes to his body. The body that is composed of the five elements, which has been given to man to understand his true nature, to recognise the truth about his immortal Spirit, and to experience the eternal within him, is being used for the enjoyment of physical pleasures. The body surely has not been given for this purpose. The body is a shrine (Kshetra). The Indweller is the knower (Kshetrajna). The relationship is that of body (sarira) and the indweller (sariri). Instead of recognising this integral relationship, man is concerned with only the body and seeks to realise the Divine. How is this

his heart.

### **The Indwelling God**

There is no need to search for the Divine elsewhere. There is no need to go to a forest and lead an austere life to experience the Divine Who is within each one. When man turns his vision inward he can experience eternal Bliss. The source of Bliss, the Spirit, is within himself. God is nearer to everyone than one's parents, spouse or children. Kith and kin are outside one, but God is within the body. Forgetting the God Who is nearest and closest to them, people are trying to seek for an invisible God elsewhere. "God appears in human form" ("Daivam manusharupena"). It is sheer human fancy to imagine that God is effulgent light or that he has four arms with conch and discus, and dwells in some remote place. A man who is attached to the body can never experience a formless, incorporeal God. Only when he gets rid of the body consciousness can he recognise the transcendental Divine. Hence, as long as one has attachment to the body, one must adore God in a physical form.

It is a waste of time to try to secure in one way or other a direct vision of God. God is manifesting Himself in the heart of everyone. The One Supreme Spirit is the indwelling Spirit in all beings ("Ekatma Sarvabhutha-Antaratma"). The Absolute Reality (Sat) is One only, though the wise call it by many names. We have to endeavour to experience that Divine.

### **The three potencies**

The significance of Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati has to be rightly understood. The three represent three kinds of potencies in man. Iccha Shakti, Will power, Kriya Shakti, the power of action, and Jnana Shakti, the power of discrimination. Saraswati is manifest in man as the power of speech ("Vaak"). Durga is present in the form of dynamism (the power of action). Lakshmi is manifest in the form of Will power. The body indicates "Kriya Shakti". The mind is the repository of "Iccha Shakti". The Atma is "Jnana Shakti". "Kriya Shakti" comes from the body, which is material. The power that activates the body that is inert and makes it vibrant is "Iccha Shakti". The power that induces the vibrations of "Iccha Shakti" is "Jnana Shakti", which causes radiation (of energy). These three potencies are represented by the mantra: "Om Bhur-Buvas-Suvah". "Bhu" represents Bhuloka (the earth). "Bhuvah" represents the Life force (also means Conscience in man) "Suvaha" represents the power of radiation. All the three are present in man. Thus, Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati dwell in the human heart.

### **Satwa, rajas, tamas**

Men are prone to exhibit rajasic qualities like anger and hatred. They are the menacing manifestations of Durga. The extolling of the Divine in song and poetry and the pleasing vibrations produced by them indicate the power of Saraswati. The pure qualities that arise in man such as compassion, love, forbearance and sympathy are derived from Lakshmi.

When people worship Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati externally in pictures or icons, they are giving physical forms to the subtle potencies that are within them. The unfortunate predicament of man today is that he is not recognising the powers within him and developing

between the material and the subtle has to be understood.

The remedy for man's ills is contained within himself. But man seeks remedies from outside. Here is an illustration of what happens in the world. A hotel and a drug store are adjacent to each other. When a hotel server gets a headache, he goes to the neighbouring drug shop for a pill to cure his headache. When the drug store-keeper gets a headache, he goes to the hotel for a cup of coffee to cure him, instead of taking one of his own pills.

### **Turn vision inwards**

Likewise, people today tend to ignore the divinity within them, but hanker after many external objects. There is no need to go in search of the Divine. Men must develop firm faith in the Divinity within them. All that is needed is to turn the vision inwards to experience the Divine within.

Men engage themselves in many outward spiritual practices (Sadhana). These must be internalised. All scholarship is of no avail if there is no realisation in the heart. The scholar may expound the texts, but lacks the internal experience. One who has mastered the Vedas may be able to explain the words, but cannot recognise the Veda Purusha, the Supreme Person hailed by the Vedas.

When a person goes to a temple, he closes his eyes in front of the idol, because what he seeks is an internal vision of God and not a sight of the external form of the idol. God is Omnipresent as proclaimed in the Gita. God is One, though names and forms may differ.

All education today is related to the physical world. It will not serve to reveal the Divine. It was this which impelled Sankaracharya to teach a pundit who was learning by rote Panini's Grammar that at the moment of death only the Lord's name (Govinda) will save him and not the rules of Grammar. (Here Bhagavan recited some stanzas from Sankara's "Bhaja Govindam".)

### **Practice and precept**

Though this teaching has been propagated for centuries, very few practise it. Many read the Ramayana as a daily ritual. But how many carry out the commands of their fathers? How many practise the virtue of fraternal affection and love proclaimed in the Ramayana? Is there anyone standing for the gospel of Dharma (Duty) as upheld by Sri Rama? Of what use is it endlessly to listen to discourses without putting anything into practice? The Gita is being read and expounded all the time. Is a single precept from it being put into practice? Not at all. The Gita shows the path to God realisation. But simply reciting the Gita is valueless. Follow the Gita and tread the path indicated by it. Only then you will reap the reward.

### **Love of God**

What is meant by practice? Direct your sacred love towards God. There is no need for any severe spiritual exercise. Love is God. Live in love. Get immersed in that love.

today is all pervading and has spread to the hearts of people. Purity has become scarce.

The love of God (Prema) is all-powerful. Prahlada demonstrated this all-conquering power of love for the Lord. He survived every kind of ordeal by his faith in Narayana.

#### *Embodiments of love!*

Though people live in the phenomenal world and carry on their activities, they should perform all their actions as an offering to please the Lord.

What is it you should do during these ten days of the Navaratri festival? Convert your "Iccha Shakti" (Will power) into a yearning for God. Convert "Kriya Shakti" into a force for doing divine actions. Convert your "Jnana Shakti" into the Divine Itself.

"Sathyam, Jnanam, Anantam Brahma", proclaim the scriptures. (The Divine is Truth, Wisdom and Infinite). These three are in man. You can experience the entire cosmos within your heart. The marvellous powers in man, the power of sight, etc are all derived from God.

Human birth has to be redeemed by contemplation on God. Man today is misusing his precious body. Instead of filling it with the nectar of love, he is filling it with worldly trash. Man should be the master of his senses, instead of being their slave.

Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the bhajan, "*Prema Muditha Manase Kaho Rama! Rama! Ram!*"

**From Bhagavan's discourse in the Sai Ramesh Hall, Brindavan, on 9-10-1994**

#### *A VOICE FROM THE PAST*

#### **Baba—the Divine Healer**

*Among the myriads of devotees coming to Bhagavan Baba, from all parts of the world and from varied walks of life, the most remarkable and significant from a mundane point of view are eminent doctors- and psycho-therapists who are familiar with the phenomena of birth, life and death and the workings of the human brain. When such men feel that there are beings who have powers beyond the reach of their sciences and who regard Bhagavan Baba as an incarnation of the Divine, with transcendental knowledge and power, the sceptics and the agnostics have to reexamine their ideas, More than a quarter of a century ago a leading psycho-therapist of Madras, Dr. Desiraj Dhairyam, "felt the healing touch of divinity:" He discovered from personal experience, like many others before and after him, the super-human powers of Baba and the avataric mission for which he had made his advent.*

#### **"The healing touch"**



I have no special talents to write on this profound aspect of Bhagavan Baba as the Divine Healer. My only qualification is that like millions of others; I have felt the healing touch of divinity. I have been a different person and I like to share my benefits, my experiences and my tentative explanations.

I first met Baba in 1960. I had come back after seven years in U.S.A. fully steeped in the rationalism of Columbia University, New York. Moreover, my field of psychotherapy, the scientific study and healing of the mind, had little respect for mysticism, for the contradictions of religion and the divinity of a supreme being.

I had gone to Baba at Puttaparthi at the request of my wife. We made the first journey on a bullock cart. We came as strangers to a strange place. We felt worse when an over-zealous volunteer of those days rudely upbraided us for coming in, wearing shoes.

Baba sent word, by Himself, without any message from us, asking us to wait. Soon after, a strange mortal came down to welcome us with his healing touch. He has continued to be a strange mortal, but has made us not strangers, but members of one family where he is the father and mother and where all the places he, has stayed have been as a home to us. His healing touch has permeated our lives in every aspect of our being, physically, psychologically, spiritually, from that day.

### **Illness and the mind**

Even in human terms, the word 'healer' is an evocative symbol. In olden days, in all civilizations, the Medicine man and the Spiritual healer were one and the same. It was mostly, with rare exceptions, so much Mumbo-Jumbo. From the so-called dark ages have evolved the Western and now the universal concept of the physician, the doctor the man who has understood the science of the body and who knows how to set it right when it goes wrong. But the most highly qualified physicians of to-day know the profound limitation of their science. They know that seventy to eighty percent of the cases that come to a General Practitioner are largely psychosomatic, neurotic illness or other psychogenic illnesses where the mind plays a major role in the illness. He knows that the faith of the patient in the doctor is of the utmost importance in all cases. He knows that faith in him as the doctor is a fundamental requisite for improvement and cure even in the 'purely' physical illnesses-that mind over matter has relevance in the cure. He knows that faith can be instilled only by Human Relations, by his sincere interest in the total 'person' of the patient and his welfare. Hence the 'good' doctor of today is still the 'healer' of yesterday in that he depends on this faith of the patient and on mobilising the psychological and spiritual resources of the patient in his own cure. Unfortunately, 'Human Relations' is now stressed as another subject not only in Medicine, but in Business Management and in other sciences and naught in the various schools of theology and religion. The milk of human kindness has dried up and there is a terrible drought, the worst type in the world today. Specialists in the

and the unhappy, as an art or a science, but not as an inner outpouring from the heart.

In this game of pretence, whole nations live lives of emptiness and hollowness. America has been called the land of conformity where people are 'other-directed' as David Reisman, the sociologist has said. They live to conform to others' expectations of wealth and happiness. We, in India, have lost our spiritual heritage to a large extent and are catching up with the West in their negative, unhappy and empty leadership in modern civilisation.

### **How Baba responds**

It is in this context Bhagavan "appears as the Divine Healer. Here, again I would like to advert to my personal experiences to a slight extent. Matters in my personal life were slowly moving to a life and death crisis in most respects of my life between the years 1964 and 1968. He manifested Himself to us as the Divine Healer. In those years, Swami came to our house many times. Our summer vacations were made possible to be spent in the vicinity of Swami. Bhagavan came home when we were in the joint-family house even though there was much animosity and ill-will towards Him in the same compound. He came because we needed Him. I would like to write about one 'of many examples to us of His help in our illnesses.

In the summer of 1966, Bhagavan was in Ooty. We drove up to Ooty. That night I had an attack of Angina with dyspnoea—(difficulty in breathing) sweating, pain etc. The doctor was called in. Next morning at Swami's residence, Bhagavan suddenly called upon me to drive Him in my Ambassador though He had two of His luxury cars with drivers at His disposal. I drove Bhagavan to Calicut. We started at 2 p.m. and reached at 5 p.m. We left Calicut at about 10 p.m. and in the pouring monsoon rain, I drove Bhagavan back to Ooty and arrived at three in the morning.

I felt fine. I had a good night's rest and went to Bhagavan in the morning. He asked me to take His temperature. It was 106° C. He reassured us and gave a discourse. Two hours later the temperature had come down. In the evening he left for a visit to Ootacamund. He had in a very direct manner given me health in my illness. It was not that I was a special devotee or much spiritually endowed or inclined. Each and every one of His devotees can testify to Bhagavan's personal intervention in their illnesses some way or other. This is one aspect of his Divine Healing.

In these years we went through a financial, legal, professional and moral crisis, through no fault of ours, which could easily have resulted in our ruin. Bhagavan in these years was personally interested, gave minute directions and advice, from moment to moment, and in the end miraculously intervened to get us through the crisis. This again is a personal experience which will evoke remembrance in the lives of the readers. Bhagavan's divine healing is manifold.

### **Baba's global mission**

Bhagavan has manifested Himself in the world to perpetuate and enlarge on Sri Shiridi Baba's work as the Divine Healer. The world is in far greater need of healing on many fronts

refinement of the tools of exploitation and destruction. The economic exploitation where millions are under-nourished and starving is the lesser of many evils. The deliberate exploitation of people's thinking, feeling and behaving, in other words, extensive 'brain washing' of the world's millions by a few rich in the capitalist countries, by a few 'theoreticians' and 'ideologists' in the socialistic and communist countries, have made people forget values, morals, spirituality and God Bhagavan sees physical illness in the context of Karma, rebirth and ultimate spiritual salvation. I know of particular lady who went to Him as a child for a physical ailment. Bhagavan looked at her and said it is good that she had it. Now twenty-five years later she sees the value of Swami's advice. Certain persons He cures of their physical illness. Certain others He does not. The physical cure is, it seems to me, always the minor aspect of His cure. He touches the heart and the soul of that person. When the person is not 'physically cured' still a cure has taken place. In that person 'Thy faith has made thee whole' applies. Of course this can be a type of casuistry so often made use of by every pseudo prophet or Swami to hide his own deficiencies. Bhagavan is extremely reticent about His cures and non-cures. It is for us in our thousands and hundreds of thousands to testify in terms of that faith born from experiences received from Bhagavan. Man has been called a 'rational' animal, a 'thinking animal', but these concepts have been proved to be illusory. The only difference between Man and Animals that really counts is that Man is the 'God Conscious' Animal. That God consciousness in an individual attracts him to the true God like iron to a magnet. The physical illness may be merely the circumstance that puts him within the orbit of Bhagavan's magnetic field.

Bhagavan, the Divine Healer, has not come to affect some physical cures here and there. He has come to 'touch' the millions across the world. His mission is world—wide. He has often said he will set his house in order before he visits other countries. India, the land of spiritual heritage, has to have a renaissance of spiritual rebirth before it can set an example to others.

### **Baba's Universalism**

What are the unique attributes of Bhagavan, the divine healer of the world. His healing is analogous to layers in a pyramidal structure. The foundation layer is the healing of the physical, economic and other environmental ills of the person. On that foundation is effected the mind and emotional healing. The Apex layer is the spiritual healing. He has come to motivate people to transcend caste, creed and race in their religious life. There is only one God, the God of Love. There is only one creed, the creed of humanity. There is only one temple and that is within oneself. Religions have often led to separation of peoples outside and within the fold. The superiority of one religion over another, the superiority of one section of a religion, be it the priestly class or of a community over another, are negated. All are equal and have equal access to God. Rituals, temple visiting and various observances and practices are all right, provided they do not infringe on the rights of others, nor do they confer superior privileges and virtues merely because of them.

These messages are nothing new. Many societies, modern day version of every religion, ethical Culture Society of America, the Bahai Religion, the Quakers, the Unitarians and a host of others advocate the same.

The difference lies in Bhagavan, the re-incarnation of Divinity. As he so often says, "My life is my message" His life is His Mission. His life will leave its divine touch across the world for a better world to live in and breathe in.

### **Baba and Christ**

I was born a Christian, a Roman Catholic. As I said I lost my religion in New York in the atmosphere of rationalism. I have been a devotee of Bhagavan Baba for over fourteen years. I believe I am now a better Christian than I ever was. I am in close contact with Christian priests and nuns. They are quite perplexed at my attitude.

"How can you change your religion?"

"I have not changed my religion"

"But you don't believe in Christ"

"Yes. I do". "But-but this Man" "Christ and He are one".

"But that's ridiculous" "Why so?"

"Christ was a re-incarnation". "The Jews laughed at Christ's disciples as worshipping a mere man and that too a mad man. So in his days few thought of him as God."

"But Baba is a Hindu" "Bhagavan is not a Hindu".

Christ was not a Christian. God cannot be Christian or Hindu or Mohammedan. Baba expounds the Vedas and is reinvigorating the ancient spiritual heritage of India. He has often said, "All paths lead to me". I believe Bhagavan effects a transformation in all peoples, though they are of different religions.

"Work is worship" is exemplified by his continuing activity twenty-four hours a day except for a few hours of rest at night. He is up before 4 a.m. and after a busy day is instructing young and old alike giving directions and instructions far into the night. This he has carried on day after day for thirty-five years. No mortal can keep up with this grueling schedule.

### **Baba's Love**

God is love, is Prema. Baba has the care of the millions in his heart. He has come to many in their dreams. Every soul he sees or talks to, treasures that moment with tears in his or her life for life. You have only to watch him wend his way among the thousands of devotees waiting for his darshan in any city, town or village in India. You see the myriad faces turned in rapture towards him and you know he is the embodiment of Love.

changeable as the wind but in reality he is as constant as a running stream true to its goal of reaching the ocean. Every prophecy he said has come true. Every dealing he has had with his devotees and others has the mark of Sathya, Dharma and Prema.

### **Purity and Selflessness**

His path is not easy. In fact it is the hard time-honoured path of purity, selflessness, of non-attachment for all earthly goods or personal relationships. Baba declares we have to be always watchful every minute of our lives. In his pithy way he says, "Learn the A B C of life—Always Be Careful". In U.S.A. there is a great rush for spiritual life but they want it in an easy package, all wrapped in a beautiful parcel and ready to work at a moment's notice. Many youngsters from the West come to him, after a round of drugs, free living and Gurus, in India and in the West, who offer short-cuts. They get disappointed when they can get no quick results.

Baba's message is hard for Indians and non-Indians alike. But the path is made easy by the divine presence of Baba. Therein he is the divine healer. Christ was a divine healer, but his personal presence was limited in time and space. His mission was for three years and was confined to Palestine. His followers have indeed spread his message far and wide down the centuries but the effects have been unfortunately not what was expected. The Christian countries are most un-Christian. Buddha showed the eight-fold path to do away with pain and misery but his followers are few and his message is almost lost. The Vedas have been revitalised and reinvigorated for the people from time immemorial down to Adi Sankaracharya, Madhva, Ramanuja, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Vivekananda but we Indians of to-day are not good examples of the Vedic way of life.

Baba the divine healer has come to personally touch the lives of the millions across the world. He is already an All-India Force. He will soon be an All-World Force. We are soon to celebrate his fiftieth birthday. May be, that would mark the beginning of his world mission. He may carry his darshan to the four comers of the world. His ways are mysterious and our minds are too limited to comprehend his mission. To my mind Bhagavan has laid his healing touch on millions in India through his darshan. Tens of thousands gather wherever he goes across the length and breadth of India. They go away feeling a sense of awe, of a resurgence of their inner potential towards peace and spiritual evolution. Bhagavan is always on the move and his contact is with masses.

### **A multi-faceted programme**

Bhagavan has a multi-faceted programme to bring about a resurgence of spiritual enlightenment which is the fount for his divine healing. It starts with the infants, goes on to children, boys and girls and adults. His stress on education, on Seva Samitis have all borne fruit. But in all that he says and does the touch of the divine healer is ever-present. We are lost and helpless in a fast moving world of scientific advance, economic and political conflicts, in sensationalism and materialism. Our puny efforts at spiritual uplift are again and again beaten back by our own weakness in all that we do we desperately need the touch of the divine healer.

Even a family, physician when he advises on hypertension touches on every, aspect of, the patient's life, his diet, his habits; exercise, relaxation, his work, his relationships at home whether they are happy and free from worries etc. Similarly Bhagavan though on an immensely more profound scale, encompasses every minute aspect of a person's life in his mission as a divine healer. He takes on a Guru shishya relationship except that he is the Divine Guru.

The awe and wonder with which devotees view Bhagavan's materialisation of Vibhuti in healing the illnesses of his devotees is to my mind very exaggerated. For the Divine Being, these materialisations are as natural as breathing is to us. Further, it is feeble-minded to think for a moment that the Vibhuti is necessary for Bhagavan to accomplish His miracle. The Vibhuti is a symbol of Bhagavan's divinity. For many at their level of consciousness, the Vibhuti does have healing powers.

Bhagavan's healing is beyond time and place and space. Cures have been reported in America; in various places in India while Bhagavan is hundreds or thousands of miles away. All that He requires is faith.

### **All-encompassing mission**

In conclusion, Bhagavan as a divine healer manifests the main aspect of his mission on earth. The healing is not, the few physical beatings here and there known to a few or to many. It is an all encompassing purpose of His incarnation. To every individual he effects His healing in his divinely unique manner. To one, He is the divine family physician who takes care of the ills in the family; to another He is a divine psychotherapist wherein He gives solace and strength and freedom from worry and stress; to another, He is the divine educationalist who propagates education in and out of institutions on the growth of Sathyam; Dharma and Prema in daily life; to yet another, He is a social scientist pointing out the ills in the world to-day and how they can be remedied; to yet another, He is the divine Guru training the shishya in spiritual growth; to still another, He is the divine scholar come to expound the Vedas and bring about a resurgence of spirituality as in Vedic times; to yet another, He is pure prema or Sathyam or Dharmam or any of the many fundamental qualities; to still another, Bhagavan helps him to be a better Christian, Mohammedan, Buddhist or even a free thinker. The list would be multiplied endlessly. Yet, whatever aspect Bhagavan is to an individual; his touch is a healing touch-healing in the true and traditional and the real sense of the term.

### **Bhagavan: The Ideal Teacher**

*“Love is the main spring of all human activity, be it the highest or the lowest. To know this is supreme wisdom.”*  
—**Baba**

gong a group of little ones were singing in the school in my neighbourhood.

I lapsed into a reverie. The 159 year-old Maharaja's College, of Mysore, which started as the Rajah's school in 1837 and became a University College in 1916, when the University of Mysore was founded during the Dewanship of Sir M. Vishveswariah, had a galaxy of teacher administrators. Tracing the history of the College through one hundred years of its existence, noted historian, Dr. M. V. Krishna Rao, sketches the profiles of a couple of the most distinguished Principals. Speaking of Professor Mackintosh, Dr. Rao says, "Professor Mackintosh was a distinguished scholar and one of the Nature's finest gentlemen whose one aim was to be as normal as possible, to despise nothing in the world except falsehood and meanness, to think seldom of hatred, but often of friendship, and to fulfill himself not in denunciation, in punctiliousness and scruples about trifles, but in largeness of heart; singleness of purpose, true breadth of character, and true love towards mankind. His was the footpath of peace as it was also of many other teachers of that generation."

Writing about Principal J.C. Rollo, Dr. Rao says, "Principal Rollo's administration was one perpetual flow of buoyant melody without discords or attritions; no single flashes of light, but one continuous serenity. Rollo in the college was a versatile personality, and his being was a Symphony of many notes. He was a noted tennis player with an almost wild enthusiasm for cricket, an athlete gifted with an agile, physical frame very much alive and awake, a savant, an orator by divine right, an entertaining speaker, a good story teller, a warm friend, a wit, the soul of social parties, a very famous letter writer, a great doubter and a great believer, a capable organizer, a born leader. He was all this and much more besides and the music of his eloquence could be heard resounding at the dark ends of the corridors." Dr. M. V. Gopalaswamy, the noted Psychologist, was an "uncompromising idealist who strove continuously for a better future." In the Centenary Souvenir a writer recalls how when Mr. Thomas Denham retired, his pupils made him sit in a horse carriage and drove him round the college singing and dancing to the tune of the good old song, "For he was a jolly good fellow!"

I would have got lost in the reverie had not the singing and dancing ended in a loud clapping that whipped me back into the routine of existence. But the lilt of the little rhyme the children sang kept haunting me day in and day out.

### **Baba's message**

What is the secret of success of a teacher administrator? No administrator other than a teacher administrator comes into so much of living contact with the young and the old, the rich and the poor, the ordinary and the extraordinary, the slow and the quick, the pure and the wily. He lives in the midst of God's heterogeneous plenty. How then can he bring sanity into his administration? Why is a Mackintosh or a Rollo, a Denham or a Subba Rao, remembered long after they are no more? What is the secret of their success? In Bhagavan Baba's life and message we have the answer. Has not Bhagavan said, "Love is the lever that operates the mind from which only good can result?" Bhagavan has demonstrated to us the potency of a life consecrated by Love. "Love is life. Without loving or being loved, none can exist on the earth. Love sustains,

that combine to make the Panchsheela of life, Love alone is the strongest because love leads to understanding, understanding leads to kindness and compassion and these in turn lead to the service of humanity. Why do students flock to Baba? Why do parents, who are thousands of miles away, send their children to Baba's schools and colleges? Why do the foolish and the afflicted dote on Baba, the teacher of teachers, the Divine teacher?

Why are the Sathya Sai schools and colleges centres of human excellence? How do street dogs get converted into street lamps? What is the secret of this transformation? All of this happens because, as the greatest of teacher administrators Baba is all love. Baba looks into the heart of humanity.

### **Bhagavan's example**

A teacher administrator must realise that he is dealing with living beings, and not with dead tissues. A kindly word, a gentle pat, a loving admonition can work wonders. Set your eyes on Swami and see how he glides down like a "king of compassion." The readiness to accept; transform; and lead the younger generation can be a lesson in itself to all administrators. A teacher administrator should never suffer from any mental blocks. He must develop certain qualities of head and heart that enable him to work for the betterment of humanity. In my experience of twenty years—as a teacher administrator I have found that love and love alone works. Love succeeds where even police force fails. It is possible to control a class of restive students, control an agitating and unruly mob of youth, bring peace into the minds of anxious parents and create harmony among the disturbed staff, develop rapport with the authorities by developing friendly relations. Baba says, "Give Love and receive Love."

I am reminded of a couple of lines from the prophet and poet—philosopher Kahlil Gibran.

*"Then said a teacher, speak to us of Teaching. And he said: No man can reveal to you aught but that which already lies half asleep in the dawning of your knowledge.*

*The teacher who walks in the shadow of the temple, among his followers, gives not of his wisdom but rather of his faith and his lovingness.*

*If he is indeed wise, he does not bid you enter the house of his wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind."*

### **"To become themselves"**

Speaking of, Baba's views on Education and the significance of the summer courses in Indian, culture and spirituality, in his book "Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba—The man and the Avatar", Dr. V. K. Gokak says,

*"..... there is Bhagavan's love flooding in the course and overwhelming the teachers and the participants. This in fact is the most distinguishing feature of the course. Who can*



The course helps young men and women to **become themselves** in the **India of tomorrow**.

Teacher administrators of all times have this great lesson to learn from Baba. They should help young men and women "**to become themselves**." The essential genius of our country envisages a society built on love and co-operation. The Sathya Sai system of Education which aims at a "two-fold transformation aspires to train individuals in the process of creative self-sculpture and to promote a creative self contribution to the building up of a society based on co-operation and love."

Teacher administrators should listen to the clarion call of Baba to realise the glorious heritage of our country and to transform themselves to become worthy citizens of our motherland.

### **The power of love**

Baba is love incarnate. One should see Baba move with students. He is their mother, father, guide, guardian, guru and all. He dwells in their hearts. Thousands of young men and women have received the warmth of Baba's love that emanates from within and have enrolled themselves as volunteers in the service of the Divine. The power that "commands this loyalty," is love—the love that guides, guards, corrects and creates.

Teacher Administrators must first become "learners" themselves in order to perform their duties. Baba says that teachers must lead lives based on "upright conduct, moral grandeur and spiritual Sadhana". Only then can they guide students, inspire teachers and motivate the public to tread the path of self-confidence, self-satisfaction, self-sacrifice and self-realisation.

"The educational system of a country," says Baba, "is the bank on which the nation draws a cheque whenever it requires strong, reliable, skilled workers. If it goes bankrupt, as ours has very nearly gone today, it is a national disaster. If the system is overhauled and lubricated, the next generation is assured of good leaders and, what is equally essential, good followers." (Sathya Sai speaks. Vol. VII p.203)

The message of Baba to students is a message to the teacher administrators as well.

### **New type of leaders**

"You must learn," says Baba, "to become a new type of leaders, leaders who have passed through the crucible of Seva and Sadhana, leaders who have mastered the problem of the present and the future in the light of the past, leaders who appreciate the traditions and culture of this country."

deteriorated into trade centres. Teacher Administrators, teachers, students and the public alike have become traders. As Baba points out, colleges and universities have at present been infested with "anxiety, perplexity, discontent, indiscipline, irreverence and futility."

But there is no need for despair, no need to negate life, no need to get frustrated. There is hope. The advent of Baba is as an Avatar for resurgence, for the liberation of the mind and spirit, for the upliftment of mankind. A renaissance in Indian education has already set in with Baba as the beacon-light to usher in a new dawn in the life of our nation.

### **Role of teacher administrators**

Teacher Administrators have a great role to play in the building up of a new India, strong, sensible, peaceful and creative. They should, at the outset, submit themselves in all humility to a course of rigorous self-discipline, self-control and self-effacement, the three supreme "S"s so difficult to pursue. It may perhaps be necessary for them to go through a conscious and conscientious period of training to become 'leaders' before they choose or are chosen to "lead"

*	<b>Faith in the Divine</b>
*	<b>Faith in oneself</b>
*	<b>Faith in the life of the Inner Spirit</b>
*	<b>Faith in the future of mankind</b>
*	<b>Faith in the inherent goodness of students</b>
*	<b>Faith in the latent potentialities of colleagues</b>
*	<b>Faith in the potent power of love</b>
*	<b>Faith in the three D's - Duty, Devotion and Discipline</b>
*	<b>Faith in the cultivation of good manners, courtesy, compassion and comradeship.</b>
*	<b>Faith in positive action, based essentially on Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, Prema and Ahimsa in both personal and public life.</b>
*	<b>And, above all, a total surrender to the Will of the Almighty realised within -</b>
	<b>These can surely change:</b>
	<b>Untruth into Truth</b>
	<b>Darkness into light</b>
	<b>and</b>
	<b>Death to Immortality.</b>

*- Prof. C.N. Mangala, Bangalore*

*Scriptures are endless; Sadhanas are countless; opportunities are few; time is already overstocked. But you can easily win the battle of life, in spite of these handicaps, provided you*

*of Sadhana, the best use to which all opportunities can be put and the most profitable way of utilising the precious capital time.*

—**Baba**

## **He's There**

When lost in a desert of darkness  
And can no longer find the way,  
I look to Sai for answers  
To show me the light of day.

Though the road of faith is a difficult track,  
And it seems there is no one to care,  
We must continue and not turn back  
And trust that Sai Baba is there.

Our life is not always an easy one  
For we all have lessons which we must learn,  
We must first learn to walk before we run  
We must build the fire before it will burn.

The fire of Swami will burn in our heart,  
His love will always be there  
And when you feel too far apart  
Just close your eyes and He's there.

—**Eva (16 years) (Havelock North, N. Z.)**

## **From Science to Spirituality: The Call of the Divine**

I am a scientist, and make no apologies for it. Nearly half a century ago I was attracted to science, and later made it a satisfying career.

Science is the exploration of the facts underlying the physical Universe scientists prefer to call it the Truth, although, a Vedantist might disapprove of the use of this word. Unravelling the subtle mysteries of Nature often calls for great originality and it is no wonder therefore that India's greatest scientist, C.V. Raman, once hailed science as the highest form of creative art.

stumbled on the pillar of modern physics known as quantum mechanics, he felt as though he was looking over the 'Lord's shoulder as He was composing the symphony of the Universe.

There is a widespread feeling these days that science is evil and scientists more so. This is a misconceived notion and while scientists could be blamed, science itself cannot be. Science is nothing but knowledge of the physical Universe and since the Universe is, a creation of God, knowledge about the Universe cannot obviously be evil. There can, in fact, be no reason for doubt especially since the Vishnu Sahasranama Stotra goes so far as to assert that scientific knowledge along with Vedas, Shastras etc., has come from Janardhana Himself.

Today we make a distinction between science and spirituality, but in ancient times there was none since sages and philosophers were as much concerned with the question, "Who am I?" as with the question; "What is the Universe?" The demarcation crept in only after the Renaissance when science became increasingly engrossed with details, especially of a quantitative nature. At the practical working level, science became so far removed from its philosophical moorings that both scientists and the lay public began to feel that science and spirituality were two entirely different things, one being rational and the other being speculative at best. While this is the popular perception, the actual fact is that the breath-taking discoveries of science have raised several profound and disturbing philosophical questions—for science, that is.

### **Origin of the cosmos**

Consider, for example, the origin of the Universe. According to science the Universe originated in a Big Bang and indeed one has a very detailed picture of what precisely happened a tiny fraction of a second after the Big Bang. But science is unable to answer questions like: "Why Big Bang?" "What was there before the Big Bang?" "Where did that immense store of energy come from?" and so on. Similarly, in the case of quantum mechanics one is forced to accept the view that there is no independent physical reality, it being created by the act of observation: Once again one is faced with a host of uncomfortable questions to which there are no clear cut answers. Thus at some stage science appears to come to a dead end, with no hope of further light.

There are many reasons for this impasse the most important of which is the belief of the scientist that there is nothing other than the physical Universe. Thus the dead end alluded to is a creation of the scientist rather than an intrinsic feature of science itself. The scientist accepts the physical Universe because he can see and experience it. The Universe is external and the experience comes via the senses or instruments (e.g., the telescope and the thermometer) which are merely extensions of the senses. But strangely, other human experiences like emotion and consciousness are excluded on (what I think are) flimsy grounds. The Nobelist Eugene Wigner has suggested that consciousness is crucial to understanding the idea of observer-created physical reality but thanks to the distaste of the physicist for subtle and intangible ideas, Wigner's hypothesis has not gained acceptance.

Vedanta does not shackle itself as modern science does. It accepts experience in all the three states—the waking state, the dream state and the deep-sleep state and recognises also the existence of a fourth transcendental state. Thus physical reality with which science is solely preoccupied relates merely to the lowest of the various possible realities, the ultimate being the Absolute Reality, also variously called the Atma, Brahman, Pure Consciousness, etc. Physical reality issues from the Absolute One and science as we understand it is but a mere subset of Vedantic knowledge. Admittedly these are intricate matters but Bhagavan Baba has lucidly explained them in His Divine Discourses in the summer of 1993. What emerges is that these higher levels of reality and consciousness all the way to the Brahman can be and HAVE BEEN explored by sages and seers. However, this calls for directing one's vision inwards instead of outward; which is the method of the modern scientist. No wonder he fails to recognise that beyond physics lies metaphysics and still further to that is the Absolute Truth.

### **The moral law**

Vedantic analysis also reveals that there are higher laws than the mere physical laws which appear to govern the Universe. As Gandhi put it, "There is a MORAL law which governs the Universe", which is why Baba repeatedly stresses the importance of morality. Divorced from morality modern science emphasises mere knowledge, paying little attention to wisdom. As Rajaji once remarked, "Knowledge without devotion is useless tinsel". Having been reared in the Indian tradition, I slowly began to realise the poverty of science as it is now practised and this is one of the factors which drew me to Swami. Even Western scientists are beginning to feel that scientific knowledge is not necessarily an unmitigated blessing. As physicist Weisskopf remarks, "Knowledge without compassion can be inhuman".

Bound by its limited perspective, modern science (unwittingly though) promotes aggression, unwanted needs and desires and other similar tendencies. No wonder Swami frequently refers to science as the splitting of Love; Spirituality, on the other hand, is the spirit of Love.

It is our supreme fortune to live in an era when Divine Love has incarnated in our midst in human form. Mankind must wake up and listen to the call of the Divine; it would be a supreme tragedy if it fails to pay heed.

—G. Venkatraman

### **A Journey to Excellence**

*"Aim at the highest goal... Be concerned to acquire as support the embodiment of truth! Be anxious to win the status of immortality! Struggle for eternal verity, though the victory may be distant and difficult."*

*(Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XI)*

We are so blessed! This is obvious, yet we are unaware of our good fortune. To be in the midst of the quintessential Avatar of the age is nothing small. I no longer take for granted the Sai Baba that I love so dearly. In order to benefit from this incredible opportunity, we must give proof to Swami that we are earning His blessings on this most excellent adventure that He is putting us through. We must never give up, especially when things get very tough; we must trust!

In my case, I was given many arduous tasks at once and among those was handling a bankrupt company in severe trouble that could have put my family in the throes of complete disaster. It is not in my nature to quit and give up; it used to be the easy thing for me to do. In order to grow, I had to go beyond myself and get out of my own way. Sai Baba and Lord Ganesha have been great inspirations and wonderful teachers. They teach us through personal experience that is tailored to suit each one of us individually. Learning how to use each experience is crucial. We have behaviour patterns that need to be destroyed, developed, changed, and some good patterns that we have lost and must recreate. We need to create new ones that are consistent with our situation or the times that we live in. That is essentially what this spiritual adventure is all about. I used to be very angry, now I am very careful, precise, and focused. I used to be Impulsive; now much, less so. How in God's name did I change? Through the situations that Baba has blessed me with; through the situations that Lord Ganesha has helped me out of. The bankruptcy is a notable example. The situation made me get rid of my fears, moulded my mind and sharpened my intellect. As divine beings, this human experience is quite an open school.

On our respective journeys to excellence, Baba does say to us "Follow the Master, face the devil, fight to the end, and finish the game." If this statement is followed, that is really all that is required to accomplish our tasks. To absorb this message is most important and crucial for our development. In order to be spiritual we must understand the world in which we live and manipulate it properly but not allow it to manipulate us. Over time, these situations that are put before us, allow us to grow.

I have been through very tough and arduous periods in my life. They have been painful, sometimes unfulfilling, yet as I reflect on them, they have been a journey to excellence. Finally, let me recall a statement that allowed me to change my life. A drill sergeant once told me that "Winners never quit, and quitters never win." Sathya Sai Baba expects us to shoot for the stars. Go forward and never turn back.

—David M. Wolff, U.S.A.

## **The Avatar**

The ancient and timeless One  
Father, Mother, Daughter, Son,  
Assumes a role in Time's day

Others before He has sent,  
Examples of His intent,  
Here to warn, and help and guide  
With love, to encourage, to chide

Saints and sages were, adored  
Many martyred, some ignored.  
Life leads to dead-end questions  
God answers all pure intentions

Lord Sai reveals rules of His game  
Arms us with the invincible Name.  
His message of Love is strong and clear  
The time for practise is now here

Love is law, Righteousness protects  
Consequence is as act effects.  
No concern what others say or do  
Doing good is the road for you

Some, however high they be,  
Ate as good as their acts decree  
Honeyed words sweetly spoken  
Devoid of deeds are useless token

They themselves must not stray  
Who profess to show the way  
Beware of egos who misinform  
Sai alone will guide and transform

Listen with care above the din  
Sai as Conscience speaks within  
From His Own Word, has all begun;  
Sai is Love, Love is God, we are One.

—Hal Honig, New York

*I want each one of you to grow into a strong, steady and straight person. Your eyes should not seek evil sights; your ears should not seek evil tales; your tongue should not seek evil speech; your hands should not seek evil acts; your minds should not seek evil thoughts. Be pure and be full of Love. Help those who are in a worse condition and serve those who need your help.*

—Baba

## **The Avatar and the Devotees**

*More effulgent than the-Sun,  
Purer and whiter than snow,  
Subtler than space (Aakasa);  
The Supreme Self pervades everything,  
From the minutest particle,*

*Holding everything within Him,  
Illumining everything  
By His Consciousness.  
The Divine (Brahman) is in you  
And you are in the Brahman  
There is no difference  
Between you and Brahman.  
What greater truth can I convey  
To all of you assembled here?*

### *Embodiments of the divine atma!*

When the Lord (Narayana) incarnates in human form, He cannot avoid abiding by the regulations set by Him. You should not forget that even if the Lord is the Director of the Cosmic drama, in His human form he is playing a specific role. If He does not, act according to the role assumed by Him, either overdoes or underplays the role, departing from what is appropriate, He will be failing in His purpose. When the Divine assumes human form, He has to serve as an example by ideal actions.

Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakasipu, impelled by their hatred, embarked on many enquiries in search of Narayana. They felt after their probe that Narayana was not in any of the five elements. But the tide of time and circumstances led to situations in which they, faced the Lord in His most dreadful forms and met with their end.

### **The Krishna Avatar**

When Krishna made His advent on earth, he also had to play His part according to His role. While Shishupala was railing at Krishna, He allows him along rope and destroyed him, when the appropriate time came. The Bhagavatam relates the story of how Krishna retreated repeatedly in His encounters with Jarasandha. How can the All-knowing, All-powerful, Omnipresent Lord flee from anywhere? Where can He hide Himself? This is utterly fanciful.

When one has faith in the ways of the Lord and abides by the will of the Lord, the Lord can be understood and experienced.



Duryodhana, although she was humiliated and dishonoured by Duryodhana and Dussasana, Krishna, in accordance with the role He had to play, did not intervene, as both of them were destined to meet with their death at the hands of Bhima.

During Krishna's life-time, he was the target of attacks and accusations by many wicked persons. But the Divine has no likes or dislikes. The wicked persons suffer from the consequences of their own actions, according to their deserts.

What, one gets in life is dependent on what he has earned by his actions. This is called "Prarabdham". This is by its nature temporary. What is got as the fruit of a past action will not last long. Forgetting this fact and forgetting also his true nature ("Swabhavam") man is carried away by the transient and acts according to his whims.

When an actor in a play is assigned a certain role, he studies the entire play but while acting his role, he has to play his part alone in each scene as required in the play and not all the roles that he knows. He has to suit his actions to the demands of his role in each scene in the play. Likewise, the Lord, when He has assumed a role in the Cosmic play, has to act in each situation according to what is appropriate to it and according to the rules of the game.

### **Mankind's fall**

From ancient times, in accordance with the spirit of Bharatiya Culture, Bharatiyas have been, according to the Highest place to renunciation or sacrifice (Tyaga). They adored Dharma (Righteous Conduct). They were pledged to upholding Justice. They adhered to Truth. People today have ignored these values of Bharat's ancient culture. They have fallen a prey to worldly and sensuous pleasures, believing that only earthly existence is real.

People in the world today are taking to evil ways and cherishing evil thoughts the like of which have never before prevailed. Men are consumed by a limitless passion for wealth and power. No doubt money is necessary for meeting one's daily needs. But even here there should be a limit. The vast ocean, when it swells beyond its bounds, causes disaster. The food that is required for sustaining the body is conducive to health only when it is consumed within limits. Over eating poisons the physical system. Food may give satisfaction or cause illness. By his food habits man is becoming a prey to disease. Food is essential, but it must be taken within limits for it to be wholesome. Likewise wealth is essential but within limits. When there is excessive wealth; many dangers ensue. With excessive wealth man turns arrogant and loses the sense of discrimination between right and wrong. He becomes a Duryodhana who exemplified greed rather than a Karna (who was noted for his generosity).

### **Wealth and sacrifice**

Together with the growth of one's wealth, one's spirit of sacrifice should grow commensurately. Increase in wealth should bring about an increase in generosity. These days wealth increases but not magnanimity.

*Even if a river is overflowing,  
A dog can only lap a little of it.  
For a greedy man, there is no contentment  
Even if he has large hoards  
(Poem)*

Today, when a man's riches increase, he becomes increasingly miserly. As a result, he forgets his true nature.

When monk earned by honest means does not always confer happiness, how can you get happiness through money earned by dishonest means? Hence, it should be realised that excessive wealth can never, confer peace or happiness. When you have large wealth, offer it for, good causes to help others. Thereby you will derive satisfaction.

### **Power and morality**

The second evil is the passion for power. From the villager to the topmost man in a city, everybody is after power. Power carries with it limits and obligations. There are five kinds of power (or strength) the power of knowledge, intellectual power, the power of fame, the power of character, and the power of sacrifice. Only the person who has all these five attributes should aspire for a position of authority.

These days, men conduct themselves in positions of power-without any understanding of how to exercise authority. Every man aspires for positions of power from that of. Panchayat President to the head of the government of the country. In the pursuit of power, men are prepared to use any means, sacrificing morality and justice. All sorts of corrupt practices are being resorted to for securing power. Law and order are being undermined. In this manner, the true nature of man is being forgotten. This is a highly dangerous situation. Those who seek positions of authority should recognise their obligations. They should exercise power with due regard to the restraints to be observed. "Nassreyo Niyamam Vinaa" (Nothing great can be achieved without restraint.) Thus both wealth and power have to be used with restraint. But these restraints have been violated at present.

### **The time factor**

All the troubles and disorders the country is experiencing today are due to these violations. Men are failing to recognise the nature of the Divine. Even though the Divine has come down as an actor on the world stage, He is biding for the proper tune to play His full role. A fruit takes time to ripen. When the fruit is ripe it falls down of its own accord. Likewise when the time is ripe for one to reap the fruits of his actions, he must be ready to gather them according, to the nature of the actions. It is one's own actions which lead to bad or good results. That is why the scriptures have declared that man's mind is the cause of his bondage or liberation.

actions related to service to others. It should be devoted to concern for the welfare of the World. Only then the purity of the mind expresses itself.

### **The Divine witness**

For all the confusion and conflict prevailing in the world today, it is the feelings and thoughts of people that are responsible. To take offence when some one criticises you or to, think of retaliation when one does some harm to you, is not the right way of reacting to them. Consider whatever good or bad that happens to you as the consequence of your own actions. Do not attribute them to acts of the Divine. God is like a postman. The postman delivers one letter to one address and the people in the house rejoice over the good news contained in it. He delivers another letter at a second house and there is lamentation over the sad news contained in the letter. Is the postman responsible for the joy or the sadness of the recipients of the letters? No. It is the content of the respective letters that is responsible. What you experience by way of joy or grief is a consequence of your own actions. God is only a witness.

### **Earn God's grace**

In human society today, egoism is rampant. Ostentation is ubiquitous. Can peace and security be ensured in such a milieu? Can God's grace flow in such a state? No. Whatever one's scholarship or wealth, as long as there is egoism (Ahamkara) God's grace will not flow. Grace, like water, flows from a higher to a lower level. God's grace will be showered on those who have humility and discipline. Humility is essential for securing God's grace. Revere elders. Be content with what you have. Develop goodwill towards all. Bear no ill will towards anyone. When you desire that all should love you, you should equally love all.

(The history of Bharat bears testimony to the peaceful attitude of Bharatiyas. They defended themselves when the country was invaded by outsiders, but they never embarked on wars of conquest. The ancient Bharatiyas never resorted to wrongful or unrighteous policies. Adherence to peace and truth was natural to them. Unfortunately today, in the pursuit of power people are giving the go by to morality and integrity. In western countries many leaders resorted to violence to capture power. In Bharat also, there have been many examples of Muslims who killed or imprisoned their own fathers or kinsmen to seize the reins of power. This greed for power converted men into demons.

### **Rama's example**

But look at what happened in the Ramayana. To carry out the promises of his father Rama renounced the kingdom and chose to live in exile for fourteen years in the forest. He did not aspire for power or position. He cherished Dharma (the code of right conduct.) Shortly after their entry into the forest, one day, when Rama and Lakshmana were sitting under a tree, they heard the neighs of horses and cries of elephants. Rama asked Lakshmana to find out the reasons for the unusual presence of horses in the forest. Lakshmana climbed to the top of a tree and surveyed the scene. He noticed the advancing of a huge army, but only the flag fluttering high over the haze could be seen clearly. Lakshmana concluded from the emblem on the flag that it was Bharata who was coming with the army.

Lakshmana got down and asked Rama to get ready with his bow and arrows. "What for?" asked Rama. Lakshmana said that at the instance of his mother, Bharata was coming with his army to seize them. Amused at Lakshmana's naivety, Rama told him smilingly: "Bharata is not such a person. He will do no such thing. He is coming to see us because he did not find us in Ayodhya when he came back to the city". Lakshmana retorted: "If he is coming to see us, why should he bring the army with him?" Rama said: "To allay the feelings of the people, Bharata is coming with all the citizens. Lakshmana! You have failed to realise that no one born in the Ikshvaku line will ever shed blood to ascend to the throne. Those who seize the throne by the sword cannot be righteous rulers. No such Kings will ever be born in the Ikshvaku dynasty. The rule of conduct for the Ikshvaku Kings is to inherit the throne by righteous means and rule with the consent of the people. The spirit of service should inspire those who seek positions of authority. Without knowing how to serve one cannot become a true leader." Rama allayed Lakshmana's apprehensions in this manner.

Meanwhile, Bharata came running towards Rama, crying "Oh Brother!" and fell at his feet. Watching this scene; Lakshmana regretted his misjudgment and sought Rama's forgiveness.

### **Truth and righteousness**

Thus, from ancient times, the rulers in Bharat never resorted to violence or unrighteous means to ascend the throne. They were dedicated to the practice of Dharma. "Sathyam. Vada, Dharmam Chara" ("Speak the truth, follow Righteousness"). These were the two basic tenets of the ancient Bharatiyas. They esteemed them as their two eyes. Today the rule has been reversed. "Sathyam Vada" (Kill truth), "Dharmam Chara" (Imprison righteousness). Today it is the reign of falsehood. Unrighteousness is the prevailing moral code. It is because of these tendencies, Bharat today is a prey to disorder.

Every individual should try to practise and protect truth and righteousness this is the bounden duty of every citizen of Bharat. This is the service they have to do to the nation. The nation will not be protected by an army or by the most modern weapons. If the people safeguard truth and righteousness, the latter will protect the nation and the world.

### **Swami's encounter with intellectuals**

Price, more than two decades ago, Sri. K. M. Munshi convened a conference of intellectuals in Bombay to be addressed by Swami. The, so-called intellectuals today seldom have any intelligence. They are filled with conceit. The intellectuals in the gathering were proud and arrogant, gloating over their scholarship and book knowledge. Bhagavan was the Chief Guest at the meeting and Munshi was seated next to Swami. Munshi requested Swami to clarify the doubts of intellectuals regarding spirituality and right conduct. Many questions were put to Swami and Swami answered all of them clearly and convincingly.

One member of the audience asked Swami whether it was not necessary for India to equip itself with atom bombs in view of the fact that both affluent America and Communist Russia had huge piles of atom. Bombs. Swami replied, "What folly is this! When there are millions in the

task and not the manufacturing of atom bombs. Of what use are bombs when you cannot feed the people? Crores are being wasted on armaments. I cannot agree to such wastage.

Then another member asked: "How are we to meet an attack from outside?" Swami replied: "Our country's name is Bharat. For this country the Mahabharatam is the authentic guidebook. The heroes in this epic are the five Pandava brothers. Among them, Arjuna and Bhima are incomparable warriors. Nevertheless, they submitted themselves to Dharmaja, the eldest of the brothers. If India upholds Dharma, America and Russia will have to respect Bharat. Confronted by Dharma, anyone, however powerful, will be cut to size. Therefore, the most vital thing for Bharat is Dharma."

When Swami gave this reply, the entire gathering cheered Swami for fifteen minutes. Thereafter Swami told them: "it is not enough to clap your hands; open the taps of your minds. Take to the path of Dharma. There is no use merely applauding my words."

### **Precept and practice**

There are many in the country who worship the Ramayana as a sacred text. How many of them honour the words of the father? Of what use is it to recite the Ramayana without following its precepts? You have discourses on the Gita in every street. It is anyone acting up to even one of its teachings? If you go on learning for years, when are you going to start practising the lessons? The endless study of books is sheer folly; to put into practice a single word is better than such studies. Today Bharat is full of such foolish persons.

Many of you have been coming here for over twenty or thirty years. You have listened to Swami's discourses many times. Swami has been repeatedly declaring that immortality can be achieved only by sacrifice and not by deeds, wealth or progeny. How many are making any sacrifice? How many are putting Swami's teachings into practice? Why are you gathered here? It is all useless unless you practise at least one of the teachings. What is my directive? What is it that will please me? What is it that I desire? Only one thing: 'Love, Love, Love. That is Sai 's most potent weapon. Was any invitation sent to any of you to come here? So many of you have gathered here attracted solely by the power of Swami's love (Cheer). There is nothing that cannot be achieved in the world through love. Some things may be achieved by other means, but through love even the Divine can be held in, the palm of one's hand. (Swami here recited a poem praising the heroin of Savitri; Chandramati, Sita and Damayanti and said they stood out as exemplars of Indian womanhood.) People read books about them, but do not follow their example. The reason is that, people are swayed by evil thoughts. These bad qualities are due to bad habits, relating to food and recreation.

### **Eschew meat, liquor and smoking**

Today let it be anyone, whether one deems himself a devotee or not, he should give up meat eating. Why? Meat eating promotes only animal qualities. It has been well said that the food one consumes determines one's thoughts. By eating the flesh of various animals, the qualities of these animals are imbibed. How sinful is it to feed on animals, which are sustained

committing the sin of inflicting cruelty on animals. Hence, those who genuinely seek to become devotees of God have to give up non-vegetarian food. Calling themselves Sai devotees or devotees of Rama and Krishna, they fatten on chickens. How can they be deemed Sai devotees? How can God accept such a person as a devotee? Therefore, whether they are devotees in India or outside, they should give up from this instant meat eating.

Next, there is the question of drink. The water that one drinks is life giving. It issues from the head of Siva. It is sacred. Instead of such wholesome drink, it is wrong to drink intoxicants. It makes a man forget his true nature. Alcoholic drink is utterly obnoxious. It degrades the addict. It makes him forget God. The drink addict is not conscious of what he says or does. The very sight of such a person is revolting. The drink evil has ruined innumerable families. Alcoholics have caused misery to their wives and children by wasting all their money on liquor. Of what use to the world are such derelicts?

In addition to liquor, many are addicted to smoking tobacco. Today cigarette smoking is the cause of many diseases like asthma, lung cancer, eosinophilia and heart ailments. The evil effects of smoking can be easily demonstrated. If a whiff of cigarette smoke is blown at a handkerchief, the cloth turns red at the spot. If smoke can cause such damage to a piece of cloth, how much damage will it not do when it gets into the blood stream? It ruins one's health and shortens one's life-span. Therefore, those who aspire to become true devotees of God have to give up meat, liquor and smoking.

Drink addiction is the cause of many evils. But no Government can stop this. The change must take place at the individual level. This can take place only through a mental transformation and not as a result of preaching by others. Each one has to recognise the truth and reform himself.

### **"Be happy"**

Embodiments of Love! You are deeming this day as the sixty-ninth birthday of Swami. I have no desire to celebrate such birthdays. As I was coming I was greeted by many wishing me "Happy Birthday". I am always happy. Why should anyone wish "Happy Birthday" for me? Be happy yourselves. Your happiness is my happiness.

Today, as an offering to Swami, give up meat eating, consuming liquor and smoking. By renouncing these three you will benefit yourselves as well as society and the nation. Swami's sole aim is to promote the welfare of the family, the society and the nation. If you wish to carry out Swami's aim, renounce from this moment itself these three bad practices. Do not put it off to tomorrow. Take the resolve from this moment. Expecting that you will carry out Swami's wish and thereby promote the well being of your family and the nation, I bless all of you. (Cheers)

Bhagavan concluded His discourse with the Bhajan "*Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahi.*"

**(From Bhagavan's discourse in the Poornachandra Auditorium on 23-11-1994)**

## **Sri Chavan's Call to Sai Graduates**

Education is a life-long process and the acquisition of academic degrees is only one stage in the process, "observed Sri S. B. Chavan, Union Home Minister, in his address to the thirteenth Convocation of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, in the Poornachandra Auditorium, on November 22. Sri Chavan congratulated the students on their good fortune in being moulded under the direct guidance of Bhagavan Baba, the Chancellor of the Institute.

The convocation, which used to be held in the Vidya Giri Stadium in recent years, was held in the Poornachandra Auditorium this year, in view of the enlarged facilities available for devotees to watch the proceedings from the shamianas outside the Auditorium.

The Auditorium was filled to capacity even an hour before the scheduled time and thousands of people had occupied the shamianas outside provided with closed circuit T.V. sets for watching the proceedings. The stage in the Auditorium was specially decorated with attractive floral drapery in the background befitting the occasion.

Bhagavan Baba, in His academic robe as chancellor, accompanied by the Chief guest, Sri S. B. Chavan, Sri Krishna Kant, Governor of Andhra Pradesh, and members of the Governing Council and Faculty Members, came in procession to the Auditorium, headed by the Institute Band Group, in their gleaming white uniform, playing catchy tunes. After they had taken their seats on the stage, a group of students chanted hymns from the Taittiriya Upanishad.

The Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Hanumanthappa requested Bhagavan Baba, the Chancellor, to inaugurate the Convocation with His blessings. Bhagavan Baba lit the sacred lamps on the stage and formally inaugurated the proceedings.

### **Vice-chancellor's address**

The Vice-Chancellor, in his introductory address, expressed gratitude to the revered Chancellor for creating "this great universal centre of learning, sustaining it and nurturing its growth from strength to strength and making it shine magnificently as a beacon-light in the field of education." He recalled the statement of the late Dr. V. K. Gokak, the first Vice-Chancellor of the Institute, at its first convocation in 1982, that "while all Universities may have as Chancellors sovereigns of States, Prime Ministers, members of the nobility, captains of industry and other eminent persons in public life, none of these has the good fortune to have as Chancellor an Avatar who is the Chancellor of the Universe itself. In His presence and in the magic circle of love that He has woven around Prasanthi Nilayam, hate changes to love, blindness to vision and darkness to light."

various high positions held by Sri Chavan as Chief Minister of Maharashtra and as the incumbent of several Ministries in the Central Government such as Education, Defence, Planning and Home. As Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission during 1981-84, he had made a significant contribution to the setting up of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. He described Sri Chavan as a person of integrity and administrative ability with a commitment to the basic values of Indian culture and ethos.

### **Role of Sai Institute**

Referring to the unique role of the Sathya Sai Institute, Dr. Hanumanthappa said: "Recognising the crucial importance of education in shaping and moulding the destiny of mankind and building a harmonious world order and for overcoming the moral and spiritual crisis in the life of the people, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba started educational institutions to inculcate in students not only moral, ethical and spiritual values, but also human values in general. The Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (Deemed University) was established in 1981 with three Campuses at Prasanthi Nilayam, at Anantapur (for girls only) and at Brindavan (Bangalore) The Institute's central objective is to impart a type of learning that is described as 'Integral Education', encompassing as it does the pursuit of knowledge, inculcation of the traits of duty and devotion and the virtue of simple living, together with cultivation of a sense of unity with all fellow-beings irrespective of religious affiliation.

Sri Sathya Sai Philosophy of Education has a profound positive content based on our spiritual heritage, national goals, universal perceptions and cultural perspectives. The divine atmosphere here is surcharged with devotion to Swami, which influences the habits and attitudes of the students and teachers. For the development of the "total integrated personality" of an individual, here is an Institution which is unique in itself. The Sathya Sai System of Education has a goal that transcends the concept of building a fabric of academic "knowledge" and "technical skills". Its primary objective is to produce a combination of action in the material world with deep yearning for spiritual enquiry."

Giving a report on the programmes and activities of the Institute, the Vice-Chancellor said: "The Institute runs Under Graduate course, PG courses and Ph.D. Programmes in Arts, Science, Commerce and Management faculties, Master of Financial Management. M. Tech (Computer Science) and M. Tech (Applied Optics and Digital Image Processing) are the new courses recently introduced, while Instrumentation system based on Microprocessor technique, bio-technology and Pharmaceutical Chemistry are the areas in which M. Tech. Programmes have been initiated. It is proposed to introduce courses in M.H.M. (Master of Hospital Management) and M.H.A. (Master of Health Administration).

"During this year, the syllabi of all the courses and the academic regulations were updated and modernised. All the boards of Studies, Faculties and Academic Council were reconstituted for a term of two years. Vocational courses, Environmental studies and Computer application subjects will be introduced as core subjects at the undergraduate level from 1995-96.



"Research work in the front-line areas is being carried on with great zeal and enthusiasm. The research problems taken up by the Institute have got great social and economic relevance. Many research articles by the Faculty and Research scholars have been published in professional journals of national and international repute. The Institute invited many distinguished Academicians and Researchers in different areas to share their knowledge and experience with students and staff. Various departments conducted orientation programmes, refresher courses, workshops, seminars and symposia to update the knowledge of the teachers.

"The staff and students of the Institute participated with great devotion and deep feeling of love and awareness in all faiths by celebrating Christmas, Sankranti, Gurupoornima, Krishna Ashtami and Dasara festivals in the immediate presence of Bhagavan Baba."

In conclusion, the Vice-Chancellor thanked University grants Commission and the All-India Council of Technical Education for the help, guidance and co-operation extended by them to the Institute.

The Vice-Chancellor then requested the Chancellor, Bhagavan Baba, to declare the Convocation open.

After the Chancellor had formally declared the Convocation open, Prof. U.S. Rao, Dean of the faculty of Business Management, presented to the Chancellor the candidates for various degrees to be awarded at the Convocation.

All the candidates got up at their places and bowed to the Chancellor, who conferred his benediction on them.

The Vice-Chancellor then administered the Institute's pledge to all the new graduates.

Sri Paramahansa, the new Registrar, then read out the names of graduates who had been awarded gold medals for their distinction in their respective subjects. The recipients of the medals are

Gajendra Priyadarshi Pradhan (B.A.), S. Jaibharath (B.Sc. Hons. Mathematics), M. V. Gurudev Dutt (B. Sc. Hons. Physics), G. Shankar (B. S.c. Hons. Chemistry), Ballapuram Vijaya Mohan (B. S.c. Hons. Bio Sciences), S. Swaminathan (B. Com.), S. Sai Venkatesh (B. Sc. mathematics), Krishna Prasad Bastola (M. Sc. Chemistry), M. Sai Krishna Mohan (M. Com), Kumari Malathi Srinivasan (B. Sc. Hons. Botany), Kum A. Lakshmi Suvarchala (B.Sc. Hons. Zoology), Kum C. Meenalakshmi (B.Sc. Home Science), Kum Sai laxmi Gouna (M.A. Philosophy), Kum B. Madhavi Latha (M. Sc. Home Science), Kum Ranita Thakkar (B. Ed.)

Each candidate went up to the stage and was presented with the medal by Bhagavan Baba and was photographed with Bhagavan.

Sri S. B. Chavan, in the course of his Convocation Address, said: At the outset, I would like to extend my congratulations to the Graduates of the year who are receiving their Degrees to day in recognition of the fact that they are now ready to emerge, as it were, from the womb of their 'Alma Mater' into the world of work and societal responsibilities. You must remember that though your education has reached a stage which may be described as 'coming of age', this occasion can hardly be the end of your education which is a life-long process.

I consider it my duty, first and foremost, to remind you, my young friends, never to forget that it is not just any ordinary institute which has prepared you for this day. I am sure all of you realise how lucky and fortunate you are to have been associated with this temple of education which combines the best of academic excellence with the spiritual purity for which our great nation is justly famous throughout the world. Although a fledgeling in the sense that it has been in existence only for about a dozen years, your Institute has the maturity of a 'gurukula' of a thousand years' standing. You are indeed fortunate that you have been educated at a University which has the blessings of Bhagavan Baba and which, through his association as its Chancellor, enjoys direct access to the best traditions of thousands of years of cultural and educational heritage of our country.

### **Duty of scholars**

The recorded history of University education and higher learning in India is more than 2600 years old. Universities like Nalanda and Takshashila used to attract scholars from all over the world who travelled thousands of miles to sit at the feet of Indian gurus. Education in our glorious past was a process for shaping the body, the mind and the attitudes of the 'Shishya' with a view to unleashing his intellectual and physical energy to support an existence dedicated to the common good of his family, society and country and to the search of inner spiritual truth within himself. Translated into modern idiom, education, particularly higher education, must seek to instill healthy minds in healthy bodies. Scholars should be trained to think in terms of giving more to the society than they take from it—whether it is in regard to concern for the down trodden and less fortunate members of society or concern for protecting the environment. In the context of our democratic, socialist and secular polity, education must so shape the recipients' perceptions that their adherence to these principles is unshakeable. The ability to remain steadfast on the course of Truth even in the face of extreme adversity is a quality which education must seek to inculcate in the youth.

### **Service motive needed**

It is a sad commentary on our university system and institutions of higher learning today that most of these have, to a large extent, become centres of mere academic and professional training shorn of the basic spiritual and philosophical purposes of education. Our University systems and a large number of institutes of science, technology and management teach excellent courses and our young men and women are acquiring qualifications and capabilities which are acceptable, even welcome, in the most advanced countries. What both the teaching as well as learning communities in the country must, however, realize is that our educational system is not meant for producing engineers, doctors and professionals without any motivation for serving

acquiring wealth by the shortest route possible. Our educational system must chiefly aim at being the training ground for a responsible and dedicated citizenry—which is prepared to willingly make sacrifices for the society which has raised and educated them.

Commenting on a large part of our educational system, Baba has perceptively observed: "The entire educational system is riddled with selfishness. Educated persons want to amass wealth quickly by any means. It is the same motive that is impelling many students to go abroad and acquire money for selfish ends, without regard for their parents or their Motherland. Such self-centered intellectuals who suffer from the craze to go abroad should remember the declaration of the Scriptures that 'one's mother and Motherland are much superior even to heaven'. They should give up their obsession for acquiring wealth and realise that real wealth consists in leading virtuous lives coupled with love and service to the land of their birth."

### **Vocational courses**

While education must be for life and not only for earning a livelihood, we cannot forget that here is a massive problem of unemployment and underemployment facing us and the education system must prepare young men and women to be confident and productive members of the socio-economic order of the country. In this context, the authorities of the Institute would be happy to note that the UGC as from the current year initiated a scheme of financial assistance to Universities and Colleges for introducing vocational courses at the first-degree level under which approximately 200 colleges and 20 universities have been extended such assistance. I hope that, unless this Institute is already receiving financial assistance under the scheme, it would approach the UGC for consideration. It gives me considerable satisfaction that though young in years, the Institute has already started forward-looking courses in computer science, genetic engineering, bio-technology etc., I am given to understand that the Finance Ministry has already authorised the Institute to receive donations exempt from Income Tax. This would help the Institute to mobilise additional resources necessary for improving and expanding the facilities it offers.

I wish more and more Institutes like the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning are set up to serve as reminders of the noble and integrated objects of higher teaming. I close my address by bowing to Revered Bhagavan Baba and reiterating my best wishes to the young graduates."

### **General Joshi's Advice**

As a mark of respect to the late General B.C. Joshi, Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee and Chief of the Army Staff, who had been scheduled to deliver the Convocation Address- but passed away suddenly after a heart attack, Maj. Gen. Iyengar was permitted to read the address prepared by Gen. Joshi. In the course of his address, Gen. Joshi observed: Students the world over first learn the common knowledge and only later, if at all, begin a search for the ultimate truth. You, dear students, are doubly blessed, for Revered Baba has led you simultaneously on the paths of knowledge and wisdom. Once you leave the precincts of this divine storehouse of teaming, the pressures of worldly affairs will engulf you. Remember what Baba has said, "Education is for life, not for a living. Use education to distinguish between right and wrong". In

Academy where officers are trained is, "Veerta our Vivek", that is; Valour and Discrimination. The power of the weapon with a soldier, as that of education with you, should be used with discrimination which distinguishes the real from the unreal, kindness from cruelty, and chooses service before self.

### **Happiness through service**

It is only through service to others that we can find our own happiness. You shall, therefore, have to put the interests of others first and those of yours last. In the Indian Army, the Code for officers emphasises this and I quote

"The Safety, Honour and Welfare of the Country come first always and every time.

"The Honour, Welfare and Comfort of the men you command come next.

"Your own Ease, Comfort and Safety come last, always and every time."

I am aware that some of you will leave the Institute shortly for pastures new. All of you will have the good fortune of taking this great country of ours through to the twenty-first century which is just six years away. I am sanguine that the next century will belong to India. This is not wishful thinking. It is a prophecy based on considered assessment of a soldier of four decades of experience. I trust Baba will endorse it. I wish with humility, to offer you a fourfold Mantra which should help chart a smooth passage through the daunting, exciting and fulfilling times ahead of you.

### **Fourfold mantra**

Firstly, pursue *excellence* in whatever you do. Excellence in professional competence and indeed excellence in *thought* and *deed*. This must be your passion and pride. Ensure that the standards of excellence are tailored to the aggregate of your inborn and acquired talents. Do not spare yourself. Seek out your *opportunities* take *calculated risks* and be *audacious*. No matter what your vocation, you must *work to win*, come what may. Baba has advised in unequivocal terms! "Whoever has the enthusiasm, the steadfastness, the determination to reach the goal, will certainly succeed. Cultivate that faith in ultimate success; never despair or falter or doubt. That is my advice to one and all. Success is your birthright and you must get it, sooner rather than later."

Secondly, *lead* from the front with *dignity* and *honour*, indeed your Alma Mater has trained you to lead. Those under you must be *led* and not *driven*. All this must be done with *personal example* seeking inspiration from your *conscience*, following the path of honour and always upholding *Dharma*. When the *cause* is *right* and *just*, the valiant never flinch. Remember the two sine qua nons for a leader—integrity and courage. While these may mean different things to different people, the simple litmus test of what they imply for a leader is never to do anything out of *temptation* or *fear* which he will be ashamed of admitting in public. The yardstick to measure good leadership is enshrined in Baba's "Mahavakya on Leadership". The quality of leadership to be aspired for is articulated by Him in very lucid terms, "I want you to

lion is the King of animals and I want you to be king among men."

Thirdly, learn the art, of converting your *problems* into *challenges* to conquer. The life of a leader is be set with what an ordinary mortal refers to as constraints, difficulties, hardships, danger, risk and problems. Good leaders view these *problems* as *challenges* to conquer, for *problems* only case *worry* while challenges induce inspiration.

Fourthly, get *clean fun* out of life. While some of the routine of living in the world is dull and tedious, there is plenty of good and wholesome enjoyment to be had. Whether you get frustrated or enjoy a clean life will largely depend on yourself. So inculcate the correct mix of *work* and *pleasure*. Enjoy the *nobility* of your chosen profession this will generate a positive attitude. Enjoy giving freely, for you are likely to receive in the same proportion. Enjoy tackling *challenges* for it will be so *fulfilling* and lastly enjoy growing up in your vocation for it will *enrich your life* and make you more complete. Let the *joy* of life permeate in all you do.

### **A journey to fulfillment**

Let your, life be a journey to fulfillment. The attainment of fulfillment according to the Upanishads is through the path of shreyas—knowledge and illumination—and not through preyas—the path of profit and pleasure. Heed Baba's simple but deep advice: Consider truth and righteousness as 'the very eyes' of Bharatias. You should follow and practise those two virtues throughout your life. Fill your life with joy by following this sacred path. Inspire many others to follow this path by your own life and reap joy in life."

Bhagavan Baba then delivered His Benedictory Address (published separately).

After Bhagavan's, discourse, the National Anthem was played by the, Institute Band to mark the conclusion of the Convocation.

## **Memorable Celebrations in Prasanthi Nilayam**

Although every celebration of Bhagavan's birthday in Prasanthi Nilayam has its distinctive charm and glory, this year's celebration of the sixty-ninth birthday has been memorable and significant in many ways.

For one thing, this was the first time in recent years when Bhagavan chose to have the celebrations within the Nilayam grounds instead of the vast amphitheatre at Vidyagiri. This was primarily because the spacious and lofty Mandap in front of the Mandir, with its magnificent columns and sweeping ceilings on either side of the central entrance to the Mandir, provided an immensely increased accommodation for devotees. In addition, Swami had arranged for erection of shamianas on all the open spaces to the east of Poornachandra Auditorium, which itself served as the main venue for all the functions held during the six-day celebrations. With a widely

devotees who could not get seats within the Auditorium.

The celebrations were also memorable on account of a superb three-day cultural programme, consisting of musical concerts, dances and bhajans by eminent artistes from all over India organised by the Bharat cultural integration committee.

On the 23rd November, 1994; from the early hours of the morning thousands of devotees, including a large number from overseas, started pouring into all the spaces around the Auditorium.

Though the celebrations were scheduled to start at 8 a.m., the Auditorium was filled up even before 7 a.m. The vast crowds waiting outside had a glimpse of Bhagavan as He came, in procession, donning a glittering white robe, from the Mandir to the Auditorium accompanied by members of the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust and preceded by the Institute band, Veda-chanting students and a group of secondary school children performing the Bhangra dance with vigour.

Bhagavan entered the Auditorium precisely at 8 a.m. and on reaching the stage; he was greeted by Sri S. V. Chitti Babu, former vice-Chancellor of Madurai University, and a member of the Governing Council of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. Bhagavan took His seat on the Silver throne at the centre of the, beautifully decorated, stage, amidst continuous cheers.

Sri V. Srinivasan, in inviting Sri S. V. Chitti Babu to address the gathering; referred to his varied career in the educational field.

Sri Chitti Babu spoke about his personal experience of the Divine healing power of Bhagavan and praised the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning as a universal model which could be called a true University. He said that as an educationist of 54 years standing he could declare that there was no other text that was more stimulating and inspiring than the "Summer Showers" of Bhagavan which "cool us and exhilarate us to progress in the right direction." He called upon the thousands who had gathered to receive the blessings of Bhagavan on that happy occasion, to remember His splendid glories, cherish His teachings and elevate themselves by practicing them.

Bhagavan then gave his Divine message in an hour-long discourse (published separately).

Prasadam blessed by Bhagavan was distributed to all devotees, Bhagavan himself giving laddus to quite a few lucky devotees.

The blissful function came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan in which the entire gathering joined.

silver "Jhoola" from 7 to 8 p.m. Srimatis P. Suseela and P. Leela entertained the gathering with devotional music. The birthday celebrations concluded with Arati to Bhagavan.

*GURUDEV VANI*

*XIII CONVOCATION OF SAI INSTITUTE*

## **Education and Culture**

*Wealth is worshipped as God  
Selfishness has become the basis of life  
Pomp and show have become the fashion of the day  
Ego is ruling supreme in everyone  
Ambition makes men ignore righteousness.*

*There is no humility and-no regard for truth.  
Education is sought for earning money  
Hypocrisy has become the order of the day  
How can the sons of Bharat Mata  
Hope to progress in the right path?  
Spiritual education is the urgent need  
Of the hour to reform our children  
And turn them in the right direction (Poem)*

*Students, teachers and educators!*

What do you mean by education? What type of education should you have? What kind of education will set an ideal? What is the outcome of education? One must enquire deeply, investigate and get the right answer to these questions. People feel that education helps in materialistic pursuits and rest content with this. This is a not a right attitude Education should promote culture. It is not by education alone but by culture that one gets refined.

Culture promotes refinement. It is termed as "Samskara" which consists of Sadguna (Good Character), Sadachara (good practices) and (Sadbhavana) good feelings. For a person to be deemed educated, his behaviour should be good; his actions useful to society and his feelings should be compassionate and kind. "Sarva bhootha Hithe Rathaha". One should have concern for the welfare of all beings.

It is not enough if a student is endowed with scientific and worldly knowledge. He should have essentially moral and spiritual knowledge also.

The aim of education should be to bring about an all-round development of the personalities of the students. Education should make all virtues emerge and shine forth in students. Indian culture essentially aims at developing human beings with such a personality.

What is education without culture? It is like a kite cut off from its main thread. It is not possible to predict where this kite would land whether on thorny bushes or on dwelling places. It is difficult to predict how such education is going to affect and harm society. It may also be compared to a house without light; bats and poisonous reptiles enter into such houses. Education without culture makes man forget his true human nature and take to evil ways. Such education is like a counterfeit coin. Even beggars refuse to accept a counterfeit coin. Even parents would hesitate to love a son without culture. Refinement and culture are the very life-breath of human life.

### **Knowledge and character**

It would be wrong to call it education if it merely teaches the meanings of words. The basic aim of education is to make men of character and virtue. Many people think that knowledge is power. It is not so. In fact, character is power. Education should confer humility. Education without humility, action without discrimination, scholarship without wisdom, words without truth, friendship without gratitude, music without melody, politics without morality and integrity can never shine in society. One's personality blossoms only when one has humility along with knowledge.

Education should be useful to society. It should make citizens follow the path of morality and righteousness and make their lives happy.

Human life is very sacred and valuable. Today people are not aware of the uniqueness of human life. They have forgotten human values. That is the reason why one comes across various agitations and strife in society today. What is the reason for the country getting poverty stricken, for suffering from fear and anxiety, for not recognising the sacredness of spirituality, for losing morality and integrity? The reason is that man is not living as a human amidst his fellow beings. He is living like an animal or like a demon. Today, the cloud of ego and pomp is covering the sun of Atma and hiding its natural splendour.

Selfishness is rampant. The true meaning of word 'Swartha' is that one has to know "Swa" (Atma). Understanding the Swa (Atma) is SWARTHAM (SWA + ARTHA). The syllable 'Swa' in SWARTHAM does not refer to the body, but the soul. The spirit or Atma is pure, unselfish and eternal. That was the reason why the ancient Rishis described the Atma in such glorious terms, but today, man is misunderstanding the meaning, of the word 'Swa', identifying it with the body Instead of the soul.

Man today is treating the body as the source of all happiness. Such happiness is not true and permanent; it is momentary. Educated persons are not striving to earn spiritual, permanent and real happiness.

We are acquiring knowledge, but do not put it to proper use. Knowledge without action is useless. Action without knowledge is foolishness. There is a divorce between knowledge and



and a spirit of service. It is conspicuously absent today.

In India today there are 200 Universities and 9000 colleges. About a crore of students have been enrolled in these colleges. Universities are becoming factories which manufacture graduates. These students are let loose on the world after graduation. No one is bothered about the future of these graduates and how they will benefit the nation?

What is the use of having education which does not benefit society? No one seems to bother to examine all these matters, whether Government, society, educational authorities, Vice-Chancellors or other administrators, etc. This is a sad state, which ails the system of education today. It is making man a slave of the senses. How can such people serve the society? Wherever you look at the students one finds sacrifice conspicuous by its absence.

Universities are busy developing different types of subjects to be taught, but are not aware of the Real Subject which they should teach. What is that subject which is the very basis of all other subjects? Atma Vidya, Spiritual knowledge, is the basis of all education. It is like the ocean while all other types of education are like rivers which must merge in the ocean. Today, education without a spiritual base is causing harm. The essence of Spiritual Education is faith and dedication. They are like the two bunds of a river. Only when the river of life flows between these bunds would the river be safe. If there are no bunds, the waters would flow over, villages and towns and cause vast destruction. It is the absence of spirituality which is responsible for all the problems, violence, agitation and strife. Education should foster the two bunds of dedication and faith in students.

### **From self-reliance to self-realisation**

Education should inculcate in students the spirit of self-reliance and self-confidence. The first thing in life is self-reliance, second is self-confidence, third is self-sacrifice, and fourth is self-realisation. With self-realisation life finds its final fulfillment.

Sage Valmiki has compared Rama and Ravana in his epic, the Ramayana. Rama is described as a great Jnani and Ravana as a fool: Ravana had mastered 64 types of worldly knowledge whereas Rama had mastered only 26. Why was such a highly educated person as Ravana called a fool by Valmiki? It is because Ravana lacked three important qualities which Rama had. They are: working for the welfare of entire humanity, possessing the supreme knowledge and having great virtues. Ravana was only a slave of the senses.

Knowledge bereft of noble qualities and virtues becomes only bookish knowledge which is of no use to society. What is it that made Rama God? It is imbibing of the six qualities, namely: character, compassion, non-violence, control of the mind, control of the senses and fame. Students should imbibe these six qualities which make man God. Students should never indulge in violence. Hurting or harming any person essentially means hurting and harming oneself. It is in this context Vyasa stated that the essence of the eighteen Puranas is "Help ever, Hurt never".

Ramayana, Bhagavata and Mahabharatam are like three important life-breaths for Indian culture. Today's students do not know these three texts without which a person cannot be called Bharatiya. Instead, students indulge in reading cheap novels, which contain had ideas.

### **Spread Bharatiya culture**

Students going out from Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning should take an oath that they would plunge into society and spread Bharatiya culture from house to house to all people. Indian culture is the very backbone of our life. If you cannot spread this culture your studies have no meaning. I desire only one thing from you: You should enjoy peace yourself and spread peace all around. That is the gratitude which, you have to show to the Institution which has given you free education and which has showered so much of love on you. Strive to bring about unity; there is no greater strength than unity.

Whatever you have learnt should be made relevant and useful to society. The gap between learning and practice should be bridged. Knowledge from books and laboratories should be made relevant and useful to society. Work for the honour and glory of the society and the nation.

What are you planning to do after you obtain the Degree from the University? It is no use going in search of a job from office to office with your Degree certificate or registering your name in the employment exchange. If the Government starts colleges without being able to give jobs to the graduates, it leads to all sorts of problems arising out of unemployment. The colleges must be operated, keeping in view the demand for graduates.

Our University spends Rs. 60,000 per head on Arts students, Rs. 90,000 per head on Science students, but we do not charge any fees. What benefit do we get out of this? The only benefit is to make your lives exemplary to the world at large. We want you to carry on your secular life with spiritual outlook and attitude. With the education obtained in the Institute, if you have determination, there is nothing which *you* cannot achieve. During your student days do not enter into politics. After completing your education, you may enter into politics and practise the values which you have learnt as a student and serve the society and the nation.

We got Independence, but unfortunately after Independence unity is lost. Independence without unity does not benefit the nation.

Today in the Convocation you have taken an oath administered by the Vice-Chancellor. Oath taking is like giving a promise. You must take the oath whole heartedly. It would be a great sin if you conduct yourselves in daily life contrary to the oath.

Students! Whether you are aware of it or not, Mother Bharat is pining for you. You are not even recognising the fact that you are born in the sacred land of Bharat. Mother Bharat has hidden an enormous treasure for you the treasure of knowledge and spirituality.

the type of training that you have obtained here. Do not get a bad name either for yourselves or for your parents. You should be, free from ego, jealousy, arrogance and be full of humility, nobility and sacredness. Service *to* society and the nation must dominate your thought, word and action.

*(From Bhagavan's benedictory address to the Convocation of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning on November 22, 1994)*

### **"Prahlada" in Brindavan**

A superb dramatic presentation of the Prahlada story from the Bhagavatam was staged by secondary school students from the Sathya Sai Lokaseva institution at Alike on October 6th in the Institute auditorium at Brindavan, in the Divine presence of Bhagavan Baba.

The dialogues and songs were in Kannada. The actors were students from the 7th to the 12th standard. The first scene showed Lord Vishnu in Vaikuntha giving an assurance to Mother Earth and the Devas that he would incarnate on earth to rid the world of demonic forces. The subsequent scenes showed how Hiranyakasipu tried in all possible ways—by education and dire persecution—to turn his son Prahlada's mind away from devotion to Lord Narayana. Ultimately, the Lord emerges from a pillar and destroys Hiranyakasipu and blesses Prahlada.

Vikram, a VII standard student, as the child Prahlada, played the role to perfection. Kiran Kuppal of the 12th standard as Hiranyakasipu did his part well.

Bhagavan enjoyed the performance and congratulated all the children after the play.

*You have to busy yourselves with activity in order to use time and skill to the best advantage. That is your Duty and Duty is God. The dull and the ignorant will hesitate to be active for fear of exhaustion or failure or loss. The emotional and passionate individuals will plunge headlong and rare for quick results and will be disappointed if they do not come in. The balanced persons will be active because it is their duty; they will not be agitated by anything—failure or success. The Godly will take up activity as a means of worshipping God and they leave the result to God. They know that they are but instruments in the hands of God.*

**—Baba**

### **Akhanda Bhajan in Prasanthi Mandir**

November prior to Bhagavan's Birthday celebrations, had special significance this year when Bhagavan lighted the Akhanda Jyothi on November 12 to the renovated Prasanthi Mandir.

The Mandir wore a new attractive look with seven artistically designed and exquisitely executed domes replacing the old ones, besides the huge imposing new Mandap in front for accommodating the vast concourse of devotees, waiting for Darshan. The Mandap with twenty massive ornamental pillars, covered with shining polished granite slabs and bearing a lotus-shaped bowl to carry the concealed lighting, transformed the former open darshan grounds into a spacious hall with polished black and white marble slabs for the flooring. The two wings of the hall appeared like two gigantic pianos, with a series of elephant images decorating 'the frieze. At night the Mandir appeared like a Fairy Land with multi-coloured illuminations setting off the Mandir in bold relief and enhancing the beauty of the sacred edifice. The old Dasavatharam gate at the northern entrance to the Mandir has been replaced by a massive iron gate with ornamental grills.

The Mandap was filled with thousands of Eager devotees from all over the world while the Mandir was occupied by students from the three campuses of the Sathya Sai Institute.

On, the Akhanda Bhajan day (Saturday, 12th November) Bhagavan came to the Mandap before, the bhajans started and gave darshan to all sections of the crowd. The Akhanda Bhajan commenced at 6 p.m. after Bhagavan lighted the Akhanda Jyoti (Lamp) to the Mandir. After the first song on Ganesha was sung by the men students, the Bhajan song, "Akhanda Jyoti jalao" was sung by the women students. The Bhajans continued non-stop for twenty-four hours with men and women leading by turns.

Bhagavan sat through the Bhajan for nearly two hours on Saturday. On Sunday morning Bhagavan went round the devotees, giving darshan and stayed for the bhajans for two hours.

The Bhajan came to a close at 6 p.m. on Sunday with the distribution of prasadam to all the devotees with the blessings of Bhagavan. Prasadam consisted of tamarind rice and sweet rice. Bhagavan supervised the distribution of Prasadam after taking Arati and staved on till all were served.

### **Bhagavan Commends Doctor's Spirit of Sacrifice**

The spirit of dedication and sacrifice exhibited by Dr. Venugopal and other doctors and personnel serving in the Super Speciality Hospital at Prasanthigram was highly commended by Bhagavan Baba at a special function held in the Poornachandra Auditorium on November 22 to honour Dr. Venugopal.

tribute to Dr. Venugopal and his colleagues.

Dr. Venugopal, leading Cardiologist and Head of the Cardiology Department of the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences, Delhi, who has done a large number of open heart surgery cases in the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Medical Sciences Hospital, was chosen for being specially honoured by Bhagavan on the occasion of the third anniversary of the inauguration of the Hospital by the Prime Minister of India in 1991.

A large gathering of devotees and students of the Institute, special dignitaries, doctors and eminent personalities from all walks of life who had come for Bhagavan's Birthday Celebrations, were present in the Auditorium. Bhagavan came to the Auditorium precisely at 8 a.m.

### **Dr. Safaya's report**

Dr. Safaya, the Administrative Head of the Super-Speciality Hospital, in his report on the activities of the Hospital, stated that within three years the Hospital had acquired the reputation of being the best hospital in the country. It has attracted highly qualified and eminent doctors from all countries of the world who have expressed their admiration at its record of performance by successfully conducting 3100 heart operations, including 1870 cases of open-heart surgery, in three years, mainly serving villagers and poorer sections of society by giving the treatment entirely free. The Urology department was inaugurated in 1992 and has done 49 kidney transplantations in a year.

Today, on the third anniversary, the Ophthalmic Department, equipped with all the latest and most sophisticated instruments to perform even complicated eye operations including cornea transplant, will be opened in a short while by Bhagavan. The first operation will be a cornea transplant. Other sections like Neurology, Cancer and ENT departments will be opened in due course.

Dr. Safaya said: This Hospital, which is a Divine gift from Bhagavan to people from all parts of the world, will be a 300-bed hospital. It has already elicited the admiration of world-renowned surgeons and physicians from many countries such as America, France, U.K. Italy and Israel, who had assembled here for two International Conferences of Cardiologists held in 1993 and 1994.

According to current rates of charges, the total cost of treatment and surgery so far done in this Hospital will amount to Rupees fifty crores. This will give an idea of the contribution made by the Hospital in the field of treatment.

### **Dr. Venugopal's record**

Dr. Venugopal has played the major role in the successful conduct of heart surgery in this Hospital. He has done six or seven cases per day. He has been assisted by a team of doctors and paramedical and nursing staff who are contributing to the reputation of this Hospital as the prime one in the country and perhaps the only one in the world where treatment is entirely free. In fact,

money outside as they are given clothes by the hospital and are charged no fee for anything. Out of the total number of patients treated here 20% are children and 20% are housewives who are in the utmost need of help.

The National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences has recognised this Hospital for P. G. Courses in Nephrology, Urology and Cardiology. The selection of candidates for admission to these P. G. Degrees is made by a National Selection Committee. It will not be an exaggeration to say that the Sri Sathya Sai Super-Speciality Hospital has achieved what was considered impossible by human standards, by the Grace of Bhagavan.

Dr. Venugopal, who hails from Andhra Pradesh and who had a brilliant academic career of high distinction, having won a gold medal in the Degree courses in Andhra Pradesh, and was admitted to the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences for post-graduate specialisation on competitive merit, is occupying the post of Head of the Cardio-Vascular Department of A.I.I.M.S. at the early age of 50. He has acquired the unique distinction of having performed recently the first successful heart transplant operation in India."

### **P.M.'s tribute to Dr. Venugopal**

The Prime Minister in the course of his speech, referred to the unique happenings at Prasanthi Nilayam by the Grace of Baba which reminded him of the words of Yashoda in the Bhagavatam to describe the deeds of KRISHNA as "Vaishnava Maya". He said something -new was planned every year and was achieved in record time. Unlike the five-year plans of the Government, the plans of Baba are one-year plans and are finished within the year. No extra time or cost is involved.

He went on to say: Here is an example of a model of the best hospital in the world transplanted in a village and the most eminent doctors are attracted to this Hospital and voluntarily serve here. Theirs is a labour of love. Dr. Venugopal is one such doctor of highly proven ability in his field, of whom the country feels proud. I admire him. He is the moving spirit behind heart surgery bringing credit to this country. I had the good fortune to inaugurate this Hospital three years ago. It is now well known for unbelievable happenings. Provided with the best equipment in India, it is serving the people without collecting any fee. This is something beyond the words "service" and "Duty" in the normal sense of the terms. It is a symbol of devotion. Anything done with devotion becomes great. All institutions under Baba's care work with this inspiring devotion, with Baba Himself as the Inspirer of all goodness. I pray that this hospital must continue for all time to give relief and comfort and happiness to mankind. I congratulate Dr. Venugopal and I consider that the blessings received by him are equally blessings received by every one serving with devotion. This is the significance of this function."

### **Bhagavan's message**

Bhagavan, in his discourse, explained how good health is essential for all. He said the word "Health" is derived from the word "Heliom", which means "Sacred". The human body is sacred. Man is a combination of body, mind and spirit. For proper functioning each is dependent on the

maintaining the proper interrelationship can the body be healthy. For preserving health, food, drink and rest are needed. Disease has become rampant' today because of the neglect of the discipline regarding food, which should be balanced and limited according to the capacity of the system to digest and assimilate. There are two types of cells in the body, one that helps and the other that causes harm to the system. If one does not take proper food, illness is caused.

For accomplishing any task, good health is necessary. The ancient sages realised the Divine by maintaining perfect health. The body is given only to do righteous deeds. As it is the instrument for action, it should be maintained in proper condition. Because of the anxiety and worry to which man is subjecting himself his health is affected. The causes of cardiac trouble are "hurry, worry and curry". By 'hurry', the system is made to work abnormally fast, which affects the heart. Worry also causes ailments such as ulcer, etc. By eating beyond limit and fatty food, the cholesterol level is increased causing heart trouble. By controlling food habits and avoiding excessive stress and strain, one can maintain good health.

Some people ask why Baba has constructed the Super-Speciality hospital. Today the glory of Bharat has declined because of the commercialisation of many welfare and cultural activities. In ancient times, doctors used to serve the people by giving them proper medicines from a sense of service and responsibility. Now-a-days health centres are increasing in number but the quality of service has declined. A wealthy person builds a nursing home at a cost of Rs. One crore with the sole motive of earning Rupees 10 crores out of it. Even in the educational field, money plays a major role not only in admissions to the institutions but also for marking attendance and giving marks in examinations. Because of such greed for earning money the good reputation of Bharat is sullied.

"Vaidyo Narayano Harihi" is the declaration of the scriptures. The doctor is considered equivalent to god. A case of heart surgery costs two to three lakhs in any good hospital. How can the poor afford this? The suffering of a poor man is the same as that of a rich man when one is affected by a disease. You should understand others' suffering too. The spirit of sacrifice is absolutely essential, especially for doctors as they are dealing with the problem of life and death of a patient. Doctors should always speak encouragingly to a patient. Some patients may even collapse when they are told that they have serious heart problems. In the Sri Sathya Sai Super Speciality Hospital Dr. Venugopal and his colleagues and assistants are setting a fine example in this, respect especially as they are dealing with ignorant and innocent villagers. All those who have come to serve in this hospital are doing their work with a great deal of responsibility and spirit of sacrifice. They have come here not for earning money as to render service. Sometimes the paramedical and nursing staff work with the doctors in the operation theatre even till 2 a.m. and return afresh to work again at 7 a.m. Some old students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, after taking their P. G. degree were sent to Delhi for a few months' training and are now serving in the hospital with great dedication and devotion. Women graduates from the Anantapur College are serving in the food and nutrition section with utmost efficiency, taking care to see that food is cooked in highly hygienic conditions and the appropriate diet is served to the patients.

The service rendered by Seva Dal Volunteers who come from all States of India by rotation cannot be described adequately in words. They work round the clock with a great deal of dedication to see that the Hospital is maintained scrupulously clean as a shining mirror. Thus, the entire staff are spreading the fragrance of selfless service through their sustained hard work the like of which cannot be seen in hospitals anywhere in the world.

Dr. Venugopal went to the U.S.A. to study the technique of heart transplant and has successfully done the first such operation by transplanting the human heart in a patient and thus saved his life.

The motto of the S.S.S.S. Hospital is "Paropakaaraartham Idam Sariram" (The purpose of this human body is only to help others). Hitherto kidney transplants have been done here besides heart surgery. From now on even cornea transplant will be done. The heart, the kidney and the eyes are vital organs of the body. Dr. Safaya said that this is the best hospital in India. I have no hesitation in declaring that there is no hospital equal to this in the whole world (Cheers). There may be many bigger hospitals with more capable doctors too. But nowhere is treatment offered entirely free as is done here. We follow the motto: "Duty is God; Work is Worship". We don't want any advertisement. Our Central Trust does many things that are not done anywhere by any Trust.

### **Water problem of Rayalaseema**

I wish to draw the attention of the Prime Minister to the 45-year-old water problem that is affecting most parts of Rayalaseema, especially in remote villages, where people have to walk several miles to get a pot of drinking water. This needs immediate redressal. Rivers are the gift of God. In rivers like the Krishna, the Godavari, a lot of water is allowed to flow into the sea. There is no point in every State claiming right over the river waters and quarreling with each other over riparian rights. The waters of the Krishna and the Tungabhadra rivers can be harnessed to supply the much-needed water to Rayalaseema. If there is constraint of finance, I am prepared to meet the cost even if it is 100 or 200 crores for fulfilling this dire need of the Rayalaseema people. The devotees are prepared to make any sacrifice but I have not stretched my hands to anyone.

### **Abolition of cattle slaughter**

Another thing to which I want to draw the attention of the Prime Minister is the slaughter of cattle that is being done in large numbers in order to cater to the sordid taste of people for meat eating. I have been stressing the vital importance of people giving up this habit of eating non-vegetarian food even from my boyhood days. Meat eating fosters animal qualities in man making him descend to the demoniac level. It is a heart-rending sight to see cows being slaughtered to serve as food for man. The cow has been worshipped as mother in Bharat since ancient times. Go-Mata (cow), Bhoo-Mata (Mother earth), Desa Mata (the Motherland) and Deha Mata (the uterine mother) are all adored as Divine according to the culture and tradition of Bharat. Cow-slaughter is repugnant to the culture of this country. The provision of drinking water to the people and putting an end to the killing of animals for food are two prime needs for



is tantamount to blatant savagery. I bless the Prime Minister and expect him to get these two things accomplished during his tenure.

Bhagavan then presented two gold kadayams (wristlets conferred as insignia of honour) to Dr. Venugopal and invited the Prime Minister to fasten them on Dr. Venugopal's wrists. The prime Minister performed the pleasant function to the cheers of the vast gathering.

After the function, Bhagavan Baba, the Prime Minister Dr. Venugopal and others left for the Super-Speciality Hospital for the inauguration of the new Ophthalmic Department by Bhagavan Baba.