

## No Religion Teaches Hatred

*When people give up hatred and violence, inculcate the feelings of love and acquire the wisdom to realise the unity of mankind, the earth will then become verily the heaven.* (Telugu Poem)

### Embodiments of Love!

*Sathyam bhruyat, priyam Bhruyat, Na Bhruyat Sathyamapriyam* (speak the truth, speak pleasantly and do not speak unpalatable truth). These three correspond to moral, social and spiritual values, respectively. Man is the combination of these three values. He cannot be truly called a human being if he lacks these values. Just as there can be no ocean without waves and no sun without rays, likewise, one without love is no human being at all. Waves are fundamental to the ocean as also rays to the sun. Similarly, love is the most fundamental principle of man. Hence, man should fill his life with love. He should neither hate anyone nor indulge in violence. His heart should be full of compassion. Hridaya (heart) is that which is full of Daya (compassion). Ego and unlimited desires are responsible for wicked qualities in man. One with ego cannot have compassion in his heart.

### True Nature of Man

Man is not merely Vyashti (individual). He is a part of Samashti (society). He cannot live alone. He has to depend on society. He should not lead a life of selfishness. He should take into consideration the time and circumstances and live in harmony with society. Prakriti (nature) is a combination of Vyashti (individual), Samashti (society), Srishti (creation) and Parameshti (God). Vyashti should serve Samashti and try to visualise Parameshti in Srishti. Jesus said that the life of an individual was useless if he did not realise his duties towards society. Where there is unity there is purity, where there is purity there is divinity, where there is divinity there is bliss. Man should recognise the intimate and inseparable relationship that exists between unity, purity and divinity. He should therefore develop unity and purity to attain divinity. Our ancients could visualise unity in diversity because of their purity. But modern man, due to the impact of Kali Age, fragments unity into diversity.

According to Vedanta, man is a combination of Bhutakasa, Chittakasa and Chidakasa. All that is seen by the naked eye constitutes Bhutakasa. But what we see is subject to dissolution, which means Bhutakasa is transient and ephemeral. The sun, the stars and the Milky Way, etc., which are crores of miles away from earth also form a part of Bhutakasa. The rivers, the seas, the forests and the mountains, all form a part of Bhutakasa. It comprises all objects in the universe, all Bhutas (elements) and all living beings. Bhutakasa is engulfed by Chittakasa and forms a tiny part of it. You can then very well imagine the vastness of Chittakasa. You may wonder how it is possible. All the gigantic objects, e.g., the sun, the stars, the oceans, the mountains, etc., are contained in Chittakasa in their microscopic form. The apparent world is thus contained in you as a small entity. Bhutakasa and Chittakasa relate to the body and mind, respectively. Chidakasa transcends both Bhutakasa and Chittakasa and forms the fundamental basis for these two. Chidakasa corresponds to the Atma. Human being is a combination of these three—Bhutakasa (body), Chittakasa (mind) and Chidakasa (Atma). (Cheers) The first refers to the one you think you are (body), the second, the one others think you are (mind) and the third, the one you really are (Atma).

Man is not feeble and frail. He has unlimited potential, although he does not realise it. People deny the existence of the Atma as it cannot be perceived. Chidakasa symbolises the Atma. It has no form. It is changeless and transcends time and space. Vedanta describes this as *Nirgunam, Niranjanam, Sanathana Niketanam, Nitya, Shuddha, Buddha, Mukta, Nirmala Swarupinam* (attributeless, pure, final abode, eternal, unsullied, enlightened, free and embodiment of sacredness). Bhutakasa corresponds to Jagrat (waking) state, Chittakasa to Swapna (dream) state and Chidakasa to Sushupti (deep sleep) state. Chidakasa is the state of bliss. You experience peace and bliss of Chidakasa in, deep sleep. That is the bliss of the Atma. Man, being a combination of Bhutakasa, Chittakasa and Chidakasa has immense power but he becomes weak when he identifies himself with the body.

When you say, this is my body, this is my mind, it means that you are different from them. In fact, you are the master (Atma). Master the mind and be a mastermind. How can man, being the master of everything, consider himself low and weak? The true form of man is Chidakasa and not the Bhutakasa or Chittakasa. Bhutakasa, Chittakasa and Chidakasa correspond to Pratyaksham (direct), Paroksham (indirect) and Pavitram (sacred). That which is sacred is the Atma. It transcends name and form. It is described as Shabda Brahmayi, Characharamayi, Jyotirmayi, Vangmayi, Nityanandamayi, Paratparamayi, Mayamayi and Sreemayi (Atma is the embodiment of sound, mobility and immobility, light, speech, eternal bliss, supreme majesty, delusion and wealth).

### **Jesus Taught the Lesson of Love and Service to Mankind**

The Atma transcends the limitations of form. Buddha and Jesus made concerted efforts to have the vision of the Atma. Buddha realised that names, forms and physical relationships were transient. He said one should not get deluded by them. *Yad Drishyam Thannasyam* (all that is seen is bound to perish). He studied various sacred texts and had an audience with many scholars but he was not satisfied. Ultimately, he came to the conclusion that one could attain Nirvana only through proper use of the five senses. No spiritual practice can yield the desired result if the senses are misused. Have sacred vision. Speak good words. Hear only what is good. Entertain noble thoughts. There is no greater spiritual practice than this. This was the teaching of Buddha. The same was taught by Jesus too.

The fishermen wanted Jesus to fulfill their worldly desires. Peter wanted more fish. But ultimately, he realised the futility of worldly desires. He made efforts to go beyond the level of the body and the mind as per the teachings of Jesus. Jesus told the fishermen to give up hatred and love all and serve all. He exhorted them to develop faith in the principle of unity. Many disciples of Jesus interpreted the teachings of Jesus in their own way.

When Jesus was being crucified, he heard an ethereal voice, "All are one, my dear son, be alike to everyone." When Mother Mary was shedding tears, Jesus told her, "Death is the dress of life." Death is like changing of dress. Do you find anybody wearing the same dress everyday? Just as you change your dress everyday, you change the body from birth to birth. The body has death, not the life principle. The Spirit is immortal and non-dual. To realise the nondualistic nature of the Spirit was true wisdom, said Jesus. *Advaita Darshanam Jnanam* (perception of the one without a second is true wisdom). *Ekam Eva Adviteeyam Brahma* (God is one without a second). Man attributes names and forms to God because of his worldly feelings and external tendencies

(Pravritti). Truly speaking, there is only one God. We sing in our Bhajans, *Ek Prabhu Ke Anek Nam* (one God has many names). Give up body attachment. Only then can you develop attachment towards the Atma. As you are endowed with physical body, you have to discharge your duties diligently. However, do not be deluded with the feeling that the body is permanent.

All the physical relationships are like passing clouds and are subject to change. Truth is that which does not undergo change. That is Chidakasa, the principle of the Atma. It is changeless; it has no specific form. You can experience it in the form of your choice. Suppose a mother has some sweet juice to distribute among her four sons. The first son asks her for red colour juice, the second for green colour juice, the third for black colour juice and the fourth for white colour juice. Then what does the mother do? Being an intelligent mother, she pours the same juice in red, green, black and white colour glasses to satisfy her sons. Our bodies are like those glasses. We should not go by differences in the bodies. We should realise the oneness of the Spirit within and develop love for God. The glasses and colours may be different but the sweet juice (Atma) is the same in all. The body is bound to perish one day or the other. You will have to undergo suffering if you are attached to the body. In order to attain immortality and experience bliss, you have to transcend name and form. Since the body is the means of doing your duty, you have to take care of it. But you should not be unduly attached to it or worried about it. Ignorance is the root cause of worry. Whatever has to happen will happen. So, never give scope to worry. Develop faith in the principle of the Atma and experience bliss. This was the main teaching of Jesus.

### **All are Children of God**

Mathew was one of the twelve disciples of Jesus. He was a tax collector and used to collect tax from the fishermen. Jesus used to impart sacred teachings to the fishermen everyday. Mathew noted down all his teachings. His writings formed the Bible. Later additions made in the Bible by others are based on their own feelings. Nowhere did Jesus ever state that he was God or the Master. He always addressed God as his Father. He showed the path to experience unity in diversity. He always said that divinity pervaded everywhere.

Nearly five hundred years ago, there lived a realised person who used to constantly repeat, "I am God, I am God." People wondered at this declaration and considered him a mad person. Some scholars thought that he said this out of ego and developed hatred towards him. They felt that even after studying various texts and acquiring knowledge, they did not dare make such a claim. They approached the king and lodged a complaint against him. Who is a true scholar? *Pandita Samadarshina* (one with equal-mindedness alone is a true scholar). But those scholars lacked equal-mindedness and threatened the king that they would leave the country if that person was not punished. The king asked the scholars as to what could be done. At the behest of the scholars, the king ordered that his legs be cut off. Even when his legs were being cut, he did not feel the pain. He was saying, "I am God, I am God." Even the blood flowing from his body repeated, "I am God, I am God." Then the king felt repentant for having paid heed to the words of foolish scholars. He understood that he was a true devotee of God. The king praised him in the end and agreed with the assertion of this true devotee of God. Jesus also suffered at the hands of those who did not understand the truth.

From the very beginning, Jesus never said that he was God. He only said that God was his Father. He taught to the people that there was only one God and all were His children. The priests complained to the Governor against Jesus. The priests knew that Jesus was speaking the truth. But they did not support him in order to safeguard their own position. Though the Governor issued orders for the crucifixion of Jesus, yet he repented later. When Jesus rose from the dead on the third day of his crucifixion, he proclaimed his divinity.

All are the Embodiments of Divinity In the beginning, the Romans addressed Jesus as 'persona' meaning one of sacredness. The English word 'person' is derived from 'persona'. Since there is divinity in everyone, all are addressed as person. That is why I address you as 'embodiments of divinity'. I and you are one. All are divine. There is divine spirit in everybody. There is no human being without divinity. There is no life principle without God. There is divinity in every being. *Sarvata Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvata Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Thishthathi* (With hands, feet, eyes, heads, mouth and ears pervading everything, God permeates the entire universe). Divinity pervades all forms. The Bible and the Quran contain these sacred teachings. But foolish people who do not understand their teachings are taking to wrong ways.

*He who is known as Allah by Muslims,  
As Jehovah by Christian aspirants,  
As the Lotus-eyed Lord by the worshippers of Vishnu,  
As Sambhu, by those who revere Siva,  
In whatever way He is worshipped,  
He gladly responds,  
Grants the grace of fame and fortune,  
And showers happiness and joy.  
He is the One,  
The Supreme Self. Know Him as God.*

(Telugu Poem)

You are attributing various names and forms to God for your own satisfaction, but God is one. The teachings of Rama, Krishna, Mohammad or Jesus are meant for the emancipation of man. No religion preaches violence or harm to anybody. Some evil-minded people misinterpret sacred teachings and indulge in wicked deeds. All the noble souls taught good things. They did not preach hatred. God never tells anybody to kill others. No one has any right to kill others because the same Atma is present in all. Due to their own wicked feelings, people commit heinous crimes in the name of God. It is not good for anybody. *Love all, Serve all*. Do not say anything evil. It is better to keep silent than to utter harsh words. You can sanctify time by talking sweetly and softly. All of you are the embodiments of love. *You cannot always oblige but you can speak always obligingly. There is no God greater than love. Love is God, God is love. Live in love.*

Destroy your wicked qualities. Mean minded people try to attribute their meanness to God. It is a sign of ignorance. Do not pay heed to such people. Have faith in the Self. Otherwise, you cannot have love for God. Due to defects in modern education system, love is diminishing in man day by day. Hatred is on the rise. Man is forgetting Yathartha (truth) and thereby subjecting himself to Anartha (danger). He has forgotten Manavatwa (humanness) and is developing Pashutwa (animal tendency). True spirituality lies in destroying Pashutwa and transforming Manavatwa into

Daivatwa (Divinity). (Cheers) It is not possible to attain Divinity without getting rid of animality. Today man is behaving like an animal because of his selfishness. Then, how can he enjoy happiness? He will always be drowned in misery. The more you love others, the greater will be the joy you experience. The more you develop hatred, the more miserable your life will be. Understand that God is the embodiment of love and so also is man. *Daivam Manusha Rupena* (God takes the form of man). So, you are God. There is Divinity even in animals. If you listen to the mooing of the cow carefully, you will hear it say "Amba" (Divine Mother). It only proves the existence of Divinity in it.

### **Chant the Divine Name and Redeem your Life**

Embodiments of Love!

When Jesus was twelve years old, his parents took him to Jerusalem where a huge crowd had gathered to take part in a festival. After some time, Mother Mary not finding her son Jesus by her side thought that he had lost his way in the crowd. Both the parents searched for him frantically. They became sad and worried at not finding him. Ultimately, they found him in a temple listening to the sermon of a priest. Mother Mary was overjoyed to find him. She hugged him and shed tears of joy. Then Jesus said, "Mother, why should you worry when I am in the company of God, my Father?"

In those days, people used to sacrifice pigeons in the temple of Jerusalem thinking that God would be pleased. Jesus told them that violence could never take them near God. He sought to put an end to this cruel practice. He went to the place where pigeons were sold and let them all free. The affected persons turned against him. But Jesus carried on his work regardless of their hostility. He did not attach any importance to praise or blame as they pertained to the body, not to the Self.

The same is stated in the Mahabharata also. When the Pandavas, recognising Krishna as their saviour, offered Him Agradatambulam (chief offering) in the Rajasuya Yajna, the wicked Shishupala started hurling abuses at Krishna. When Krishna was receiving this honour, he said to Krishna, "*Do you think that you deserve this honour because you stole the Saris of the Gopikas when they were having a bath? Or do you think that you deserve this because you spent all your time in the company of cowherds? Stop this self-aggrandisement and shut up!*" (Telugu Poem) Hearing Shishupala abusing Krishna in this manner, Dharmaraja started shedding tears. Krishna hurled the very plate in which the offering was made to Him at Shishupala which beheaded him. It was not Krishna's Chakra (wheel) which killed him as some people believe. At that moment, the blood of Shishupala splashed at the feet of Krishna. Seeing this, Dharmaraja became perplexed. He said, "Krishna, Shishupala abused You to no end. How is it that his blood fell at Your feet?" Smilingly Krishna replied, "Dharmaraja, praise or blame relates to the body and not to the Atma. Moreover, Shishupala was thinking of Me and repeating My Name all along. He might have done it with hatred but I am not concerned about it. The most important thing is that he chanted My Name all the time." "*Chanting of the Lord's Name is the only way to liberation in the Kali Age. God's Name only will redeem us.*" (Sanskrit verse) Any mighty task can be achieved by chanting the Divine Name. For spiritual practices like meditation and penance, a specific time and place are required. But for chanting the Divine Name, no such requirements are necessary. Wherever you are, whatever you may be doing, you can chant the Divine Name.

*Sarvada Sarva Kaleshu Sarvatra Hari Chintanam* (everywhere, at all times, under all circumstances contemplate on God).

One of the previous speakers, a member of the Messengers of Sathya Sai, prayed that Swami should never forget them. To think that God forgets anybody is only your imagination - the reflection, reaction and resound of your inner feelings. God never forgets anybody. It is only the devotees who remember or forget God. God loves all equally. So, develop love. Eschew all evil tendencies.

Modern education system is breeding evil qualities in students. Those with evil qualities cannot be called students at all. As Srinivasan said, Sai students are not like that. Some people pose to be Sai students and indulge in wicked activities. But our students are highly virtuous and full of noble qualities. None can point an accusing finger at them. Today many people are misusing the name of Sai for their own selfish gains by posing themselves as Sai devotees. Anyway, They are chanting the Divine Name in spite of their evil intentions. Only repetition of God's Name will liberate you. Do not give scope to evil qualities. Never indulge in accusing others. Lead your lives suffused with love. Consider love as God. There is nothing greater than love.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, *Prema Mudita Manase Kaho...*

—*From Bhagavan's Christmas Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 25th December 2001*

## **The Official Website of Prasanthi Nilayam**

**[www.srisathyasai.org.in](http://www.srisathyasai.org.in)**

We deem it a pleasure to announce that the official website of Prasanthi Nilayam, [www.srisathyasai.org.in](http://www.srisathyasai.org.in), which was launched on 23rd December 2000 with the Divine Blessings of Bhagavan, has completed one year. The website is an attempt to bring the serene ambience of Prasanthi Nilayam and the Message of Bhagavan to the homes and hearts of devotees around the world.

The website presently consists of relevant information about the Life, Mission and Service Activities of our Beloved Bhagavan. It also hosts; information about the Ashram, the various Sri Sathya Sai Institutions and the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations. All the discourses of Bhagavan from the Sathya Sai Speaks series have been categorised by event, venue and date for the convenience of the devotees.

The complete texts of Divine Discourses delivered by Bhagavan from time to time are regularly uploaded onto the website. Devotees can also feast their eyes on the beautiful pictures of Bhagavan and virtually experience the joy of being in the Divine Presence during festivals through the Photo Galleries. There is also a collection of Bhajans sung by Bhagavan and Audio

Clips of extracts from landmark discourses of Bhagavan. A daily selection from Bhagavan's Message is available as "Thought for the Day as in Prasanthi Nilayam Notice Board Today."

We fervently hope that devotees will find it enriching to use the website to study Sai literature, to enjoy the revitalising atmosphere of Prasanthi Nilayam and to relive the Divine moments spent basking in the Divine Love of Bhagavan.

*Secretary:* Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust

## **Crossing a New Milestone Radio Sai Global Harmony**

G. Venkataraman

Swami says that events always happen according to *Samayam* and *Sandarbham*, that is, according to the time and the circumstances, including in the life of an Avatar. In the case of our Beloved Bhagavan Baba, He waited for fourteen years after incarnation to announce to the world as to who exactly He was. Eighteen more years had to pass before He granted permission to start a monthly magazine to carry His Message, a periodical now familiar to the devotees all over the globe as "Sanathana Sarathi."

### **All that Happens is Divinely Ordained**

Years rolled by and the world was swept by the communication revolution, thanks to the explosive growth of satellite technology, telecom technology and computers. Devotees, especially from overseas, repeatedly prayed to Swami to permit them to launch radio links, Internet links and what not, so that His Golden Voice and Message could be flashed across the globe instantly. As if He was putting into practice His own maxim, Baba invariably smiled when such requests were made but otherwise remained non-committal. And then, when none was in the least expecting it, Radio Sai Global Harmony burst on the scene with stunning rapidity. It all started rather casually—or so it seemed. But the speed with which events moved subsequently clearly indicates that the outcome was Divinely ordained.

Sometime in September 2001, two distinguished visitors came to Sri Sathya Sai Super Specialty Hospital in Bangalore. They were Dr. Noah Samara, CEO, WorldSpace Corporation, and Dr. Michael Nobel, Chairman, Nobel Family Society, and a Member of the Board of Directors of World Space. Dr. Nobel is the great grand nephew of Dr. Alfred Nobel, the founder of Nobel Prize. These two gentlemen were in Bangalore on official work connected with WorldSpace, and having heard about a "dream hospital" they decided that they must see it before leaving Bangalore. When they saw the hospital, they both were stunned—no surprise in that. Immediately, they were seized with the irresistible urge to have Swami's Darshan, and that is how they both found themselves in Puttaparthi; such a trip was not at all in their schedule but nevertheless it happened. Who can deny the play of the "hidden hand"? Dr. Samara and Dr. Nobel were duly blessed with a Divine Interview, in the course of which Dr. Samara offered at the Lotus Feet an entire digital radio channel for broadcasting Swami's Message of Love and Compassion to the entire world.

### **Satellite Digital Radio Broadcasting**

Here it is necessary to say a few words about WorldSpace and its efforts to promote digital radio broadcasting. Dr. Samara hails from Africa but was educated in the West. He noticed that one of the crucial imbalances between the developed and the under-developed countries lay in the ease of access to information. He then reasoned that use of satellites in conjunction with digital radio broadcasting was the answer to the question of providing the common man with the latest news. The use of satellites avoids the huge expenditure associated with setting up massive radio transmitters, and the use of digital broadcasting ensures highest quality, not at all possible with conventional broadcasting—no hiss, no radio noise, no interference from other stations, no fading due to weather conditions, etc. And modern technology has made it possible to have a compact receiver with an antenna of the size of one's palm, to directly receive the broadcast signal from the satellite. With such a receiver, one can tune in with great ease even inside a Jungle and yet get crystal clear reception.

Dr. Samara quickly followed up on his idea by first setting up the WorldSpace Corporation in America. He then had a satellite launched and positioned over Africa; this satellite called Afristar covers not only the whole of Africa but a sizeable part of Europe as well. After this came the Asiastar which took care of the Asian continent. In fact, Dr. Samara's visit to Bangalore was in connection with promoting WorldSpace operations in India. In 2002, WorldSpace expects to launch its third satellite, the Ameristar, extending coverage to the American continent (Figure in the beginning of the article shows the WorldSpace Coverage Area).

For a couple of weeks after Dr. Samara's trip to Puttaparthi, nothing happened but shortly thereafter a WorldSpace team showed up in Prasanthi Nilayam for follow-up discussions. It was at that stage that I got into the picture. I sat through the first round of talks unable to believe that we would soon be involved in satellite digital broadcasting. Frankly, I had never heard of this technology earlier, much less seen a digital radio. But when the Lord pulls the strings, the puppets have no problem, not too much that is! What happened thereafter is largely a blur for those of us who were involved with this. On the morning of 23rd November, 2001, amidst Bhagavan's 76th Birthday Celebrations, when Bhagavan pressed the button and put Radio Sai on the air, I just could not believe my ears. It took a while for me to realise that the sound heard on the public address system in Sai Kulwant Hall was actually coming from a digital radio specially placed inside the Mandir and tuned to the Asiastar satellite hovering some 23,000 miles above the earth!

### **Radio Sai Global Harmony**

Radio Sai Global Harmony is operated by Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust, Prasanthi Nilayam as a part of its mandate to spread Swami's Message. The broadcast programme is prepared in Prasanthi Nilayam, written onto computer CDs, and then sent to Melbourne in Australia where the satellite uplink station is located. From there, the signals are sent to Asiastar which then re-radiates back to earth. Thus, the programme heard on 23rd morning actually originated in Australia. The moment Swami pressed the button in Prasanthi Nilayam, a signal was flashed to Melbourne and hey presto, Radio Sai was on the air!

Currently, the programming schedule is as follows: During week days, that is Monday to Friday, there is a four-hour package that is looped and repeated six times during a 24-hour period, from



6.30 a.m. one day to 6.30 a.m. on the next. In the four-hour package, the listener can hear two Divine Discourses and some music consisting of vocal Bhajans, instrumental Bhajans, and excerpts from concerts rendered in the Divine Presence. The looping is done for the convenience of people living in different time zones. On weekends, there is a consolidated programme that covers all the programmes of the preceding week or ten days. This way the listeners, who missed some segments earlier in the week, can catch them again in leisure. Efforts are in progress to diversify the programme content with talks, interviews, special programmes, and the like. Meanwhile, many technical innovations have also been made. Within less than a month, we are now able to control the programme content in the Melbourne computer directly from Prasanthi Nilayam. In my opinion, this is quite a feat, made possible by the admirable dedication of two of our former students assigned to this work. As one connected with Swami's Institute, I am so happy and proud that all our former students, whether they are in the Hospital, or in the College, or in the Book Trust, or in the Central Trust or in the Planetarium, work so hard just to please Swami.

At present, Radio Sai covers only West Asia. What next? It is said that the appetite grows by what it feeds on. So, having tasted what is now being offered, there is a clamour for immediate extension of Radio Sai service to South Asia and East Asia. After that would have to come the extension of service to Africa and Europe, followed by service to the American continent. We must also find ways of reaching out to countries not covered by the satellites of WorldSpace; we can't leave out the devotees in these countries, can we? Many also want live broadcast—that means when Swami is giving a Discourse, the whole world would hear at that very same instant! All these extensions are technically possible but require much work, technical, administrative and legal. But when Swami wills, who can stop these things from happening?

Some time ago, Swami said during a Discourse that when we sing Bhajans, the subtle sound vibrations thus generated spread throughout the world and indeed the universe; not only that, they get absorbed and become latent in all material objects present in the universe. Bhagavan added that if we sing Bhajans with true love for God, these subtle vibrations can in fact cleanse the world and promote peace as well as harmony. If our voices could do that, how much more can the Divine Voice do, especially when it is physically pervading the whole world via radio waves! Just imagine, this very moment, Swami's voice can be heard in every strife-torn part of Asia! Soon it will do so throughout the world. Can there then be any doubt that Peace WILL prevail?

AVATAR VANI

LADIES DAY SANDESH

### **World Today Needs Ideal Mothers**

*This land of Bharat has given birth to many noble women like Savitri who brought her dead husband back to life; Chandramati who extinguished wild fire with the power of truth, Sita who proved her chastity by coming out of blazing fire unscathed and Damayanti who, reduced an evil-minded hunter to ashes with the power of her chastity. This land of piety and nobility attained plenty and prosperity and became the teacher of all the nations of the world because of such women of chastity.* (Telugu Poem)

### Embodiments of Love!

From time immemorial, women of India, by their adherence to lofty ideals, have occupied exalted position in society and have bestowed joy on this land. Therefore, from the very beginning the name of women comes before that of men as a mark of honour. Women represent Mother Nature. Our ancient sages recognised this truth and professed solutions to the problems of life on this basis.

### **Women are Repositories of Great Capabilities**

What is the cause for misery, conflict and suffering in the world today? It is the absence of purity in the hearts of men and women. The conduct of men and women is responsible for the rise or fall of a nation. The country would not lack in anything if there are men and women with pure hearts. But today human heart is completely polluted. Here is a piece of pure white paper. It loses its whiteness when something is written on its other side. So too is the case with a man's heart; dirty feelings pollute it. We read newspaper every morning. The newspaper by itself does not have any smell. But when it is used to pack jasmine lowers, it gives the fragrance of jasmine. The same paper will smell of Pakodas or even of dry fish if it is used to pack them. Similarly, our heart is affected by our thoughts. When we have good thoughts, our heart shines with sacred qualities like kindness and compassion. Bad feelings and bad thoughts pollute the heart of man.

In ancient times, women maintained purity of their hearts. Savitri was one such great woman of India. She brought her husband back to life by winning over the Lord of Death. There are many examples of women bringing their dead husbands back to life. But history does not provide even a single instance of a man bringing his wife back to life. There have been women of such exalted character in Bharat who have set great ideals of womanhood. The decline in moral values of today's society is due to the reason that modern women are not upholding such high ideals. In modern times, the ways of life are so perverted that good thoughts and good deeds have no place in society. In this situation, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations are fostering moral values and are encouraging women through their Mahila Vibhag (women's wing) to develop the ideals of high character and propagate them to the world at large. The progress and prosperity of a nation depends upon its women. Women have made highly valuable contributions in many fields, but men do not recognise their good work. They consider them inferior and try to suppress them. Women are capable of ruling the whole world. The world has come to this pass because men have undermined the tremendous capabilities of women.

### **Modern Education is Responsible for Decline of Values**

There is nothing in this world that women cannot achieve. We should recognise their qualities and capacities and should encourage them by giving them equal opportunities in society. No such encouragement is being given today. Men get angry even when women go to Satsang. Because of their selfishness, men are unable to realise that there can be no progress in the world without women. Women by their very nature are selfless. Their hearts are full of compassion and love. They take a lot of pains to bring up children and put them on the right path, a task that is almost impossible for men.

The mother plays a very important role in shaping the character of the child. Modern education is largely responsible for the degradation in the children's conduct. In olden days, mothers initiated their children into studies by chanting sacred Mantras like Om Namah Shivaya or Om Namo

Narayanaya. Thus at a very early age, these sacred words got imprinted on the hearts of the children. But today's parents initiate their children into education, not by chanting holy and sacred Names of God but by rhymes like 'Baa... Baa... Black Sheep...' So, children are being taught all types of meaningless terms from the very beginning. In earlier days, children developed good qualities. They would welcome guests in their home with humility and reverence, whereas these qualities are missing nowadays. Today children are taught to earn money and secure power and position in life. No attention is given to develop good qualities and character in them. What is the use of wealth, power and education bereft of character? Money comes and goes. So, one must teach them morality, integrity and righteousness. Earlier, children were taught such sacred values. Today parents want their children to pursue higher studies and become great, whereas earlier, parents desired their children to be good. Since those parents wanted their children to be good, Bharat stood as an ideal to all the nations of the world.

Nowadays the students are not being taught good qualities. Instead, when they come home, the mother immediately puts on the television and the father too joins them to watch the television. In earlier days, when the children returned home, their parents would take them to the Puja room and deliberate upon whatever was taught to them by their teachers in the class. Today parents want their children to pursue higher studies to gather degrees, attain name and fame so as to get a rich father-in-law. In earlier days, parents did not desire their children merely to attain wealth and name; they wanted them to become virtuous and good. This is the reason why there was peace and prosperity in the world in those days. What is the reason for chaos in the world today? As there are no ideal parents today at home, there are no ideal children also. The first school is the home itself. The second school is society. A virtuous society imparts high moral values to children also. The students must recognise that they have acquired knowledge, wisdom, progress and growth from society. So, they have to ask themselves as to what they are doing for society after receiving so many benefits from it. If we do not serve society after deriving all benefits from it, we are ungrateful. We must be grateful to those who help us. What is the use of our education if we cannot show gratitude and respect to our benefactors? All the education acquired thus becomes useless. First and foremost, we must learn to serve and uplift society because we are born, brought up and live in it. Only then will our life become exemplary. In earlier times, mothers used to teach their children to make their life ideal by devoting it to the service and glory of society.

### **Ideal Mothers are a Nation's Pride**

Take, for example, the episode of Abhimanyu. He prostrated before his mother Subhadra and sought her permission to go to the battlefield. Initially, his mother hesitated to permit him and said. 'The great warrior Dronacharya has devised a difficult strategy in today's battle—Padmavyuha (Lotus Formation). Bhishma has joined hands with Drona. Your father Arjuna and uncle Krishna are not here. Your wife is in the family way. We do not know what may happen in the battlefield. Therefore, I advise that you may not go to the battlefield at this stage!'

He replied, *"Mother, this is not what you should teach me; you should encourage me to pounce upon the wicked Kauravas like a lion in the battlefield and destroy them. Instead, you are discouraging me. Is it right on your part to do so? I pray that you grant your blessings to me to be victorious in the war."* (Telugu Poem) Subhadra immediately realised her duty in that situation and blessed him, "My dear son, may you have a long life! May you earn a good name

for the family! May you earn the blessings of your uncle and father! May the Lord be with you and protect you in the battlefield!"

It is the duty of the son to earn a good name for the family. But in these modern times, parents do not impart such good teachings to their children. Parents today feel proud and distribute sweets when a son is born to them. But in ancient times, parents would feel proud when their son brought good name to the family. *"The father does not feel the joy of having a son merely because the child is born. Only when people praise his son for his good deeds and achievements does the father feel joyful!"* (Telugu Poem) Thus, we find a gulf of difference between the values of those days and of today. Since time immemorial, it is the mothers who bring up the children. The lap of the mother is the child's first school. That is why the Vedas say, Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava, Acharya Devo Bhava, Atithi Devo Bhava (revere your mother, father, preceptor and guest as God). Thus, first honour is always given to the mother. Let us take, for example, the names of deities. We say Sita Rama and not Rama Sita. Similarly, we say Radha Krishna and Parvati Parameshwara. It is the woman's name that always comes first. What is the reason? It is the mother who shapes the child's life. Even when she punishes the child for any of its mistakes, she does it with love, to lead it on to the right path. Today we need such mothers.

*"Forbearance is the real beauty in this sacred land of Bharat. The nectarine feeling in this country is the feeling towards one's mother."* (Telugu Poem)

There is nothing more sacred than motherhood. We need ideal children who fulfill the aspirations of their mothers. We also need women who are the personification of ideal motherhood. In order to propagate such lofty ideals, we have chosen the 19th of November as Ladies Day.

### **Easwaramma Exemplified Ideal Motherhood**

The mother of this body Easwaramma had no formal education, yet her heart was full of compassion and lofty ideals. One day, she approached Swami and said, "Swami, there are so many rich people in this region, yet the children of our village have to walk all the way to Bukkapatnam to attend school. My heart grieves to see these little children walk miles. Swami, could you please build a small school in our village?" I replied, "I don't have money!" She immediately removed the gold chain from her neck, gave it to Me and said, "Swami, please sell it and build a school." I told her, "Don't be hasty, it is only to test you I said so. I will definitely construct a school." On the following day, the foundation was laid, and within a short period the school building was ready. Then I asked her if she was happy. She did not appear completely satisfied. I asked her, "What else bothers you?" She replied, "Swami, when children fall ill, their mothers carry them all the way to Bukkapatnam for medical treatment and things may go wrong on the way. So, please build a small hospital in the village." Thus, she always thought of the welfare and happiness of others. She used to say, "It is not enough if these facilities are available only in our village. They must be available to all the villages around, and everyone should be happy." She desired the happiness of all. As we pray, *Loka Samasta Sukhino Bhavantu* (May all the people of the world be happy!), Easwaramma had the same broad feelings.

Once I took Easwaramma to Brindavan. It was during the Summer Course. Students from colleges all over the country were attending the course. There were many overseas students also.

She was very happy at the noble things bought to them in the classes and also in Swami's Discourses in the evenings. One day, I asked her, "Are you happy now?" She replied, "Swami, what more do I need? People of so many countries are getting benefited. This is enough for my happiness." She had such a broad mind. Today we see only narrow-mindedness everywhere. People desire that only their family and children should be happy. But Easwaramma was not like that. She wanted everyone to be happy. Even though she was not educated, she taught such noble qualities to everyone. A country attains name and fame because of such mothers. What was the reason for the greatness of Bharat in the past? Bharat achieved greatness due to men and women of noble virtues and high character.

One day, Easwaramma was sitting in the verandah after her breakfast. Swami was upstairs. Suddenly she called out, "Swami, Swami, Swami." I responded, "I am coming, don't go!" Gokak, who was there, was surprised why I was saying that. I rushed down. She held my hands and said, "I am completely satisfied with this Summer Course. It is not only students who are getting benefited. Even I have developed a broad mind. Swami, I am going!" She offered her Pranams to Me and passed away peacefully. Everyone aspires for a peaceful death. But only those with noble feelings will have such a peaceful end. Easwaramma did not have any trace of evil feelings in her. That is why she was always happy. Even at an advanced age, she used to walk three miles to the house of Gogineni family. When I asked her, "Why do you walk so much distance? Why don't you go in a car?" she would reply, "Swami, I do not feel comfortable in a car. I do not need a car, I prefer to walk as long as my legs are all right!" She always aspired to see others happy. It was because of such mothers that there was great progress and prosperity in society.

When I was twelve years old, one day, I asked Subbamma to get a long robe stitched for Me. She did not like it. She said, "Why do you want to wear a robe? You can wear Dhoti." I replied, "No, time has come to do it." She obeyed my command and got a robe stitched for Me. Its cost was two Annas. It was not so costly at that time. One Bottia (one quarter of an Anna) was paid to the tailor. In two days, the robe was ready. When I put on the robe, she requested Easwaramma to come to her house to see Me. She came, saw Me and started shedding tears saying, "Swami, did you call Me here for seeing this form of Yours?" I told her, "Don't grieve, I am setting an ideal for the whole world. I am wearing this Kaashaya (ochre) robe only to remove Kashaya (wickedness) from the minds of people." They were satisfied to hear this.

### **Jayamma's Devotion to Swami**

Today Jayamma is translating the Discourse. She used to look after Easwaramma during those days. She would visit the house of Easwaramma and serve her day and night and listen from her about Swami. I do not know what Easwaramma told her. Jayamma did not like to enter family life. But her parents prevailed upon her to get married. I tried to persuade her parents against the marriage but they did not pay heed to my words. Jayamma's mother was a very good woman. To be as virtuous as Easwaramma was her earnest prayer to Swami. The marriage was arranged. I was in Puttaparthi. Jayamma sent a telegram to Me, which read, "Today I am going to hell!"

Jayamma's marriage was performed, but I did not go for the wedding. Her husband's name was Gopinath. He was noble and well educated. He had just then returned from America after his education. He got his posting in a big company in Rajahmundry. When I visited Rajahmundry, he served Me by taking Me in his car wherever I wished to go. Gopinath's constant prayer was

that he and Jayamma should find a place at Swami's Lotus Feet. I kept advising him not to be hasty. When Swami returned from Rajahmundry, there came a telegram that Gopinath had expired. Jayamma immediately locked her house and rushed to Brindavan. She smeared Vibhuti on her forehead and sat under a tree. I asked her why she had put on such a dismal appearance. She replied that it was ordained by Swami. She informed Me that her husband was no more and said that she would not go anywhere away from Swami's Lotus Feet. I then sent Karunyananda and Rama Brahmam to Rajahmundry to get all her belongings. I instructed Jayamma to teach in the college at Anantapur. She is an excellent teacher. She was awarded a gold medal for her proficiency in English during British time. She also learnt Sanskrit from Maharani College, Bangalore. But she was not satisfied. She wanted to secure a doctorate. With Swami's blessings, she got the doctorate under Gokak's guidance. Jayamma has strong determination and she has continued to work in the Institute since then. She never went anywhere else. She used to come to Puttaparthi from Anantapur every Sunday. I told her, "Jayamma, don't waste time. Do your duty. Duty is God." Jayamma promptly obeyed Swami's command and she does so always. She came to Swami as a child of four years when Swami resided in the Old Mandir. Wherever Swami went, she would follow with a small towel in her hand. Her parents taught her to follow Me wherever I went. Since she grew up in the Divine company, she is endowed with noble feelings.

### **Only Divine Love is Selfless and Pure**

God is the embodiment of love. He is completely selfless. Those who believe in God should follow Him and should therefore be selfless too. When your hearts are filled with divine love, you would be able to perceive oneness in the entire creation. When this unity gets established in your heart, there would be no scope for hatred towards others. The principle of love will make you realise the oneness of the entire creation. Therefore, those who follow the Divine and inculcate Divine love are truly fortunate.

There is not even an iota of selfishness in Swami from top to toe. Swami is completely selfless. When you inculcate this selfless love, you too become selfless and your love will inspire others to follow the ideal path. There may be a trace of selfishness and self-interest in the love of mother, father and friends, but divine love is untainted by selfishness. You strain so much to attain worldly love. Why don't you yearn for selfless divine love? Worldly love is negative. Only God's love is positive. When you attain this love, you can be truly powerful and perform ideal deeds. Let people think whatever they wish, you need not worry about it. Inculcate divine love.

*Due to the absence of fear of sin and love for God, humanness has declined in human beings.  
This is detrimental to universal peace.*

(Telugu Poem)

You should not be misled by others' words and lose sight of the sanctity of divine love. People are like crows and speak whatever they like. But you should exercise your discrimination. You should be pure at heart and be fearless. People who are jealous may concoct several stories. But it cannot harm you. Instead it will help you. You should be ready to face any difficulty because true happiness springs out of hardships. Censure turns into praise if we are determined. In fact, criticism adds to the sacred fame of the Divine. You should not be bogged down by criticism.

*For those who say yes, I say yes*

*For those who say no, I say no  
No and yes are only for you,  
But for Sai, it is always yes, yes, yes!*

### **Significance of Ladies Day**

I never say no. I am always in bliss. I know nothing except bliss. We should welcome even death happily. Everything happens for our own good. Once you are born, can you escape death? Birth and death are inseparable twin birds. Till this day, I have had no desires except one. That is: "All should be united!" You must recognise the oneness of the principle of the Atma immanent in one and all. Always contemplate upon the principle of love. You must have respect for all. Love your parents. This is what I desire.

Children! You may make mistakes knowingly or unknowingly. But brooding over those mistakes is not advisable. Past is past. Forget the past. Future is not certain. Present is very important. It is not ordinary present. It is omnipresent. So, be happy in the present. The parents should redeem their lives by inculcating virtues in themselves and by moulding their children to grow up as virtuous persons. They should always aspire for the goodness and well-being of their children. They should think of making their children good rather than great. It is a good boy who becomes a god boy. A bad boy can never become a god boy. How did the term good boy get modified? During British times, they used to say good boy. Later it became goodbye. Thereafter, the word 'good' disappeared and 'bye' has remained. In this way, with the passage of time, changes occur in words and their meanings. But what you should accomplish is to become a good boy. From good boy you will gradually become a god boy. Give up selfishness and become selfless. Self is lovelessness and love is selflessness. So, your love should become selfless. Whatever you do and wherever you go, bring a good name to this institution.

Obey the commands of your parents and imbibe the values taught by them. Tomorrow when you become parents yourselves, pass on these values to your children too. In order to give this sacred message, I have proclaimed 19th of November as the Ladies Day. The importance of this day lies in propagating to the whole world the sanctity of motherhood, which is founded on the principle of selfless love. Fostered by the selfless love of mothers, children would become pure and pious. They would grow up as ideal persons. It is for this reason that 19th November is celebrated as Ladies Day. Years may pass, aeons may roll by but 19th November will be celebrated forever as a sacred day. This is the firm Sankalpa (Will) of Swami. Remember this day to receive the love of Swami.

Bhagavan concluded His Divine Discourse with the Bhajan, *Prema Mudita Manase Kaho...*

*—From Bhagavan's Ladies Day Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 19th  
November 2001*

GURUDEV VANI

CONVOCATION ADDRESS

**Humility and Character are the Hallmarks of True Education**

*He alone is truly educated who is engaged in the service of all beings,, who is the master of all forms of knowledge and who is the paragon of all virtues. (Sanskrit Sloka)*

Embodiments of Love!

Education which is not used for the welfare of society is no education at all. You can be called truly educated only when your education benefits people at large and you become recipient of their love. It is not rough if you merely acquire bookish knowledge. You should attain wisdom supreme and cultivate all virtues. True education is that which bestows on man the wealth of morality, spirituality and character. The purpose of education is not merely to sustain the body; it should broaden man's mind and make him an ideal and virtuous person.

### **Character—Need of the Hour**

If one enquires deeply, one will find a lot of confusion in the modern system of education. Under these circumstances, students have to understand the purpose of education, put their knowledge into practice and experience bliss therefrom. Man today has made a great progress in the field of science but that should not make him egoistic. Science is related to worldly education. What man needs is good character. Worldly education cannot foster virtues in man. One who sets an ideal to society by his virtues and conduct alone is truly educated. Modern students are trying to master various forms of knowledge but they are unable to understand the nature of their body and the mind. The same was said by Winston Churchill once: "Man has conquered all, but he has not conquered himself." Modern man knows everything except himself. To know one's own self is positive and to know about the world is negative. It is not the quality of a true student to acquire degrees merely to seek a job. A true student is one who shares his knowledge with his fellow beings and leads an exemplary life.

*"One may master all forms of knowledge,  
One may vanquish one's adversaries in debate,  
One may fight with valour and courage in the battlefield,  
One may be an emperor reigning over vast kingdoms,  
One may offer cows and gold as an act of charity,  
One may count the countless stars in the sky,  
One may tell the names of different living creatures on the earth,  
But it is impossible to control the body, mind and senses,  
Turn the vision inward  
And achieve the supreme state of equanimity of the mind."*  
(Telugu Poem)

Man has travelled lakhs of miles into space and reached the moon but he is yet to travel even half an inch inward. An educated person should investigate into his true nature. Ravana was in no way inferior to Rama in terms of knowledge but sage Valmiki, the composer of the Ramayana, described Ravana as a fool and extolled Rama as one of wisdom. The reason for this is that Rama put His knowledge into practice and led an exemplary life. On the other hand, Ravana did not practise the knowledge he acquired, became a slave to his senses and thus ruined himself, his kingdom and his entire clan. Education is meant not to satisfy the senses but to make one transcend the senses and set an ideal to society. This is most essential for modern students. Our



country can attain its pristine glory only when we have such ideal students. But alas! the students today do not think on these sacred lines.

*"All the ancient and eternal teachings are being misinterpreted. Sacred qualities are fast disappearing among people. Righteousness and compassion are no longer practised. The sacred teachings of the Vedas are forgotten and wickedness is on the rise."* (Telugu Poem)

This is the appalling state of affairs today. All the remedial measures that are being undertaken are only making matters worse. True education is that which destroys narrow-mindedness, develops equality and ultimately leads to world peace. Students should acquire such education and serve the country. People say that they are serving the country, but most of them are craving for their own selfish gains. Man today is immersed in selfishness and is wasting his life in futile pursuits. He wants to possess everything in this world. His craving for more and more things is to satisfy his unlimited desires and not to fulfill his real needs. In this manner, man is getting immersed in sensual pleasures. He has become a slave of his senses. He can be called truly educated only when he controls his senses. Modern students behave and act as they please. What are the qualities that are expected of a student? *"Students should pursue such education which confers on them the sacred qualities like good character, adherence to truth, devotion, discipline and duty."* (Telugu Poem) This is what we have to learn today.

### **Practical Knowledge Leads to the Understanding of the Atma**

Embodiments of Love!

You are all very virtuous and intelligent. You are endowed with a sacred heart. Fill your heart with love and compassion. That which is filled with Daya (compassion) is Hridaya (heart). However, today love and compassion find no place in human heart. Consequently, wicked qualities are finding their way into it. Whatever you experience outside is nothing but the reflection, reaction and resound of what is in your heart. Today negative qualities are prevalent in the world. What is the reason? The reason is that man's heart today is full of negative feelings. All that is witnessed in the world is the reflection of man's heart. Man should purify his heart to receive divine grace.

A deep enquiry into the principles of science and spirituality will reveal that atom is the basis of everything in this world. This flower, this cloth are nothing but different combinations of atoms. Even the food we eat, the water we drink, the air we breathe, are all constituted by atoms. In fact, all objects are constituted by atoms. But there is something more subtle and fundamental than even atom. Everything has originated from that fundamental principle. Instead of trying to know the fundamental principle, man is getting carried away by trivialities.

*"Subtler than the atom, vaster than the cosmos, Divinity is present all over as the eternal witness."* (Telugu Poem)

Try to experience the principle of the Atma which transcends everything. In order to experience the Atma, you should pursue spiritual education along with secular education. Worldly education imparts only bookish knowledge which is in fact superficial knowledge. What we require is not superficial knowledge but practical knowledge. Can you know the taste of sweets like Laddu, Jilebi, etc., by merely reading their names in books? Only when you put them on your tongue

will you experience their sweetness. Likewise, you can experience bliss only by practising what you have learnt. That is practical knowledge. Modern system of education is based only on bookish knowledge. There are many so-called educated people in our country. What is the help they are rendering to the country? Are they involving themselves in any activity that would benefit society and make people happy? No. They are leading such a miserable life that neither they themselves are happy nor do they make others happy. Then, of what use is their education?

*"In spite of his education and intelligence, a foolish man will not know his true Self and a mean-minded person will not give up his wicked qualities. Modern education leads only to argumentation, not to total wisdom. What is the use of acquiring worldly education if it cannot lead you to immortality? Acquire the knowledge that will make you immortal."*

(Telugu Poem)

You should pursue such education which will benefit you and also society at large. There are numerous unfortunate people who are suffering. Enquire, whether you are making any effort to alleviate the suffering of at least one of them. Your education is meaningless if it does not accord happiness to you and your fellow beings.

Today students are acquiring various degrees like M. Sc., M.B.A., Ph.D., etc. But are they using their education for the welfare of society? They merely fill their heads with bookish knowledge, go to the examination hall and empty their heads. No one is making any effort to know the purpose of education and its inner significance. No doubt, the students are intelligent and noble-hearted. But they are taking to wrong ways for lack of proper guidance. It is the duty of the parents as well as the teachers to show them the correct path. Some parents may not be educated so as to guide the students on the right path. What about the teachers in school? They concentrate on imparting bookish knowledge and do not make any effort to foster purity among the students. We should therefore understand the essence of education, put it into practice and experience bliss.

Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar showed how education should be utilised for the service of others. Born in a village near Kolkata in a poor family, Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar acquired knowledge by dint of his hard work. True to his none, he was an ocean of knowledge. In his school days, he studied under street lights at night as there was no electricity in his home. His mother used to shed tears seeing her son's ordeals. He would console her, saying, "Mother, if I work today, I will be happy later." *Na Sukhat Labhyate Sukham* (one cannot derive happiness out of happiness). It is only out of difficulties that one can derive happiness. He worked hard and completed his education. As he was reputed for his oratorical skills, people would gather in large numbers to listen to his speeches. All that he spoke had a great impact on the people because he had a pure and compassionate heart.

Once he was invited to deliver a speech in a college. An I. C. S. officer was also travelling by the same train in which he was travelling. Both of them got down at the same station. The officer started looking for a coolie to carry his suitcase. Seeing this, Vidyasagar volunteered to carry it. The officer handed over his suitcase to him. Vidyasagar was happy that he got an opportunity to serve. He asked him, "Sir, where should we go?" The officer replied, "Take me to the place where Vidyasagar is going to address a meeting today. I have come all the way to listen to him."

Hearing this, Vidyasagar smiled and took him to the meeting place. The officer offered him some money but Vidyasagar politely refused, saying, "Sir, I have carried your suitcase only to help you, not for money." The meeting was about to commence. Everybody was eagerly awaiting Vidyasagar's arrival. As soon as Vidyasagar arrived, he was garlanded and given a grand welcome. The I. C. S. officer instantly recognised Vidyasagar as the one who had carried his suitcase. He repented and thought to himself, "Though he is highly educated, how simple and humble he is!"

One who has ego will not be respected even by his own wife and children. Vidyasagar had no trace of ego in him. He held the audience spellbound with his speech. Time and again they clapped and expressed their appreciation. He did not exhibit his scholarship. He spoke from the depths of his heart that made a lasting impression on the people. His speech was based on his experiences in daily life and not on bookish knowledge.

### **Students should Revive the Ancient Glory of Bharat**

Even today there are many such noble personalities. Bharat is a very sacred land but, unfortunately, the Bharatiyas themselves are not able to understand and appreciate the greatness of Bharat.

*"Due to the absence of fear of sin and love for God, humanness has declined in human beings. This is detrimental to universal peace."* (Telugu Poem)

*"Forbearance is the real beauty in this sacred land of Bharat. Of all the rituals, adherence to truth is the greatest penance. The nectarine feeling in this country is the feeling of love towards one's mother. Character is valued far higher than the very life itself. People have forgotten the basic principles of this great culture and are imitating Western culture today. Alas! What has happened to this country?"* (Telugu Poem)

What an ideal and sacred country our Bharat is! But today it is facing hardships as the Bharatiyas themselves have not understood their culture and are unable to adhere to its principles.

*Students! Boys and Girls!*

Remember the glorious history of Bharat and its rich cultural heritage. People from other lands visited this sacred land in the past and admired its greatness.

Fill your hearts with compassion. Spare no effort to alleviate the suffering of your fellow beings. You may not be in a position to help everybody but alleviate the suffering of at least a few and experience bliss. If you have ten rupees in your pocket, give at least one rupee to the needy. The culture of Bharat teaches: *Na Karmana Na Prajaya Dhanena Thyagenaikena Amrutatthwamanasu* (immortality is not attained through action, progeny or wealth; it is attained only by sacrifice). Help everyone to the extent possible. Charity is the true ornament for the hand, truth is the true necklace. These are the true ornaments that one should aspire to possess. When you become the possessors of these precious jewels, there is no need for any other jewels.

Develop compassion and spirit of sacrifice and earn a good name in society. Do away with all evil qualities like anger, pride, hatred and jealousy. Any act of charity or service that you may

undertake will prove futile if you do not give up bad qualities. Develop love, share it with others and make them happy. Only then will your education become meaningful. This is the service that you are expected to render to your motherland. You don't need to undertake gigantic service projects or construct big schools. Serve society as per your capacity. Whatever activity you undertake, let it be suffused with love. There is no wealth greater than love.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, *Prema Mudita Manase Kaho ...*

—*From Bhagavan's Benedictory Address in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on the occasion of the 20th Convocation of SSSIHL on 22nd November 2001*

## **True Christmas Spirit Comes to the Fore**

If one wants to witness unity of all religions in practical form, the place where it can be found is Prasanthi Nilayam. And one of the best occasions to witness this is Christmas when people from all countries, belonging to all races and religions come together to celebrate this holiest of the holy festival in its true Christmas spirit of piety, purity, unity and godliness.

### **Christmas Carols and Bhajans**

This year's Christmas programme at Prasanthi Nilayam started on the afternoon of 24th December with singing of Christmas carols by children and adults' choirs in Sai Kulwant Hall in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. Bhagavan inaugurated the programme by lighting the candles at 3.10 p.m. amidst a thunderous applause of a huge multitude of devotees. The children then sang Christmas carols which delighted all hearts and surcharged the milieu with the sacredness of this holy festival. Though many of the children did not speak English, they sang in the language of love. Much to the delight of all, one song was in Telugu. Like the children's choir, the adults' choir also comprised of devotees from almost all parts of the world. The choir singers presented a thrilling programme singing the praise of Jesus and Bhagavan Baba. Their songs reflected the Christmas season and their love for Swami. This programme was followed by Bhajans which were led by Institute students and sung by all the assembled devotees in chorus, reverberating the entire Sai Kulwant Hall with joyous singing of Lord's praise by thousands. At the end, Prasadam was distributed to all the devotees. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 5.00 p.m.

### **Divine Darshan on 25th Morning**

It is the early morning Darshan of Bhagavan Baba from the balcony of the Mandir that the devotees eagerly await on the Christmas Day. As early as 4.30 a.m., thousands of devotees assembled in Sai Kulwant Hall for this coveted Darshan.

The usual morning programmes of Omkaram, Suprabhatam started in the Mandir at 5.20 a.m. There was however a special Nagarsankirtan when a group of overseas devotees went round the Mandir complex singing Christmas carols with lighted candles in their hands. Soon after their arrival in Sai Kulwant Hall, the much awaited moment arrived. Slowly the shining silver door of the balcony opened and Bhagavan came out dressed in white robe to shower His love and grace

on the eager devotees. This was the ultimate Christmas gift for the devotees. Bhagavan slowly moved from one end of the balcony to the other to facilitate His Divine Darshan to all the devotees sitting on all sides of the Hall showering His profuse blessings on all while smiling and glowing with love all the time. The devotees sang, "Joy to the World, the Lord has come" with joy in their hearts and lighted candles in their hands. This special Divine Darshan of Bhagavan concluded at 6.00 p.m. with offer of Arati to Bhagavan. Bhagavan returned to His abode at 6.15 a. m.

### **Carol Singing and Musical Presentations**

After about an hour, Bhagavan came to Sai Kulwant Hall again at 7.10 a.m. Soon after this, Bhagavan lighted the candles and cut the Christmas cake ceremoniously to signal the commencement of the Christmas programme. The first item of the programme was a scintillating orchestra presentation by the Institute students who earned the appreciation and applause of the devotees for their presentation.

The orchestra programme was followed by a grand musical presentation by the Institute students. They sang Christmas carols interspersed with appropriate dialogues. This was followed by Bhajan singing. While Bhajans were in progress, distribution of Prasadam started directly under the supervision of Swami. The programme came to a happy conclusion with Arati to Bhagavan at 8.35 a.m.

### **Messengers of Sathya Sai**

Before the Christmas Discourse of Bhagavan, the Messengers of Sathya Sai, the alumni of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Anantapur Campus held their Annual Meeting. Bhagavan inaugurated the Meeting by lighting the sacred lamps. Then the Messengers poured out their hearts in beautiful welcome songs to Bhagavan Baba. The deliberations of the Annual Meeting started with Veda chanting by a group of Members of the Association at 3.25 p.m. The first speaker to address the gathering was Dr. K R Sai Leela, President of the Association. Describing the Annual Meeting of the Association as home coming for the Members, who wait eagerly for this rare opportunity to come to the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan, Dr. Sai Leela said, "It is the greatest blessing to be called a student of Bhagavan." In the end, she introduced the two Members who were to address the gathering. The first Member, Miss Sashaina Fanibunda, narrated some of her experiences as a Sai student and expressed gratitude to Bhagavan for His love and grace. The second Member, Miss N. Sowmya, narrated how Sai System of Education with its emphasis on spiritual education led to blossoming of human excellence through love and discipline. In the end, the Secretary of the Association, Dr. Rajeshwari Patel addressed the gathering. Referring to the disturbed conditions of the world, Dr. Patel observed that Bhagavan's message of love and unity was the need of the hour. After this, Dr. Patel read out the Annual Report of the Association which showed how the Messengers of Sathya Sai were undertaking stupendous service activities in all parts of the world.

### **Bhagavan's Christmas Message**

Three speakers made brief speeches before the Christmas Discourse of Bhagavan. The first speaker was Mr. Arthur Hillcoat from Australia. Christmas, Mr. Hillcoat said, was the time of remembrance of the birth of Jesus, his life, his teachings and his sacrifice for the mankind with a view to bring about changes in our lives through service to society and by looking within since

the kingdom of God was within us as taught by Jesus. The second speaker was Ms. Sylvia Alden from the U.S.A. who directed the Christmas choir on 24th afternoon. Narrating her experiences of Bhagavan Baba's Divinity, Ms. Sylvia observed that Bhagavan's main teaching was to love all and serve all, and exhorted the devotees to make their love speak through their actions. After this, Sri V. Srinivasan, All India President, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations, addressed the devotees. Giving his hearty greetings to all on this holy occasion of Christmas, Sri Srinivasan observed that Christmas was most beautiful in the Presence of Sai. Appreciating the noble ideals followed by Sai students, Sri Srinivasan said that Sai students were shining jewels and were models for what men and women should be.

Then came the highlight of the day—Swami's Divine Discourse. As He sang the opening poem, the Hall resounded with His Golden Voice. Hearts opened wide with joy as eyes feasted on His beautiful form. Hearing His words of wisdom and love was the perfect finale of the Christmas celebrations. Full text of Bhagavan's Discourse has been given elsewhere in this issue. At the end of the Discourse, Bhagavan was offered Arati. With this, the Christmas celebrations came to a happy conclusion at 6.00 p.m. Memorable New Year Celebrations The New Year day of 2002 will always remain as one of the most memorable days for the Sai devotees who were fortunate to be present at Prasanthi Nilayam on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2002. The compassionate Lord, Bhagavan Baba showered His love and blessings on the devotees all day long and provided them the opportunity of Nama Sankirtan (singing the glories of the Divine Name) from morning till evening continuously and that too in His Divine Presence. Soon after showering the bliss of His morning Darshan on the devotees, Bhagavan lighted the candles and cut the cakes placed in the portico of the Mandir amidst a thunderous applause of the devotees. Bhagavan came inside the Mandir Bhajan Hall at 7.00 a.m. and lighted the sacred lamp which was a signal for the students to start Bhajans. The entire Hall then reverberated with the sacred chanting of Divine Name which continued the whole day.

Besides Bhajans by the Institute students, the programme included a magnificent musical presentation by the former students and a wonderful orchestra programme by the Institute students. Prasadam and New Year calendars were distributed to all the devotees in the morning. Besides, Swami distributed watches to the old students who presented the music programme. Prasadam was distributed in the evening also at the conclusion of the Bhajan. This holy and happy programme of Nama Sankirtan came to a close at 5.45 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

### **Message of Sankranti**

*Sankranti is an auspicious festival of the Bharatiyas. From this day commences the Uttarayana Punyakala (northward journey of the sun) which is considered auspicious for man to embark on his journey towards the goal of a purposeful, sacred and blissful life. In the north, we have Himachala (Himalayan mountains). Himachala symbolises a heart that is pure and cool as Hima (ice) and steady as Achala (mountain). The message of Sankranti is that people should direct their vision towards Himachala 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 Jnana Drishti (inward eye of wisdom).*

—Baba

## Transform the World into Paradise of Love

*The sun appears serene and peaceful. The dams have become shorter. And the chill wind is blowing. The fields are ripe with golden crops. Marigold flowers are blossoming like garlands on the banks of rivers. The farmers are rejoicing and singing. The sweet festival of Sankranti has arrived, filling our homes with the newly harvested grain.* (Telugu Poem)

*When people give up hatred and violence, inculcate the feelings of love and acquire the wisdom to realise the unity of mankind, the earth will then become verily the heaven.* (Telugu Poem)

**Embodiments of Love! Boys and Girls!**

During the last four days, Prasanthi Nilayam presented a new look altogether. Students of Prasanthi Nilayam, Anantapur and Brindavan campuses, and also of Higher Secondary School and Primary School worked hard with dedication and devotion and displayed all-round excellence in sports events. Not only the students but also the teachers, young and old alike, worked hard and rendered all possible help to the students in their preparation. Truly speaking, such principles of love, unity, devotion and dedication cannot be found in any other institution in the world. (Loud applause) The world will be rid of all problems if such institutions are present everywhere.

### **Swami Responds according to your Feelings**

Students, both boys and girls, made a wonderful display of sports events. They showed that the students of this Institute not only excel in studies but are talented in other fields also. In addition to sports and games, they enthralled one and all by their band and Nadaswaram music. The lion dance group consisted of boys from lower classes as well as from postgraduate classes like M.B.A., M. Tech., M. Sc., etc. They performed with great enthusiasm and perfection and made everybody happy. Girls from Anantapur Campus have undergone training under experts and have learnt Nadaswaram, particularly for performing on Swami's Birthday and Convocation functions. This morning also you might have listened to their musical presentation. (loud applause) They participated in sports, music and cultural events not for their own satisfaction but with the sole intention of pleasing Swami. They bore many difficulties and inconveniences with strong determination and achieved success.

You have just listened to the speech of a student who hails from Darjeeling. He is a member of the lion dance group. During one of the rehearsal sessions, he went up to a height of 12 feet to perform a daring feat. Swami had told him not to go to such a height, but in his enthusiasm to please Swami, he ignored Swami's words. He lost his balance and fell down, and thereby sprained his neck. Then I told him to take rest for a few days. He said, "Swami, I have come all the way from Darjeeling only to dedicate my life at Your Lotus Feet. Let anything happen to my body, I will not give up my resolve." He was determined to participate in the dance. I was pleased with his strong faith and determination. I gently touched his neck with My hand and told him that everything would be all right. He was completely cured. I respond to each of you in accordance with the feelings you have towards Me. My Sankalpa (Will) is based on your feelings. Ultimately, the boy rose to the occasion and performed the feat admirably.

### **Relationship between the Mind and Matter**

Today you find many people, young and old, accomplishing stupendous tasks by dint of their strong determination. But so far no one has been able to unravel the mystery of the mind and matter. All the activities of man, from dawn to dusk, are related to these two. Even the highly educated do not make any effort to understand this. If you ask them, what is mind, they say, it does not matter. If you ask them, what is matter, they say, never mind. They argue that there is no point in trying to understand the nature of the mind.

First and foremost, man should understand the relationship between the mind and matter. One who does not know the nature of the mind is verily a fool. One who understands the nature of the mind is truly a Mahaneeya (noble). What is the form of the mind? Wherefrom has it originated? What is its nature? What is the mystery behind it? If one makes a deep enquiry, one finds that the Atma has three powers associated with it: i) Manas (mind), ii) Buddhi (intellect) and iii) Samskara (innate spiritual attainment). The vastness of the mind is indescribable. It can travel to any distance in a trice. Its power is beyond description and human comprehension. Even a small task cannot be accomplished without the power of the mind. The mind has no form. It derives its power from the Atma, the source of its origin. Therefore, it is the inner Self that operates through the mind and performs all activities in the world. Even ages of effort are inadequate to understand the nature of the mind. The second is intellect. It is full of illumination. It discriminates between good and evil without giving room to selfishness. The third is Samskara. Its results are experienced not only in the present birth but in future births also. Samskara requires that man should give up wickedness and cultivate goodness in thought, word and deed. It is not possible for any book to describe in detail the powers of Manas, Buddhi and Samskara. Hence, I have decided to explain these concepts to the students.

To begin with, try to understand the relationship between the mind and matter. One cannot exist without the other. Here is a rose. This corresponds to matter. Without the mind, you cannot see it. The mind is based on the principles of reaction, resound and reflection. A true human being is one who understands the nature of the mind and its effect. You think that the mind is a bundle of thoughts. Then wherefrom do the thoughts arise? The Self is the basis of thoughts. They arise out of Chaitanya (consciousness).

### **Acquire the Knowledge of the Self**

Everyone is endowed with Vijnana (wisdom). But some foolish people feel proud of their bookish knowledge. Such people cannot be called truly educated. Without the knowledge of the Self, all other forms of knowledge are useless. Take, for instance, a person who is highly educated in the worldly sense. Ask him a question, "Who are you"? He will not be able to give the correct answer in spite of his high qualification. He might say, "I am Rama Sastri." This is the name given to his body and it does not correspond to his true Self. If you ask him again, he will say, "I am a scholar." Even this is not the correct answer, because it corresponds to his worldly education and has nothing to do with his true Self. If you further question him, he will say, he is an Indian, a British or an American. He fails to understand that neither his name nor his profession nor his nationality corresponds to his true Self. The reason is that he has no knowledge of the Self; his knowledge is limited to his body, his education and his native place.



The body and the mind are only instruments. They are under your control. Do not identify yourself with these instruments. You are the master. Master the mind and be a mastermind. When you explain to him in this manner, he will realise the truth and give the correct answer, "All these days I was deluded with body attachment. Now I realise that I am the Atma which transcends the body, is beyond time and which cannot be comprehended by worldly education." It is the unseen Atma which makes the body function. People forget the master (Atma) and get deluded by their attachment to the body. All that is related to the body, i.e., name, profession and education are temporary, transient and insignificant. Truth is your name. You are the Self, which is eternal. Hence, give up body attachment and acquire the knowledge of the Atma. So long as you are attached to the body, you can never attain the knowledge of the Atma. You may be able to quote from the scriptures but that corresponds to only bookish knowledge which cannot lead you to your true Self. You are the Atma, which is the source of all powers.

### **First Understand the Nature of the Mind**

In order to understand the power of the Atma, first of all enquire into the nature of the mind. The effects of the mind cannot be described in words. The mind is responsible for birth, death, action, family, childhood, old age, happiness, sorrow, success and failure. The entire life of man is based on the mind. Once you understand the nature of the mind, you will know the nature of matter. To understand the nature of the mind, you should have control over your senses. How can you control others when you cannot control your own senses? You should have sense control in order to become a good leader.

The mind is very powerful. Without understanding its power, man feels proud of his limited knowledge. It is utter foolishness. He feels he knows everything. He is diverting his mind to trivial objectives without trying to know the Atma. This is the reason why man is subjected to difficulties and misery. You are responsible for your happiness or misery. You should not blame others for your difficulties. As you are unable to realise your true Self, you are experiencing the dualities of pleasure and pain. Once you know your true Self, you will not be affected by them. It is a sin to blame others for your suffering. You suffer because of your lack of morality and improper conduct. Your destiny is based on your character. Character is based on actions. Actions are based on thoughts. Therefore, cultivate morality and sacred thoughts. None can escape the law of action which is based on the nature of the mind.

### *Embodiments of Love!*

You cannot exist without the mind. The mind is with you always. You can be called a human being only when you know the nature of the mind. This is the teaching of Vedanta. Vedanta is the essence of the Vedas, the source of Atma Jnana (knowledge of the Self). The Atma is like the control room. Once you gain access to the control room, all your senses and the mind will be under your control. When the main switch of the house is turned on, the bulbs in all the rooms will be lighted. The Atma is like the main switch and the senses are like the bulbs in different rooms. Take for instance a mansion consisting of various rooms like bedroom, storeroom, dining-room, bathroom, kitchen, etc. Each room is separated from the other by a wall. Once the walls are demolished, only one big hall remains. Body attachment is like the wall that comes in the way of realising the Self. Once this wall is broken, you will realise the infinite and immortal Self. Instead of realising the infinite and immortal Self, you have been developing attachment to the body over a number of births. Develop detachment at least from this birth. You claim

something as 'mine' but it will be yours only so long as your body exists. After your death, what you earlier claimed as yours will belong to somebody else. Such being the case, why should you develop attachment to worldly possessions? Human life is based on 'I' and 'mine'. 'I' refers to the Atma and 'mine' refers to matter. The mind has originated from the Atma. Matter is the effect of the mind. Once you know the nature of the mind and matter, everything else will be known.

### **Develop Harmony of the Mind, Intellect and Samskara**

*Students!*

You have a long life ahead of you. Do not wait till old age to take to the path of spirituality. Start early, drive slowly, reach safely. Be very cautious at this age and do not waste your time in trivial pursuits. Time is very precious and once it is lost, you can never get it back. Make every effort to know what ought to be known while your limbs are strong. If you cannot do it now, you can never do it in your life.

*"Oh man, do not take pride in your beauty, youth and physical strength. Very soon, you will become old. Your hair will turn grey, your skin will develop wrinkles and your vision will be blurred. Children will make fun of you, calling you an old monkey. You are no better than a leather puppet. Try to understand the mystery behind this puppet show." (Telugu Song)*

Who will come to your rescue in old age? Hence, make proper use of your senses and be self-reliant. Nobody can say for sure what will happen to the body in the next moment. So, do not develop body attachment. But you should take care of it properly so that you do not depend on others. Do your duty sincerely.

You refer to yourself as 'I' which is nothing but the Atma. Let your body be under the control of the Atma and none else. When you ask, who is Ramaiah, somebody will get up and say 'I'. If you ask, who is Anil Kumar, the person standing here will say 'I'. In this manner, the principle of 'I' is fundamental and is present in one and all. Just as one lamp lights another, it is from the fundamental 'I' that all other I's have emerged. The same current illumines all bulbs. Each being is like a bulb and God is the generator.

If someone asks you, "Who are you", you should say with conviction, "I am the Atma." What is mind? It is an aspect of the Atma. Just as sugar is the basis for all sweets, the Atma is the basis for the body, mind and intellect. One should hold on firmly to this fundamental principle. This will lead you to that state of mind which is the very form of the Self. If you think that the mind is like a monkey, then you are mistaken. Since you conduct yourself as a monkey, the mind also turns into a monkey. When once you conduct yourself as man, the mind will no longer remain a monkey mind. Then you will get the realisation that you belong to mankind. So, do not allow your mind to behave like a monkey. Then you will become a true human being. In fact, monkey is better than man. Hanuman was a monkey who served Rama with dedication. He taught a lesson to man thus: "Oh mad fellow! You make fun of monkeys but, in fact, they are far better than you. Are you, serving the Lord as I did? I obeyed the command of Lord Rama, crossed the ocean and found the whereabouts of Mother Sita. I stood in front of Lord Rama like a Deena (humble) and faced Ravana like a Dheera (brave). Likewise, you should be humble before the noble and face the wicked with courage."

Today man is behaving like a mad monkey. He may not have a tail, but he has the traits of a monkey. Give up monkey traits and take to the sacred path keeping the Atma as your goal. Understand that you are the spark of divinity and strive to bring about the harmony of the mind, intellect and Samskara. Samskara is very subtle. You may not understand its implications now. It follows you like a shadow from birth to birth. Samskara also refers to refinement. You have the power to refine yourself but you are not making use of it. The sacred teaching of the Indian culture is that man should strive hard to refine himself.

Indian culture is like pure gold, but such a precious culture is being ignored today. People do not respect their parents and elders. They have forgotten the sacred values of love and humility. They give importance only to worldly knowledge and material possessions which are transient and temporary. They will not follow you when you leave this world. What follows you even after your death is only Samskara and not Samsara. But you do not try to acquire Samskara and get caught up in Samsara thinking it to be permanent. That is how you lose your peace and remain restless in life.

*"In spite of his education and intelligence, a foolish man will not know his true Self and a mean-minded person will not give up his wicked qualities. Modern education leads only to argumentation, not to total wisdom. What is the use of acquiring worldly education if it cannot lead you to immortality? Acquire the knowledge that will make you immortal."* (Telugu Poem)

*"You will attain immortality only when you acquire the knowledge of the Self. "Oh student! You struggle hard in life merely for the sake of filling your belly. You acquire many forms of knowledge from various fields. Examine and enquire for yourself what great happiness you have achieved by spending all the time from dawn to dusk in acquiring worldly knowledge and earning wealth while forgetting God."* (Telugu Poem)

Can you say that you have toured the length and breadth of the world merely by looking at the world map? Likewise, mere acquisition of bookish knowledge is of no use. Enquire, what you have gained by forgetting God and reposing your faith in the world. Nothing whatsoever! You may go abroad and earn crores of rupees, but can you take with you even a Naya Paisa when you depart from this world? What is the use of merely going round the world? Does the spoon, which is used to serve various items like Sambar, Chutney, Rasam and Payasam (sweet pudding) enjoy their tastes? Likewise, man is going to various countries and reading various books without any benefit.

### **Faith and Determination Earn Divine Grace**

Embodiments of Love! Students! Develop love and share it with others. Transform this world into a paradise of love. Then there will be no misery at all. Understand the nature of the mind and you will be redeemed. You took part in Sports Meet, exhibited great talent and won many prizes. This is also very essential from the worldly point of view. Worldly education is for the life here and spiritual education is for the life hereafter. So, both are essential. Worldly education is like left leg and spiritual education is like right leg. Both the legs are needed for marching. Likewise, both forms of education are needed for progress in life. Left (world) has to be left some day or the other, but right (spirituality) is always right. Most of us use right hand to do our work. What does it mean? It means that we should do only right things. Serve everybody and

make Bhagavan happy. Only then can you say that you have made the right use of the right hand. Even in daily life, the left hand is used to clean dirt and the right hand is used for performing one's duty. The left is left behind and the right goes forward. In this world, leave behind the left and march forward with the right. Only then can you achieve the goal of human life.

What is the goal of life? It is to recognise the fundamental truth, i.e., the principle of the Atma. It is within you. It is possible to know this through the mind, which is the reflection of the Self. But man today forgets the Atma and loses himself in transient worldly pursuits. We should use the intellect because it has the capacity to discriminate. Take for instance an orange. You peel off the bitter rind and partake of the juice only. This is the attribute of the intellect. Likewise, the intellect should give up all that is evil and accept all that is good. Not only man, but monkey can also discriminate. If you give it a banana, it removes its skin and eats the fruit. Man has to have more discrimination than a monkey. What is the use of human birth if man acts in the same manner as a monkey or a buffalo? There is a lesson to be learnt even from buffaloes and cows. They graze in the fields and masticate leisurely whatever they have eaten. Likewise, whenever you come across anything good, accept it without delay. Later on contemplate on it and assimilate it.

*Students!*

Even birds and beasts are conducting themselves in accordance with their nature. But man, in spite of his education, has forgotten his true nature and is behaving like a fool. What is the use of securing 100 per cent marks in your examination if you do not know the fundamental principle of life? You may fill your head with bookish knowledge and vomit out the same in the examination hall to get good marks. But how many marks have you secured in the field of spirituality? There is no point in getting first class in worldly education and zero in spiritual education. No doubt marks are important but you should also see that you do not get bad remarks.

The boy who spoke earlier has shown how you should conduct yourself. When he fell down during one of the rehearsal sessions, he thought that he had lost his chance and felt extremely sad. He prayed to Me to cure him of his pain so that he could participate in the lion dance. Seeing his determination and faith, I cured him instantly. (loud applause) Such faith and determination are necessary to win Divine grace. Saint Purandaradasa said, "Oh God! When You protect Your devotee, You are Rama and when You punish the wicked, You are Yama. To Prahlada, You appeared as Narayana and to the demon Hiranyakasipu, You appeared as Yama. For Kamsa You became Yama but for others You were Krishna. You manifest Yourself in the same manner as man thinks of You."

Why does God punish? He punishes the wicked for their evil deeds. So, always practise: Help ever, Hurt never. The same was stated by sage Vyasa, *Paropakara Punyaya, Papaya Parapeedanam* (one attains merit by serving others and commits sin by hurting them). There can be no sinner worse than the one who criticises God. There can be no hell worse than distancing oneself from God. You may argue that there are many in the world who have forgotten God and yet lead a comfortable life. No doubt they are living, but they are leading their lives like dogs and foxes. One should strive to live like a devotee to earn Divine grace.

### **Unity and Divinity in the Sports Meet Students!**

Uphold the name of the Institute and be ideals to society. This is the gratitude you are expected to show to the Institute for having given you free education. In other institutions, you cannot get a seat without paying donation. But here, education is provided totally free. *Money comes and goes but morality comes and grows. So, cultivate morality.* Having been the recipients of Swami's love, every drop of your blood should be filled with gratitude.

Here is a small example. The Vice Chancellor made a phone call to Singapore and asked a trainer to come here and train the boys in the lion dance. Accordingly, he arrived and trained the boys. Yesterday, I called the Warden and asked him, "The trainer came here and made us happy. How can we express our gratitude to him?" The Warden said, he had no idea. I said that we would give him 40,000 rupees towards his travelling expenses. In this manner, I give personal attention to every boy and every trainer. You may think that Swami is somewhere and does not know what is happening, but Swami is here, there and everywhere. I give satisfaction to one and all and take upon Myself all the difficulties and losses that may arise out of your actions. But you are unable to know this.

All the teachers worked hard to make the Sports Meet a grand success. In spite of their advanced age, Radhaswamy and Ramamurthi worked tirelessly and extended their support to the students. They are serving in our Institute even after retirement. All have worked with unity. Where there is unity, there is divinity. Once you have divinity with you, everything else will follow. The success of the Sports Meet is the result of the collective effort of all. There is no Institute like that of ours. The unity, harmony and love that you find here cannot be found anywhere else. Swami is the cause of all this. (Loud and prolonged applause) Swami's love has brought about this unity. I am prepared to spend crores of rupees for the benefit of students. My only aim is to transform them into ideal citizens. Some people act in an ungrateful manner after receiving Swami's love in abundance. That is their fate. Uphold the name of the Institute wherever you go. That is what I desire from you. I am prepared to give you whatever you ask for. Many people who come here are very happy seeing our Institute.

Girl students from Anantapur Campus also worked very hard. Truly speaking, those living in Puttaparthi are very fortunate because they are able to have Swami's Darshan, Sparshan and Sambhashan everyday. But the Anantapur students do not enjoy this privilege. It is twelve years since I visited Anantapur, yet they are working with steadfastness and devotion with the conviction that Swami is always with them. Their devotion and sincerity will certainly yield rich rewards. Very soon I will visit Anantapur and confer bliss on all of them. (loud applause) There is bound to be a result of every action but one has to wait for the appropriate time.

Today many people are fear-stricken, thinking that there is going to be a war between India and Pakistan. No such war will take place. (prolonged loud applause) Bharat will be blessed with auspiciousness. Bharat is a sacred land and will be safe always. There may be minor skirmishes here and there. These days there is no unity even in a small family consisting of four members. In such a situation, how can a country with crores of population be free from minor conflicts? But there will be no war. All will stand united as one family. Pray wholeheartedly for the welfare of humanity—*Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu* (May all the people of the world be happy!). You can be happy only when the world is happy. There is an intimate and inseparable

relationship between you and the world. Chant the Divine Name. Pray for the welfare of the world and participate in service activities. Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, *Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahi...*

—*From Bhagavan's Sankranti Sandesh in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 14th January 2002*

### **News from Prasanthi Nilayam**

#### **Annual Sports and Cultural Meet of SSSIHL**

The sports events displayed on 11th January 2002 will remain etched in golden letters in the annals of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning when the students of its three campuses at Brindavan, Prasanthi Nilayam and Anantapur as well as those of Primary and Higher Secondary Schools brought about total perfection in almost all sports and cultural events they presented in their Annual Sports and Cultural Meet 2002 in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. More particularly, it was one of the best shows of adventure sports ever presented by the Institute in its Sports Meets.

The Anantapur Campus Band offered a splendid welcome to Bhagavan Baba, the Chancellor of the Institute when He arrived in His glittering silver chariot at the northern corner of the Hill View Stadium at 6.55 a.m. on the pleasant cool morning of 11th January 2002. Bhagavan then passed through a canopy of flags held by the House Captains. After this, Bhagavan was led to Santhi Vedika in a grand procession comprising gaily bedecked Sai Geetha, Institute Brass Band, Motor Bike Squad, Slow March Squad and Prasanthi Lions (the group of students who performed Lion Dance). The Institute Band provided beautiful tunes to the procession.

Bhagavan reached Santhi Vedika at 7.00 a.m., where He was offered reverential and affectionate welcome by the Vice Chancellor and the Institute staff. The Sports and Cultural Meet 2002 was inaugurated by Bhagavan at 7.05 a.m. by lighting the sacred lamp amidst a deafening applause of the spectators who filled every inch of the space on the stands of the vast Hill View Stadium. The chief guest of this year's Sports Meet was Ms. Uma Bharati, Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports.

The Sports Meet commenced with a very impressive March Past by various contingents. The marching contingents smartly moved past the dais saluting their Revered Chancellor, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Before the start of the sports events, Bhagavan hoisted the Institute Flag at 7.30 a.m. and released a couple of pigeons and bunches of balloons. The oath to abide by the rules and to participate in the games and sports in the true spirit of sportsmanship for the glory of the nation was then administered to the participants. Lighting of the Sports Urn on the top of the hill by a torch vehicle is one of the unique features of the Sports Meet of the Institute. This year the mascot to light the Sports Urn was Ekashrunji (unicorn).

### **Spectacular Lion Dance**

Then the fascinating display of a wonderful mix of brain and brawn commenced. First was the majestic and graceful Lion Dance which involved tremendous amount of grace, elegance, stamina and coordination among the performers. This stunning display of colour, poise, balance and skill performed by the students of Prasanthi Nilayam campus was a feast to the eye. This event was performed for the first time in India by the Indians. It showcased the aspects of auspiciousness, martial art skills and purity as traditionally believed by the Orientals. After their presentation, Swami in a loving gesture gave precious gift sets to each of the participants.

### **Daring Feats by Brindavan Campus Students**

The Brindavan Campus of the Institute was the first to engage the audience with their active and colourful display of feats. The feats of Bungie Jumping requiring great guts and courage kept the audience awestruck. The programme of Bungie Jumping, a relatively new adventure sport in India, uses nylon cords to drop a person in free fall from a height of several hundred feet. The students jumped individually and also executed the tandem jump from a height of 120 feet, facilitated by a makeshift platform hoisted by a crane. Aero Sports, consisting of paramotor flying was the next impressive item of the students of the Brindavan Campus. Two students displayed their flying abilities by skillfully manoeuvring the paramotors and making a perfect landing. Swami very kindly called these students and blessed them on the stage.

An impressive display of a medley of martial arts like Karate and Kalari was the last item of Brindavan Campus students, in which they showed their daring feats in self-defence and armed combat.

### **Grand Display by Anantapur Campus Students**

The Anantapur Campus students started their programme with a very ingenious item showing how man should fight his enemies within, symbolically showing the fight of the defence forces of army, navy and air force with the enemy.

This was followed by stunts on motor cycles which ranged from criss-cross riders and formations to jumping through a rim of fire and ramp jump over a stretch of fifteen students. They were truly breathtaking. The daredevil feats on motor bikes were followed by an equally elegant cultural presentation by the students. The appearance of the missionaries of peace in the end was a tribute paid to those people who had succeeded in resolving the inner conflicts thereby exuding peace around them. The concluding song conveyed the message "Heal the World" and make it a happy and beautiful home for one and all.

### **Message of Unity by Prasanthi Nilayam Campus Students**

The presentation of the Prasanthi Nilayam Campus began with an Opening Ceremony: a mass invocation to sun god, who bestows light, love and life to all mankind—the eternal symbol of unity. It was a depiction of Suryanamaskar, a daily ritual performed by the sages. The events named Blazing Trails and Rhapsody on Ropes that followed displayed marvellous courage, skill and balance of the students. The students showed harmony in group exercises and joyful splendour of life in their items named Rhythms and Expressions. The next item, Live Wires, consisted of stunts on Go-karts, jeeps and All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) and trucks. The power to perform these daring events was derived from the three M's—strength of the mind, power of the

machine and sheer guts of man. Swami, in a gracious gesture, summoned the students who performed these stunts and rewarded them with gifts.

The final item was the Closing Ceremony: A depiction of the theme of this year's Sports Meet, "Unity of Religions and Nations" which highlighted Bhagavan's message to the world—"Nations are many, mankind is one; religions are many, God is one." With this, the morning programme of the Sports Meet came to a happy conclusion at 10.15 a.m.

### **Colourful Display by Primary School Students**

The day's events came to an end with the colourful and pleasant display of cultural events, formations and gyrations by the tiny tots from the Primary School in the afternoon session at 3.00 p.m. lasting for about an hour. The students from the Primary School aged from 5 to 13 years performed complicated formations and gymnastics with symmetry, rhythm and grace without any help from their teachers or seniors. Year after year, it is the children of the Primary School with their amazing presentation of colour, variety and guts who capture the hearts of the audience. The fast paced Sivathandavam followed by acrobatic display on the aerial grid and the captivating dance sequences by the children were thrilling, enchanting and a treat to the eye. The scintillating Sports and Cultural Meet of the Institute came to a close at 4.25 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

It is amazing to see the students rising to the occasion and acquiring talents requiring perfect harmony of head, heart and hand in a very short period and perform like veterans in their field. It was evident that all the events—sporting and cultural were performed out of devotion and with the single purpose to please their Revered Chancellor, Bhagavan Baba. Bhagavan responded in full measure and showered His grace on all of them. Truly, the Annual Sports and Cultural Meet is an important component of the Integral Education of the Sri Sathya Sai Educational System and brings out the best in the students at the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual levels.

### **Cultural Programme by Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vihar, New Delhi**

The evening of 12th January 2002 came alive at Prasanthi Nilayam when the students of Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vihar, New Delhi presented a musical programme in Sai Kulwant Hall in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. The programme started at 5.35 p.m. with a beautiful invocation song by the children. The theme of the programme was unity of all religions which was well presented by the students in their colourful dresses by singing Hindi and English songs besides a delightful Quawali. At the end of the programme, Bhagavan blessed the children and posed for photographs with them. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 6.30 p.m. In a loving gesture, Bhagavan distributed clothes to the children on the next day.

### **Sankranti Celebration and Prize Distribution Function**

The holy festival of Sankranti was celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam on the morning of 14th January 2002 in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. The Prize Distribution function for the Sports and Cultural Meet 2002 of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning was also held on this auspicious day like previous years.

A group of students from Anantapur Campus welcomed Bhagavan into the Sai Kulwant Hall with sweet notes of Nadaswaram music when He came for morning Darshan at 7.00 a.m. After



showering the bliss of His Darshan on the assembled devotees in the beautifully decorated Sai Kulwant Hall, Bhagavan came to the dais and lighted the sacred lamps to inaugurate the programme. In the beginning, Sri A. V. S. Raju, Chairman, Nagarjuna Construction Company enthralled the audience with some of his excellent poems on Bhagavan Baba.

The function of prize distribution commenced with chanting of Vedic hymns by Institute students. The prize winners, both boys and girls, received their prizes from the Divine Hands of Bhagavan Baba for individual and group events. They were heartily cheered by the students and devotees when they came to the dais to receive trophies, cups and mementoes from Bhagavan. Special prizes were awarded by Bhagavan to three groups for their outstanding performance. The first to receive this honour from Bhagavan were the students who comprised the Institute Band which provided beautiful tunes to the entire March Past on the morning of the Sports and Cultural Meet. Another group which earned this honour were the students of Anantapur Campus who provided Nadaswaram music and heralded Bhagavan into Sai Kulwant Hall on the morning of Sankranti. Two Anantapur Campus girls who performed the daredevil ramp jump on motor bikes were the third group of recipients of this honour.

Bhagavan graciously permitted two speakers to make a brief speech before giving His Sankranti Discourse. The first speaker was Sri S. V. Giri, Vice Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning who expressed gratitude to Bhagavan for His bountiful grace and blessings and brought forth some outstanding lessons of the Sports and Cultural Meet. Admiring the courage, confidence and skill of the students of all the three campuses, Sri Giri had a special word of praise for the students who performed Lion Dance which they brought to perfection with the blessings of Bhagavan in a short period of three weeks' training. He also praised the spirit of adventure and fearlessness of Anantapur students who showed some daring stunts on motor bikes. The second speaker who addressed the gathering was Sri Sailesh Bangdel, a student of 2nd year M.B.A. Referring to the uniqueness of the sports of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Sri Bangdel observed that it was Bhagavan's love and compassion and the students' love for Bhagavan which made these sports so unique and enthralling.

Before delivering His Sankranti Discourse, Bhagavan very graciously gave His special blessings and prizes to all the three campuses along with Primary and Secondary schools for their outstanding performance in Sports and Cultural Meet. Bhagavan then gave His nectarine Discourse (full text given elsewhere in this issue). The programme came to a happy conclusion with Arati to Bhagavan at 9.25 a.m.

*Avatar Vani*

*Divine Discourse on First Anniversary of SSSIHMS, Bangalore*

### **Light the Lamp of Morality in Your Heart**

*"One may master all forms of knowledge,  
One may vanquish ones adversaries in debate,  
One may fight with valour and courage in the battlefield,  
One may be an emperor reigning over vast kingdoms,*

*One may offer cows and gold as an act of charity,  
One may count the countless stars in the sky,  
One may tell the names of different living creatures on the earth,  
One may be an expert in eight forms of Yoga,  
One may reach even the moon,  
But is there anyone who can control the body, mind and senses,  
Turn the vision inward  
And achieve the supreme state of equanimity of the mind?"* (Telugu Poem)

*Forbearance is the real beauty in this sacred land of Bharat. Of all the rituals, adherence to Truth is the greatest penance. The nectarine feeling in this country is the feeling of love towards one's mother. Character is valued far higher than the very life itself. People have forgotten the basic principles of this great culture and are imitating Western culture today. Alas! What has happened to this country? The Bharatiyas are not aware of the greatness of their cultural heritage just as a mighty elephant is not aware of its own strength.* (Telugu Poem)

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Man is making every effort to attain the state of perfection. It is culture that leads man to this state of perfection. Man has to undertake sacred activities to imbibe purity, culture, and character. Love is the fundamental principle of life. Fill your lives with love. *Love is God. Live in Love.* Ignoring such sacred principle of love, man is misusing his life by cultivating wicked qualities like hatred, jealousy, pomp and show.

*"The honour of a nation depends upon the morality of its people. Lack of morality will certainly put a nation to disrepute. True human race is that which upholds morality. Listen to this truth, Oh, valourous sons of Bharat!"* (Telugu Poem)

#### **Unity and Purity lead to Divinity**

Today morality has declined among human beings. One without morality cannot truly be called a human being. Light the lamp of morality in your heart. Only then can you lead the life of a true human being. Morality is the fundamental basis of man's health. Man should therefore consider morality as the basis of his life. He should recognise the truth that human life is meant to uphold morality.

Do not be under the mistaken notion that the body, composed of the five elements, alone constitutes a human being. It is a mistake to develop undue attachment to the body, which is impermanent and ephemeral. Besides the physical body, man is endowed with Manas (mind), Buddhi (intellect) and Samskara (innate tendency). These three have their origin in the Atma. On this basis, the Bhagavad-Gita declares, *Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana* (the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being). The mind is an aspect of the Atma. Do not consider it as a mere bundle of desires. From the worldly point of view, it may be a bundle of desires, but from the spiritual point of view, the mind is a bundle of divinity. What does man require to attain divinity? First of all, he has to cultivate unity in order to attain divinity. In unity lies true culture. Unity is the ideal that man should strive to attain.. Any mighty task can be accomplished through unity. Man has achieved independence but he is yet to attain unity. We find diversity everywhere. Some people think that Swami has established this Super Specialty

Hospital to render service to the people of Karnataka. I do not observe any differences between one region and the other. So, I have not constructed it for the people of a particular region. I have done it for the sake of the entire humanity.

Man should make efforts to visualise unity in diversity and thereby attain divinity. Unity leads to purity. Where there is purity, there is divinity. Only through unity, purity and divinity can you experience bliss. You can never attain bliss if you do not give up the feeling of diversity and cultivate the spirit of unity.

It is true that health is wealth. *Arogyam Moolamutthamam*. Health is the fundamental requirement of man. However, once you attain the state of bliss, you can always enjoy good health. Bliss is derived only from God. Man is deluded with the feeling that he can lead a blissful life by acquiring wealth and position of authority. Neither wealth nor position of authority can confer bliss on you. Bliss can be experienced only when you visualise unity in diversity. If you are not able to attain bliss, all the service activities like construction of hospitals will be of little consequence.

### **Hospitals should not be Made Business Centres**

Everyone working in our hospital, be they doctors, nurses, paramedical staff or technicians, is imbued with the spirit of unity. This hospital demonstrates the ideal of unity. All the staff in this hospital work with the feeling that they belong to one family. Unity is the fundamental principle of this hospital. This principle of unity leads man to an exalted state. Our hospital does not crave for money, name and fame. In ancient India, education, health care, food and water were provided free of cost. It is My Sankalpa (Will) to provide all of them totally free. (Loud applause)

Our hospital is not a business centre. All over the world, hospitals have become business centres. It is the worst of sins to run a hospital with the sole purpose of earning money. You should understand that you too might fall ill some day. Hence, you should treat the patients with love, without expecting anything in return. You should not expect money from them. If you expect money from them, then all your sacrifice is a waste. After I started this hospital, many doctors have become jealous of Me and have started putting obstacles. Come what may, I will never give up this sacred task. Their jealousy will only make My resolve stronger to carry on this sacred task more vigorously. They themselves will be ultimately ruined by their jealousy. *"There will be peace and security in the world only when people give up hatred and violence, inculcate the feelings of love and realise the unity of mankind."* (Telugu Poem) One should never be jealous of others' prosperity. Asuya (jealousy) is a bad quality.

Asuya and Anasuya are sisters. Anasuya was blessed with three sons, the Divine Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara. Asuya also has three sons, namely, Kama, Krodha and Dwesha (desire, anger and hatred). Asuya leads you to all bad qualities. Once you give up Asuya, you can win the grace of the Divine Trinity. You should participate in good activities and extend your cooperation to those who undertake them. Once I take up a sacred task, I will never go back on it. There are many poor and downtrodden people who are suffering for want of proper medical care. Nobody cares for them in big hospitals as they cannot afford costly treatment. What to talk of treatment, they are not permitted even to come anywhere near the

main gate of the hospital. Can there be a greater sin than this? I therefore decided to provide free medical care to all such poor and helpless people.

### **Drinking Water Project for Chennai**

Apart from proper medical attention, pure drinking water is also very essential for a happy and healthy life. My plan of action for the welfare of humanity is stupendous. It is bound to succeed. If one takes up a sacred task, one need not be concerned about the resources. Our country Bharat has no dearth of resources. But there are very few who have the noble intention of doing good to society. When you undertake a sacred task, even Nature will extend all its help. The sacred epic Ramayana stands ample testimony to this. When Rama was proceeding to Lanka to rescue His consort Sita, not only Nature but monkeys and other animals extended all help to Him. But man today does not engage himself in good actions. He goes on postponing, which is not good.

When you sow a good action today, you reap a Samskara tomorrow. Samskara leads to purity which in turn confers merit. That is your great good fortune. Man should always go on undertaking good activities. He should never postpone them. On this sacred occasion, I have decided to undertake yet another service project. In Chennai, there is scarcity of drinking water. The rich can afford to get water through tankers and lorries but what about the poor? They spoil their health by drinking rain water from ponds and puddles. Hence, whatever may be the difficulty, I have decided to provide drinking water to the people of Chennai. (Loud applause) The waters of Godavari and Krishna are being drained into the sea without being properly utilised. Even in Rayalaseema, people are suffering from water scarcity. The districts of Bellary, Anantapur, Cuddapah and Kurnool are considered as BACKward. I want to provide pure drinking water to all these four districts also. This project is bound to be successful. There is no doubt about it.

### **Make Proper Use of your Senses**

Man should have unwavering faith. But today man has no faith in himself. Then how can he have faith in God? People have become blind having lost the eyes of faith. One with faith alone can be called a true human being. Man is misusing such a sacred birth. We should utilise our precious human life properly by undertaking sacred tasks. *Janthunam Narajanma Durlabham* (out of all the living beings, the human birth is the rarest). Help others. Only then can your life find fulfillment. You know why hands are given to you? Is it merely to partake of food? No. They are meant to render service to others. You know why tongue is given. Is it to indulge in vain gossip? No. It is meant to chant the Divine Name. In this manner, all the senses should be properly utilised. This is what Buddha did. He studied various sacred texts, met many noble souls and listened to their teachings, but he was not satisfied. Ultimately, he realised that spiritual practices are of no avail if one does not make proper use of one's senses.

*See no evil, see what is good;  
Hear no evil, hear what is good;  
Talk no evil, talk what is good;  
Think no evil, think what is good;  
Do no evil, do what is good;  
This is the way to God.*

In order to sanctify your senses, you should utilise them in the service of others. *Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavathi* (as you think, so you become). If you have bad vision, listen to bad talk, indulge in bad activities, you will ultimately become bad. If you cannot undertake any service activity, at least speak softly and sweetly. *You cannot always oblige but you can speak always obligingly*. Today man utters harsh words which hurt the feelings of others. He puts his senses to misuse. Then, how can he expect to be happy and healthy? In order to enjoy total health, make sacred use of your senses. You may be a pauper or a millionaire. You may have money or not, but God has given each one of you five senses. Make proper use of them and sanctify your life.

### **Sanctify your Life by Serving the Poor and Needy**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Each one of you is endowed with Hridaya (heart). It is called Hridaya because it is filled with Daya (compassion). Today man's heart is full of harsh feelings. It is the quality of kindness that can transform the mind of man. Goodness and kindness are man's natural qualities. Wickedness is not the quality of man. He is one of virtues. It is said, human birth is the rarest but if man indulges in bestial and demonic acts, how can we say that he is superior to other beings? He should utilise his education, wealth and energy for the welfare of others. What for is all your wealth if it is of no use to the community? No doubt, money is essential but one should not crave to amass wealth. People build hospitals spending crores of rupees only to get manifold returns. To build a hospital is good. But it should not be done merely with a profit motive. Spend at least fifty per cent of the money for the welfare of others. But doctors today do not give free medicine even to a single patient. Poor patients cannot afford even the cost of medicines as the prices of medicines have gone up these days.

It is ten years since we constructed the Super Specialty Hospital at Puttaparthi. Believe it or not, so far we have conducted 70,000 operations free of cost. This hospital has completed one year and here also we have performed thousands of cardiac and neuro surgeries. Crores of rupees are being spent every month. Not many are aware of this. Even if I have to spend thousands of crores, I will not give up this sacred task. I want this hospital to grow further and serve the poor and needy. Our Chief Minister Krishna helped us to a great extent in the construction of this hospital. Besides other things, he gave us the land free of cost. His heart is filled with the spirit of sacrifice. *Thyagenaikena Amrutatthwamanasu* (only through sacrifice can one attain immortality). The Chief Minister of Maharashtra who is with us here today wants a similar hospital to be constructed in Mumbai. He is prepared to give the required land for it. In Mumbai, life is becoming increasingly difficult because of pollution. Pollution has affected the health of the people there. Health is wealth. Health is very essential to achieve any task.

Human life is not meant to amass wealth. When you depart from the world, can you take even a Naya Paisa with you? Man cannot take even a fistful of dust when he leaves the world; otherwise, there would have been rationing for dust also. What you ultimately carry with you is only the results of your actions, merit or sin. Hence, do not indulge in sinful deeds. Undertake sacred activities. *Paropakara Punyaya, Papaya Parapeedanam* (one attains merit by serving others and commits sin by hurting them). *Help ever, Hurt never*. To the extent possible, perform acts of charity and help everybody. Fill your heart with love. When you fill your heart with love,

your whole life will be saturated with love. It is our duty to treat the patients and alleviate their suffering. *Duty is God. Work is worship.* Perform your duty with love. I do My duty with love and not by any outside force.

### **Newspapers and Television should not Spread Untruth**

I want to make another point clear to you. People are indulging in wild imagination regarding the incident that occurred the other day. The incident has not been reported properly. Newspapers are mainly responsible for this distortion of facts. They are more interested in publicising bad news than in sharing good with others. What is the purpose of a newspaper? NEWS stands for North, East, West and South. So, a newspaper has to collect news from all sides and disseminate the same. Today instead of gathering authentic information, people write what they feel like in newspapers. However, there are some good newspapers like The Times of India and The Hindu, which did not exaggerate the incident. Newspapers should present the facts as they are. But they distort truth and publicise it in a sensational manner only to make money. It is a matter of shame to make money in this way.

Report the incidents as they happen. Do not spread false news. What happened on that day was only a fraction of what has been magnified and spread everywhere in a moment by the print media and the television. Even the television doesn't seem to have any work other than spreading such false news. Now I am seventy-six years old. Till this day, I have not had any contact with people from either print media or television. One can definitely develop friendship with those who report the truth. What is the use of talking to those who publicise untruth? Spreading untruth is a sin. If you speak untruth once, you will have to face its consequences in many births. Such being the case, you can very well imagine the fate of those who indulge in untruth hundreds of times everyday. Newspapers should report events exactly as they happen. No one will have any objection to it. It is a sin to spread false news.

Actually, what happened was nothing. I went up to the last row of the Hall, reaching out to even those who were sitting outside, collected letters from them, and then sat on the dais for forty minutes. Nothing happened. After that, I went inside, had a little food and visited the hospital to oversee the arrangements. By the time I returned to Brindavan from there, all sorts of false news had spread all over. I did not see anybody nor did anyone come near Me. But the newspapers reported that someone came near Me with a pistol. Is it not a blatant lie? Did any of the journalists see the incident with his own eyes? Why should they write untruth? After all, it was only an air pistol which is used to shoot down birds. Such a minor incident was exaggerated. It is a big mistake. Let the journalists think as they like. I have nothing to do with newspapers. My heart is filled with love and love alone. I share My love with one and all. All are Mine and I belong to all. I don't have hatred towards anybody. All love Me and I love all. Love is the intimate relationship that exists between you and Me. The newspapers made a mountain out of a molehill and caused anxiety to many. What a sin they have committed! Devotees from various countries like America, Japan, Germany, England, etc., sent telegrams to Me expressing their concern. There should be some limit to the jealousy of man.

The President of America has said that the terrorists should be wiped out. Who are the terrorists? Anger and jealousy are the 'terrorists' which should be killed. These wicked traits are present in every man. Man should make every effort to annihilate them. Only then can the world progress.

One should not kill fellow human beings; instead one should destroy the `terrorists' within and cultivate virtues. This is what I desire from you. Bharat will attain plenty and prosperity and set an ideal to the rest of the world only when jealousy and anger are completely eradicated from it.

*Embodiments of Love!*

Today we are celebrating the first anniversary of our hospital. I am not interested in such celebrations. I want each one of you to cultivate purity, love and compassion. You are all embodiments of love. There is no human being in the world without love. Love is sacred, infinite and most wonderful. Having been endowed with such divine love, why do you behave in a manner that is contrary to your true nature? I wish that you lead your lives with love and make this country an ideal one. With this, I bless you all and bring My Discourse to a close.

—*From Bhagavan's Discourse in Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences, Whitefield (Bangalore) on 19th January 2002*

***First Anniversary Celebrations***

**Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences, Bangalore**

Inaugurating "Sai Health Meet 2002" on the occasion of the 1st anniversary of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences, Whitefield (Bangalore) on the morning of 19th January 2002, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba deplored the modern trend of setting up hospitals solely with profit motive. Expressing His firm resolve to provide free medical care to the poor and needy, Bhagavan Baba said, "*Once I take up a sacred task, I will never go back on it. There are many poor and downtrodden people who are suffering for want of proper medical care. Nobody cares for them in big hospitals as they cannot afford costly treatment. What to talk of treatment, they are not permitted even to come anywhere near the main gate of the hospital. Can there be a greater sin than this? I therefore decided to provide free medical care to all such poor and helpless people.*"

**Sai Health Meet 2002**

The programme of Health Meet started at 10.45 a.m. with chanting of Vedic hymns. Bhagavan then inaugurated the proceedings by lighting the sacred lamp. Union Minister for Health, Dr. C. P. Thakur, Karnataka Chief Minister, Sri S. M. Krishna and Maharashtra Chief Minister, Sri Vilasrao Deshmukh shared the dais with Bhagavan.

At the outset, the Director of the Institute, Dr. A. N. Safaya spoke on the "Role of Super Specialty Hospitals" and gave details about the service rendered by this hospital in one year of its establishment. Dr. Safaya stated that in one year the hospital had performed 1800 cardiac surgeries and 1100 neuro surgeries besides providing screening and consultation to 68,000 patients. All these services, he said, were provided free to the patients in an atmosphere surcharged with love and spirituality by the highly qualified and motivated staff inspired by Bhagavan Baba, who was the spirit behind all this work.

Union Minister for Health, Dr. C. P. Thakur, who was the Chief Guest of the Health Meet spoke next. Praising Bhagavan Baba for building and commissioning this beautiful Super Specialty Hospital in a short period of one year, Dr. Thakur emphasised the need for speedy work in commissioning government hospitals because long delays added to the woes of the poor people.

The Chief Minister of Karnataka, Sri S. M. Krishna, who spoke next, expressed deep gratitude to Bhagavan Baba for providing free medical treatment to thousands of poor people, who were looked after neither by society nor by the government. Referring to the great transformation being brought about in society by Bhagavan Baba, Sri Krishna observed that the government and people should follow the ideals of selfless service set by Bhagavan Baba. After this, Bhagavan Baba gave His Divine Discourse which has been printed in full in this issue. The morning programme came to a close at 12.40 p.m. with singing of the National Anthem by all.

### **Panel Discussion**

In the afternoon session, nine eminent personalities participated in a panel discussion in two parts in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan who graciously sat through the proceedings. Dr. A. S. Hegde, Chief, Neuro Sciences, SSSIHMS gave a clarion call to adopt Swami's concept of unification through love and compassion that was in substance what the WHO was attempting to do. Dr. Hegde said people got left behind in the wake of progress. Many had no access to tertiary care. The future for them was bleak. The WHO had envisioned three concepts as part of their health development programme—to include sanitation, clean water and preventive medicine. Dr. Hegde said for years, Swami's institutions had worked on these very fundamentals.

Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, former Scientific Adviser to the Defence Ministry, Government of India spoke on the need for bringing down cost of tertiary treatment. He also said it was important that doctors treat both the body and the mind. He cited the example of a doctor at Mount Abu who had a three-dimensional treatment plan for cardiac artery blocks. A combination of meditation, nutrition and aerobics helped remove the blocks. Dr. Kalam said indigenous technology needed to be developed to suit Indian Conditions.

Dr. Michael Nobel, Chairman, Nobel Family Society and great grand nephew of Alfred Nobel said medical technology today provided doctors with a wealth of information. Sophisticated diagnostic procedures were helpful and technology had replaced harmful investigations with safer and more accurate ones. While highlighting the marvels of modern medicine, he decried the prohibitive costs. He praised Sri Sathya Sai Super Specialty Hospitals and said there was a need for hundreds more of such hospitals all over the world.

Dr. Noah Samara, CEO, World Space Corporation said thousands come to this hospital sick and go back with their health restored. He lauded the efforts of the doctors and staff. He said Swami's energy is evident at the hospital. Dr. Samara said, the corporate houses today needed to play a role in promoting health care for all. He said that the more a corporate house was involved with others, the more were the chances of its success. He called on the corporates in the West to follow those in India that sponsored health care in villages.

Dr. H. Sudarshan, Head, State Task Force, Health and Family Welfare, Government of Karnataka said there was a great urban-rural divide that needed to be bridged. He said the urban



poor were even more neglected than the rural poor. He stressed the need to improve the quality of health care. He said the value system of Swami had to be emulated everywhere.

Dr. Shekhar Rao, Chief, CTVS, SSSIHMS spoke on the pressing need for both primary and secondary care in the country. The feeling that they had nowhere to go for tertiary care was demoralising for many in the country. Such facilities were therefore important for the morale of the nation, he said.

Prof. M. S. Valiathan, former Vice Chancellor, Manipal Academy of Higher Education said the quality of tertiary health care depended on the efficiency of practitioners and their compassion. There were many institutions in India that were efficient but lacked compassion, and many that were neither efficient nor compassionate. It was only this institution that was both. "This is a shining star in a dark field", he said. He lamented that tertiary care was available to only 60 million people in the country and 940 million had to go without it.

Prof. Gowri Devi, Director, National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences said every medical institution in the country should be both a hospital and a temple like this one. She said it was necessary to look at health care as a wide spectrum and network primary, secondary and tertiary levels.

Dr. Chandrashekhar Shetty, an Ophthalmologist, said in the 11th Report of the Human Development Index, India ranked 120. This was an improvement over the 10th Report, thanks to the IT industry here, he said. The WHO Report of 2000 too ranked India around 120. He said that unfortunately higher education had been neglected. Higher education was a catalyst for socioeconomic change. We need patient-oriented medical education and not doctor-oriented medical education. The most important thing about health care was to make it available and accessible to all, he said.

Prof. B. M. Hegde, Vice Chancellor, Manipal Academy of Higher Education said the effect of Bhagavan on people could be called the 'Bhagavan effect' and was visible in the multitudes of people who streamed in and went back contented. He said thanks to Swami's effect here, we did not have the epidemic of suicide and divorce as in the West. He quoted from Ayurveda and said that depression and frustration led to blocks in the cardiac arteries and cancer. He said that control over the mind and spirituality would lead to good health. "it is not what you eat but what eats you—your negative thoughts that kills you," he said.

With this, the very informative and educative session of Panel Discussion came to a close at 5.20 p.m. After this, a video film 'Labour of Love' was screened which showed how Bhagavan's love and the caring attitude of doctors and other staff of the Institute brought smiles on the faces of the poor and needy patients.

### **Heart and Brain Exhibition**

A very educative exhibition was organised at the reception of the hospital on this occasion. Later, it was thrown open to the public also between 20th and 22nd January 2002. Swami visited the exhibition on the 22nd and spent over two hours in the hospital to the delight of both the staff and patients, not to mention visitors to the exhibition. The highlight of the exhibition was a

simulation of a neuro operation theatre. It had the state-of-the-art Stealth Station Neuro Navigation System that came to India at this hospital last year. The exhibits included the heart-lung machine, diseased hearts, brains, diagnostics, support departments and charts on therapeutic and preventive medicine. The exhibition was informative to both doctors and the general public.

### **Hurry, Worry, Curry**

*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.*

—Baba

### **What Does Religion Mean?**

*Religion today has been rendered meaningless and valueless by all kinds of misinterpretations given by sectarian and perverse exponents. The basic meaning and purpose of religion is to lead man to his source. The word 'religion' consists of two parts: 're' meaning 'again' and 'ligio' meaning 'to come together'. That is to say, 'reuniting with God is religion'. People consider religion as a bundle of doctrines and do's and don'ts to be followed strictly. This is totally wrong. The sacred aim of religion is to remind man of his divine origin and help him to reunite with God.*

—Baba

## Sathya Sai Educare and its Significance

*If one remains undeterred and unshaken  
When things go wrong to ventures that one undertakes,  
And welcomes everything with a smile giving up all worry,  
The heart of such a one is filled with wisdom.*

(Telugu Poem)

### Q.1. What is the relation between religion, spirituality and educare?

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

It is surprising to Me to note that you have been unable to recognise the relation between religion, spirituality and educare. First and foremost, understand what religion is. Religion is realisation. What is to be realised? When you realise who you are, then you will understand what religion is. So, religion is realisation of your Self. It is love that takes you to this realisation. So, religion means love. Spirituality also is discovering who you really are. For example, you say, "This is my handkerchief, this is my plate, this is my hand and this is my body." Then who are you? There must be someone to say that he owns the handkerchief, plate, hand and body. When you enquire into this truth, you will realise that you are separate from all these and, in fact, you are the master of all these. That master is the Atma. The same Atma is present in all.

What is spirituality? Spirituality is not merely singing Bhajans, performing worship, visiting temples, going on pilgrimages or undertaking any other good activity. Recognising oneness of all beings is spirituality. Here is an example. When you close your eyes, you cannot see anybody in this Hall. But the moment you open them, you can see thousands of heads. Where have these heads come from? If you enquire into the truth, you will recognise that they have not come from anywhere outside. They were all there within you but your eyes could not see them. In fact, all beings are within you and you are present in all beings. Seeing unity in diversity is spirituality. Questions and doubts arise when you see multiplicity in unity. The basic truth to be recognised is that there is only one Atma in all beings.

The next is educare. How can you call yourselves educated if you do not understand what educare is? The word 'education' is derived from the Latin root 'educare'. While education refers to collection of worldly information, educare is to bring out what is within. Education is for a living while educare is for life. Education is for Jeevanopadhi (livelihood), educare is for Jeevitha Paramavadhi (ultimate goal of life). It is easy for us to recognise external objects but difficult to look within. There are many things inside us, which are not manifest. When you join the three letters G, O, D, you get the word GOD. When you look at the letters individually, they do not convey any meaning. Our effort lies in putting together these letters to get the meaning. This is educare. Educare means to bring out what is within us. The Atma is our innermost reality. That is what educare should bring out. Therefore, there is actually no difference between the three—religion, spirituality and educare.

Whatever you see in others is only a reflection of your own self. When you see something bad in a person, it just indicates that your own feelings towards that person are bad. On the other hand, if you see something good in a person, it is a manifestation of your own good feelings. Whatever impression you have about others is a reflection of your own feelings towards them. Because a person has put you to harm, you call him a bad person and do not see anything good in him. Good and bad are all within you. Everything is just reflection, reaction and resound. Therefore, you should not judge others. You do not have the right to judge others because your assessment of a person is limited to your experience with him. There may be so many aspects of his personality which you do not know. For example, when you look at Anil Kumar, you will know only his dress, his complexion, his height and weight. But Anil Kumar is not merely what you see. There are so many qualities like love, compassion or anger, which are in him that you cannot see. Therefore, if you want to know a person completely you should investigate into all the aspects of his personality.

In modern times, people go by physical appearance and judge others on the basis of their external actions. This is a big mistake. Hence, defect lies in your vision and not in the creation. When you put on red glasses, everything appears red to you and when you put on blue glasses, everything appears blue. Only foolish people fail to recognise this truth and resort to criticism. Even in the case of an ordinary human being, your understanding is wrong. Then, how can you understand God?

God has limitless invaluable things in His store. But you come and ask, "Swami, give me a locket." You ask Him for petty things because you do not know what precious gifts He can bestow upon you. There is no dearth of anything in His store. Therefore, you should not ask God for anything specific. When the time is ripe, He can give you many valuable gifts. God knows everything and acts appropriately according to the right time, place and situation. That is why you find that sometimes He Himself comes and gives you things unasked. It is therefore very difficult to understand God. An ignoramus, who fails to understand the meaning of God's actions, often misinterprets them. He forgets the reality, loses his discrimination and goes on increasing his delusion. So, you should never succumb to this pattern of behaviour.

Educare, spirituality and religion are not different from one another. Here is a ring, a chain and a pair of earrings. All these are different forms of the same gold. If one realises this unifying truth, then where is the scope for multiplicity? God is one, though He may appear to you in different forms. The fundamental basis for everything is love. So, give love and receive love. You do not understand the divine power of love. Do not worry about religion. There is only one religion, the religion of love. Educare means to bring out the divine love latent in man. That is why it is said, Love is God, live in Love. If you understand this principle, you need not bother about religion or educare. Then there would be no conflict in the world and all would live together happily. Where there are differences, there is conflict. Give up these differences and live with the feeling of oneness. The entire humanity is one. Human race is one.

*There is only one language, the language of the heart, there is only one religion, the religion of love; there is only one caste, the caste of humanity.*

Religions are many but the goal is one. If you know this, you will understand the unity of all religions. "Oh heroic sons of Bharat! No Mathamu (religion) is bad for one who has a good Mati (mind)" It is incorrect to see differences between religions. The differences lie in our minds, but we find faults with religions. Do not go by religion. Do not worry about Mathamu (religion). Instead make your Mati (mind) sacred. Your Gati (destiny), Stithi (position) and Sampatti (wealth) are based on your Mati. That is what you have to learn.

The question that has been asked, in fact, relates to our daily life. In our daily life, we need to realise the limitations of education. What you read for the first time may look new to you but when you read it again and again it is no more new. Here is an example. Once God wanted to grant liberation to a person and sent Yama, the God of Death, to him. When Yama approached this devotee, he questioned whether the devotee knew him. But the devotee answered that he (Yama) was a stranger to him. Then Lord Yama told him that he would return to him only when he could recognise him. When Yama returned after three days, the same question was posed to him. Now the devotee answered that Yama was no longer a stranger to him because he had already seen him. Everything appears strange and new before acquaintance. But once we get acquainted, we tend to shed differences. Basically, you have to get rid of the sense of difference and develop the sense of oneness. You can realise unity only after shedding the sense of difference. So, we should develop this feeling of unity. Have strong conviction that the same Atma is the indweller of all beings. Then you will easily know that there is no difference between religion, education and spirituality.

## **Q2. What relationship should Sathya Sai schools have with the Government?**

Are there two types of education, one Sathya Sai Education and the other Government Education? Nevertheless, we must investigate the relationship between Sathya Sai institutions and government institutions. Everybody has a right on Sathya Sai institutions because Sathya Sai belongs to everybody. But government institutions do not belong to everybody. However, Sathya Sai schools should follow all the rules of the government. There is only one rule in Sathya Sai institutions. Love is the rule of Sathya Sai institutions. We follow all rules with love. The government enforces its rules, which implies 'force', but Sai's method is from the 'source'. One can pursue Sathya Sai Education along with Government Education. Sathya Sai Education imparts human values. You can pursue Government Education while adhering to these values. Then you need not observe differences between Sathya Sai institutions and government institutions. Both types of education can be pursued at the same time. Everyday you have twenty-four hours at your disposal. Even if you study in a government school, how many hours you spend in school? At the most you spend six hours in school, three hours in the morning and three hours in the afternoon. You still have eighteen hours with you. Allocate six hours for your sleep and six hours for personal activities. The remaining six hours can be utilised for spiritual pursuits and developing human values.

Man should divide his time into four parts in a similar way, and spend one-fourth part in spiritual pursuits. When you divide time like this, there would be no obstacle in your spiritual development. Sathya Sai Education imparts practical knowledge, while Government Education gives only bookish knowledge. While the former grants us spiritual happiness the latter, worldly happiness. So, do not ignore bookish knowledge altogether. Government Education gives us the

means of livelihood whereas Sathya Sai Education leads us to the ultimate goal of life. The two constitute the two sides of the same coin.

**Q3. As teachers working to improve ourselves, how can we understand the minds of the students? How can teachers overcome any deep-rooted weaknesses in themselves?**

The teacher must first have a thorough understanding of his own mind before trying to understand the minds of the students. If the teacher's mind is good, the students will reflect it in their behaviour. Since the teacher cannot see the student's mind, he has to understand it only by observing the student's behaviour. The teacher should observe and analyse the student's behaviour with his parents, his friends and his fellow students. It will be possible for the teacher to lead the student on the right path only after knowing the mind of the student by close observation.

Sometimes, parents give too much freedom to their children at home. The children misuse this freedom while interacting with their friends who too have no restrictions on their behaviour. But when they go to school, they have to observe certain rules and regulations. So, they must be taught to strike a balance between freedom and discipline. The teacher cannot interfere in the student's family affairs, for, parents give freedom to their children out of their love. Nevertheless, the teacher must keep in touch with the student's activities at home. But, unfortunately, in the modern age parents are 99% responsible for spoiling their children by providing them with excess money and freedom. The parents are mistaken in thinking that their children would be hurt if their freedom is curtailed. But when the children get perverted and run into bad ways, they feel miserable. The children must be kept under control right from the beginning itself. Just as speed-breakers control the speed of vehicles on the road to ensure safety, so too restrictions must be imposed upon children's freedom for their safety. The children should be given freedom in areas related to right conduct. But when they go on the wrong path, they must be punished. The parents should give freedom and money to their children only for doing good things. But they should watch carefully as to how the children behave. It is then that the child will tread the right path. The first responsibility rests with the mother for the child to follow the right path. Generally, if the daughter in the family is spoiled, the mother is responsible and if the son goes astray, the father is responsible for it.

Next comes school, which should control and regulate the behaviour of the students. It is here that teachers should strike a balance between freedom and discipline in the student's life. The teachers must advise the students regularly that their conduct will be responsible for the name they earn for their parents and the school in which they study. The teachers should talk to the students lovingly and counsel them to adopt the right path.

In some countries, children do not know the value of humility and respect for elders. The teachers of Sathya Sai schools must advise the students in the right way. They should explain to the students that they are born as a human, and that they are neither wild animals to strike terror in the hearts of others nor are they docile domestic animals to be afraid of others. They have no cause to fear nor should they cause fear in others. In this manner, the teacher must lead the students on the right path. Life is a long journey and must not be dismissed in a trivial manner. It must be spent in the most auspicious manner possible. We should lead a divine life and not

merely a long life. It is possible to bring about a change in students by such good advice. The teacher should maintain contact with the parents to see that the students are put on the right path.

Some children may have certain bad habits. The teacher should first check these bad habits of the children and then teach their lessons. You are an Acharya and not merely a teacher. An Acharya is one who first practises and then teaches the same to his students. So, when you want to teach good principles to the students, first you yourself practise and set an example. For example, if you smoke in the college, the students will also emulate you and start smoking. If you try to correct them by saying, smoking is bad for health, the students will in turn ask you, "Sir, then why are you smoking?" Then what reply can you give? No reply. So, if you want to correct the children, you should not have bad habits. The true characteristic of good education is good teaching. Good teaching brings about transformation in the students. It will make the students confess their mistakes before the teacher. I know this very well. Sometimes I show My annoyance to My students for their mistakes and become strict with them. Yet, I love them and give them what they need. This transforms their hearts. They come and pray to Me, "Swami, please forgive us. It was our mistake that we did not conduct ourselves according to Your words. Now we have realised it. We will never repeat such mistakes." Words that come out of true repentance melt Swami's heart and Swami forgives them by saying, "My dear son, whatever I do is for your good." All teachers can learn to emulate this example.

#### **Q4. What is the most important quality a teacher must have?**

This is very important. The teachers should practise what is good and teach the same to the students. The teachers should lead an exemplary life. Here is an example. When I was studying at Uravakonda, we had a teacher named S. Iyengar. The students were very afraid of him. If they saw him coming on the road, they would change their path and avoid meeting him. One day, Iyengar observed Me going into a lane when he was coming from the opposite direction of the road. Next day, I went to the class. I was the class monitor. You can imagine My height in those days after seeing how `tall' I am now. I had to get a stick and keep it in the classroom with which he would punish students. When he came to the class, he was angry with Me for not meeting him on the road. He asked Me, "Why did You not meet and greet me?" I replied, "Sir, I did not see you. I was going to My friend's house to take My notebook from him." He shouted, "So, You did not see me!" Since I had not seen him on the road, I replied, "No sir, I did not see you." He threatened to punish Me. I told him, "Sir, I am speaking the truth. If you wish to punish Me, you can do so." This answer melted his heart and he started shedding tears. He called Me near and said, "Raju, I knew that You would never commit a mistake. It is my mistake to get angry with You."

Later he called Me and asked Me to come to his house the next evening after the school hours. As instructed by Iyengar, I went to his house. He showered his love on Me and offered Pakodas in an aluminium plate. He said, "Raju, I made a mistake by thinking of punishing You. As an act of repentance, I want to cultivate friendship with You." Our goodness, our truthfulness and our sacred qualities will transform any person. I said, "Sir, your position is much higher than Mine. Friendship is possible only between equals." He replied, "You may look at it that way. But one's age and education are not important, what is important is one's heart. You have a good heart." In this way, he started praising Me by calling Me a good boy repeatedly. He further enquired

whether I was studying well. I told him, "Yes, sir." He cautioned Me that exams were in the next month and wanted Me to study well.

I appeared in the examination. The examination was for two hours duration, but I finished answering the paper within half an hour. I handed over the answer sheet to the invigilator and came out. Iyengar kept watching Me. He quipped, "Raju! You don't seem to have written anything!" I replied, "Sir! You will see it for yourself tomorrow. I have written everything correctly. I do not write or speak untruth." Next day, from the pile of answer sheets, he picked up My answer sheet first. He checked My answers one by one and found that there were some answers which were not known even to him. So, on the top of the paper he wrote, "very, very, very, very good." In those days, the teacher used to retain the answer sheets. Next day, he asked his wife to prepare some snacks and invited Me to his house. He told Me, "Raju! Have a cup of coffee." I said, "Sir! I do not drink coffee. I don't have that habit." "At least have a Dosa," he requested. I replied, "But I do not have the habit of eating at odd times." "Please eat at least for my satisfaction," he pleaded. To satisfy him, I partook of it. Likewise, students have many opportunities to make their teachers happy.

Though the students were afraid of our teachers, I was not. The reason was that I never committed any mistakes. I used to talk very sweetly. Because of this, my English teacher, Mahbub Khan, was very eager to come to My class. If any other teacher continued to be in the class even after the bell, he would ask him to hurry up and leave. In the class, all other students would tease Me by saying, "Raju, go to the front!" Mahbub Khan loved Me very much. He was 50 years old and had no children. He would ask Me to visit his house frequently. He was very devoted to Me. He was looking after the prayer arrangements and he asked Me to lead the prayer, saying, "Your prayer melts our hearts. You compose a prayer song and sing it." "How can I compose a prayer song?" I asked. He said, "You can do it!" I composed a song in which I incorporated the idea of unity of all religions. After listening to that song, all were surprised. I taught unity of religions even at that age. I always led the school prayer. After some time, I left the school, declaring, "Understand the truth that I am Sai. Give up attachment and your efforts to retain Me with you. The worldly bondage between you and Me does not exist any more. No one, however mighty, can alter My resolve"

All were bewildered. They came behind Me crying, "Raju! Raju!" Without answering anybody, I went straight to Anjaneyulu's garden in Uravakonda. I sat on a rock there and started teaching, *Manasa Bhajare Guru Charanam Dustara Bhava Sagara Taranam* (Oh man, contemplate on the feet of the Guru without whose help it is difficult to cross the ocean of worldly life.) The teachers held a meeting in the school. They were all so sad that they did not want to teach in the school after I left it. There was a Telugu teacher. He resigned his job, saying that he could not continue to work in the school. Afterwards, Mahbub Khan also resigned. Many other teachers followed their example. They loved Me so much that they did not want to teach in the school without Me. A Muslim boy was asked to go on the stage to lead the prayer. After coming on the stage, he broke down thinking of Me. He could not sing the prayer. Others also started crying. From that day onwards, prayer was discontinued in the school.



There is a bond of pure love between teachers and students. Students can win their teacher's heart and the teacher can win the students' hearts. If you want to be loved, you have to love others first. First and foremost, you should aspire for truth. The basis of Indian culture is, "Speak the truth, practise righteousness." I was always very humble. My teachers understood this nature of Mine. Now also, I teach the same thing to the students. *You cannot always oblige but you can speak always obligingly.* But sometimes, one needs to be strict. That is what I do. I can be harder than diamond when the situation demands. Otherwise, I am softer than butter.

Teachers! If you want to win the confidence of your students, you have to approach them with love. You have to point out their mistakes and lead them on the right path. Only then will they adopt the right course in their life. For the progress and prosperity of the nation, teachers should develop love for students and mould their character. Society will then get many good citizens.

**Q5. How to implement educare in the case of the children from slum areas including the children from broken homes who present the problems of discipline in the class?**

In order to mould the character of such children through educare programme, we have to visit their homes and involve the people living there by taking up social service projects like cleaning and sanitation. Explain to them the importance of cleanliness and tell them that cleanliness is next to godliness. When you start such social service programmes and visit the villages, the villagers will then be motivated to come forward to take up such projects on their own. Seva Dal has been organised by Me to help in such service activities. You can also take the help of Seva Dal members in such service projects.

The students from schools can be taken to those areas and involved in social service activities. One day in a week may be allotted for this work. Teachers can take up such projects with the help of students.

**Q6. How can we motivate children in the educare programme?**

It is not possible to make small children understand the essence of educare. They are too young to understand it. It can be introduced at college level. However, at school level, we can cultivate good thoughts and good habits among students. We can also inspire their young hearts by narrating the stories of great persons of their respective lands, and exhorting them to follow the ideals set by them. For example, the life of Harishchandra is a great ideal in adherence to truth.

**Q7. How can we attract the children of non-devotees of different religions to Sathya Sai schools?**

This is a very important question. Our students are our spokespersons. We have to reform the students so that they will attract the attention of their parents and bring about a good change in them. The parents may not know about Sai Baba. But when they see the good behaviour of their children, they will naturally change their minds. The students can also tell their parents that all their good behaviour is because of their joining Sathya Sai schools and practising the teachings of Sai Baba. This will also attract other children to Sathya Sai schools.

Let us take, for example, the good practice of the students chanting Brahmarpanam before partaking of food. Even the parents will be surprised at their devotion to God. If the children explain to the parents the meaning of the prayer saying, "Food is given to us by God. Therefore, we must offer it to Him before partaking of it. Then the food becomes Prasadam and will not be tainted by impurities." Thus, even the parents will learn to pray. We can bring change in the parents through the children. This is the way to bring the parents on the right path through their children.

Whatever our children do, they must do it properly. If any guests visit their house, they must speak to them courteously. They must offer them seats, make them comfortable and tell them, "Please be seated. Father will meet you in a few moments." Such behaviour will make the guests happy and will naturally appeal to the good sense of the guests, whether they are devotees or not. This is how we have to train our children so that they will attract others and be an example to them.

**Q8. How do we deal with parents who do not follow Sai's teachings and whose children are in Sathya Sai schools?**

We must teach our students to practise Sai's teachings, so that their parents can learn through their children studying in our schools. For example, the parents of a student may be non-vegetarian. When the student goes home for vacation, he can bring about a change in his parents by narrating to them with humility the sanctity of eating vegetarian food. The student can tell his mother, "Mother, I cannot eat the food prepared by killing another living being. This is not good for me. This body, which is made up of flesh, should not be fed on flesh. Our body needs sacred food and not flesh. Eating of flesh will induce in me animal tendencies. We should eat only sacred vegetarian food which God has provided for us." Thus, we can teach the parents through the students. And in course of time, even the parents will stop eating non-vegetarian food. I know many families who have stopped eating non-vegetarian food after their children joined our institutions. I do many things through students. Thus, it is easy to bring about transformation in parents through students.

**Q9. How to actively involve parents in educare programme?**

It is very difficult to directly involve parents in the educare programme. Hence, educare must be taught to the parents through their children. The parents do not know what education is. What will they understand if you speak about educare to them? Since you understand what educare is, you should put it into practice. Then the parents will learn by following your example.

**Q10. What is the role of technology like computers in education?**

To Me technology appears to be 'tricknology'. I don't have faith in computers. Just as human beings contract diseases, computers are also prone to diseases. I have been saying this for the past five years. Now computers are also getting virus attacks like human beings. You should become a 'composer' and not a 'computer'. How does a fault occur in a computer? It happens when something goes wrong in the head of the composer. You may use this technology to develop science. Firstly, set right the computer that God has given you. That is your head itself. Today, one uses computer for every small calculation. It looks ridiculous. God has given you a better calculator, the brain. Make use of its services.

Of course, there are certain benefits accruing from computers. I do not deny it. You should use them depending on the need. You are all fascinated by computers because of their novelty. But what have computers done to our society? Earlier people worked very hard from dawn to dusk. Technology and science have made them lethargic. They have taken to a life of ease. Technology is also responsible for unemployment. Unemployment leads to rise in crimes. Therefore, we should minimise the use of such machinery which renders many people jobless. Every hand should be given work, every crop should be provided with water and every house should become a workshop. Do not depend too much on computers.

**Q11. If a country is aspiring to start a Sathya Sai school, what should be done?**

It is not possible for all to start schools as all may not have the resources to do so. But they can start imparting educare through the Bal Vikas programme. Gradually, it can be upgraded into a school. Here I have an important point to make.

The good work done by women in this field is highly appreciable. Men lag far behind in this aspect. Women Bal Vikas teachers have done wonderful work in many countries. They serve the family, look after the children and yet find time for Bal Vikas in spite of their daily chores. In this Kali Age, it is a great blessing for both parents and children to attend Bal Vikas classes. Men too should come forward to participate in this work. Only then can the nation progress. Big schools and buildings can land us in troubles when we lack resources. Let it be on a small scale. Every house has a verandah. You can teach at least ten children in it. You can teach them the human values of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, Prema and Ahimsa. Tell them that a true human must acquire these values. Like this we can develop schools.

**Q12. What is Sai Baba's vision of the future of Sathya Sai schools around the world?**

There is no need to worry about what awaits us in future. Do whatever you are supposed to do in the best way you can. This will lead you to a brighter future. Future is not sure, it is not in our hands. Present is important. Present is not ordinary present; it is omnipresent. Take care of the present, the future will take care of itself. Did you ever think that you could be here attending this conference? No. When you do good work, that itself will bestow upon you a good future.

**Q13. Can children be admitted to higher classes in Sathya Sai schools directly or should they be admitted only to kindergarten class?**

There is no hard and fast rule that children should be admitted only to the kindergarten class. You can as well admit them in 3rd or 4th class if it suits you. Depending on the situation, you can admit them to a higher class. There is nothing wrong about it.

**Q14. Should Gayatri Mantra be chanted in Western Sathya Sai schools?**

I do not say that. You can do as per the dictates of your conscience. If you feel its chanting benefits you, you can do it. Gayatri is not a woman, nor does this Mantra belong to any particular religion or country. It is only the name and the form of a deity. It has the power of Mantra. Bhur,

Bhuva, Suvaha represent the three aspects of materialisation, vibration and radiation. These three are present in everyone irrespective of his country and religion. In this Mantra, one prays for the development of one's intelligence. I do not force anyone either to chant it or not to chant it. Mine is not 'force' but only 'source'. You can do whatever gives you joy.

I have answered your questions in brief. Purify your hearts and follow the Divine command. You give any name to God—Allah, Jesus, Krishna or Zoroastra. It does not make any difference. Develop virtues and get rid of vices. Sathya Sai is absolutely selfless; whatever I say, follow it implicitly. It is good for you. Attain happiness and share it with others. That is what I expect from you.

**—From Bhagavan's Valedictory Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 21st November 2001 on the occasion of First Conference of Sathya Sai Schools**

### **Swami's Call to Action**

*Jesus taught, as does Sai, the redemption of life through love. The Lords presence at this time grants its the example, the means of loving.*

—Hal Honig

The lord has said that it will surely come to pass. And so it must. And so it will. His Golden Age is fast taking form. Despite decades of Sai's Presence weighing overwhelmingly in favour of faith, old habits of fear gathered over countless lifetimes have spawned its families of doubts. Will this new time really come about? How will it happen? Do I have a role to play? If so, where do I begin? What do I do? How can I be an instrument on so grand a level?

### **Prasanthi Nilayam, Then and Now**

It is far easier to continue our rituals and pilgrimages, our Bhajans and meditation—worthy practices all—than to undertake the difficult task of rigorously putting His teachings to work in our daily lives. Doing this means that we have caught the true meaning of spirituality by making the time He grants us here useful to others and thereby pleasing to Him. Lip service is easy and common. The gap between the spoken word and the practised teaching is frequently found to be too vast to bridge. Bhagavan's words are clear and simple. They cannot in any way be found wanting. Though wreathed in praise, they are found challenging and are largely left untried. Yet tried they will be, for that is His Will. It is for us to put aside doubts and questions and dedicate ourselves to His Divine Mission. There is so much work for each of us to do.

In the late 1960s and the early 1970s, Prasanthi Nilayam was a very small place. It was difficult to get to. The roads and the facilities at the Ashram were minimal. The Mandir was small. Those few seekers whose great good fortune brought them to His Presence found Swami easily accessible and wondrous beyond imagining. His love, His bliss, His miracles were shared by all. It was almost too good to be believed. It was not possible to deny this transcendent, holy experience. Nevertheless, there were those who found it most difficult to believe Swami when He told of what would happen in this tiny village in the years to come. It was hard to imagine this remote place will be filled with devotees from all parts of the globe and it will become the

spiritual capital of the world. It was difficult to imagine that it would become hard to see Bhagavan, that He would be a speck of orange in the distance. That seemed too unlikely to happen in such an inaccessible country setting. There were those who doubted that such things could come to pass. Miracles, yes. Pure love, yes. But the heart centre of the world? That was too much to believe. Yet He said, it would happen. And happen it did.

### **Startling Changes of the Last Decade**

There are many who find it impossible to accept that this earth is in the process of transformation into a Golden Age. It is too much to believe. One only has to read the newspapers, watch television, and experience the seemingly universal selfishness to find the talk of a Golden Age to be well-meaning but clearly impossible. Yet He has said, it will happen. And happen it will and we are a part of the plan, if we so choose.

In the midst of the confusion of change, it is hard to see the larger design. That will be more easily apparent as the years pass and we will wonder how we could have overlooked so many obvious signs. Studying the French Revolution at school, it was hard to understand how the ruling classes failed to see the dangers all around them. Even the writings of the great thinkers of the time went unnoticed. Being totally self-absorbed, change seemed impossible to them. Then the revolution took place, guillotining many prominent individuals as well as the entire system in this seriously selfish and abusive society.

After moving into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we tend not to recognise the extraordinary changes that have taken place in the last decade, events that were unthinkable only a few years earlier. These changes are the harbingers of a new time, a new consciousness fast forming. Never before in the history of man has so much taken place in so short a time. Never before have communications been so instantly shared as the information revolution shapes the new world. Any important event of the world is shared by billions of TV viewers at the same time. The day will come when Bhagavan Baba's Darshan and Discourses will uplift, guide and inspire billions all over this planet as we share His experience of oneness, and the goal of unity, purity, divinity. Never before have such unprecedented opportunities and challenges been accessible to us all as we contract into a global community. Could anyone other than Sai have foreseen the startling changes of the last one-decade? Here are a few of the more evident events: Communism came to an end in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe; economic reform and free elections have taken place in most of these countries. The Berlin Wall has been demolished and Germany is no longer divided. South Africa has put an end to apartheid. Latin America has undergone great reforms.

### **Love All, Serve All**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we are faced with the problems of a society undergoing the turmoil of change. The hope here is that economic interdependence is the great force for peace and prosperity in the future. "Love all" Bhagavan tells us. It sounds so very easy, and right and desirable. But our experience is that other people are seldom as lovable as we feel they should be. And we wonder if we are ourselves very lovable. Jesus taught, as does Sai, the redemption of life through love. The Lord's Presence at this time grants us the example, the means of loving. Even though we may be completely dissatisfied with most of our fellow beings as we think they are, He shows us how to accomplish this and it is our duty to put His teachings into practice. At

the very least, we must keep out of the way of difficult people as best as we can, never doing them any harm. But far more than this needs to be done.

Phyllis Krystal in her book, *The Ultimate Experience*, tells of her being on a plane that was hijacked by two men who were pouring alcohol on the floor as preparation to setting the plane on fire. Disaster was imminent. She writes: "I heard His voice inside my head telling me to send love to the hijackers, and I had replied that I would direct His love to them if He would pour it into me." Swami did just that and He later said that the plane was saved because it had been filled with His love.

He hears us. He is always with us and will not fail us. We must consciously make use of His Presence and ask! Ask the Lord to do for you everyday what you cannot do for yourself as yet. For example, we can say: "Lord, please help and send Your love through me to these people for I cannot do it without You." As millions and millions of us throughout the world use His limitless power, transformation will take place. More and more people will be surrounded by His love. Some countries, Russia, Croatia, Ireland and others, are sending His love at a specific time of the day, once a week. All countries can do the same to let this all-encompassing love flow freely everywhere. Let each one of us remember to ask His help daily. What was done on one airplane can be done on the entire globe. It is time for all of us to begin.

"Serve All" Bhagavan tells us and extraordinary work has been done in India and in so many countries of the world. "Hands that serve are holier than lips that pray" is His reminder to all. Compassion means action in order to relieve the suffering. Verbal sympathy is not enough. The key is in the quality of the action. Community service is certainly expanding but we frequently tend to do things in a routine and mechanical way. Without humility, it is not service. We should always remember Swami's instructions and emphasise on the uniqueness of Sai Seva.

Remember the Lord's words before moving into action: "The uniqueness of the Sai Seva Organisation consists in the fact that it regards Seva as a form of service to the Divinity that is in each being. The bliss that is derived from such service is incomparable. It is a spiritual experience." Keep on silently repeating the Name of the Lord and never worry about the results. The results are His entirely.

### **Demonstrate True Meaning of Service by your Example**

The role of youth is an essential element in the transformation of society. Swami has said: "You must try to attract young people to the service organisation." At the present time, most young adult activities reflect the established patterns of Bhajan, study circle and service. This should change. Most important is to reach out into their communities and be good models and leaders, putting aside petty, personality distractions. There are those who have done that and their work should be replicated everywhere for it is impressive. When newcomers are given the example of service done by their peers with love and dedication, they become eager to serve again and to share in the good work and the good company.

An important part of the programme should include the careful learning and the dedicated teaching of the Education in Human Values programme as well as leadership training. Some giant steps have been taken in EHV in several countries but the significant expansion is yet to

come. This should be a major goal of youth everywhere. Swami has given instructions to share and spread His message with their peers:

- "Let each one teach a hundred and the message will grow and multiply."
- "May your service fire the imagination of others with an awareness to redeem themselves."

Let hard work speak in the language of dedication and let it begin now.

This is the time for each one of us to care, to work, and to share Sai's love with all. It is His grace to us.

*With single-minded dedication, this new Sai breed  
Shall serve as one together that His Mission succeed.  
Bhagavan's call to commitment is strong and sublime  
Oh warriors of the heart, herald now His golden time.*

AVATAR VANI

DIVINE DISCOURSE ON 24<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2002

### **Sanctify Your Life by Chanting the Divine Name**

*If you leave ego, you become dear to all,  
If you conquer anger, you become free from worries;  
You become prosperous when you control your desires;  
You attain happiness only when you conquer greed. (Sanskrit Verse)*

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

It is the main duty of man to acquire a cool mind like the moonlight and shining wisdom like the light of the sun. As long as man is egoistic, none will love him, including his own wife and children, He will win the love of all when he gives up his ego. Ego is like a bomb that destroys man. So, in the first instance, man should get rid of ego. So long as there is anger in man, he cannot be free from sorrow. He will be respected by all only when he gives up anger. One with greed can never attain happiness. Man can be happy and make others happy only when he gives up greed. Ego, anger and greed are the three evil qualities which turn man into a demon.

#### **Do all Service as an Offering to God**

There is One in this world, by knowing which you would have known all. If That is not known, there is no point in knowing the rest. That is the knowledge of the Self. Zero gains value only when the number one is associated with it. The more the number of zeros, the more is the value. When one is removed, all zeros lose their value. Love for the Self can be compared to the number one. Man's life gains value only when he has love for the Self. *Isavasyam Idam Sarvam* (the entire universe is permeated by God). Who is Easwara? It is the Chaitanya (consciousness) that pervades all beings.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Your lives will be redeemed only when you contemplate on the Divine Name incessantly. All your wealth and comforts will be of little consequence if you do not have love for God. In Bharat, there are millions of people who serve their fellowmen with God's Name on their lips.

"Neither by penance nor by pilgrimage nor by study of scriptures nor by Japa can one cross the ocean of life. One can achieve it only by serving the pious." (Sanskrit Verse) Service is very important. Serve everybody with the conviction that God dwells in all. As you serve others, you have to kill your ego. It cannot be called service if it is done with the feeling that "I am serving others." *Sarva Karma Bhagavad Preethyartham* (do all actions to please God). This is the attitude one should have while serving others. There are many who take part in service activities, but how many are able to enjoy the benefits derived therefrom? First of all, you should understand the term service. True service is that which is done with divine feelings, forgetting oneself. Service should be done as an offering to God. Service has value only when it is done with Daivabhimana (love for God) and not Dehabhimana (attachment to body). Even a small act of service done with the sole intention of pleasing God will acquire great significance.

### **Cultivate the Spirit of Oneness**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Enquire, who is serving whom. The one who is serving and the one who is served are one and the same. *Ekatma Sarvabhutantaratma* (the same Atma is present in all beings). *Ekam Sath Viprah Bahudha Vadanti* (Truth is one but scholars refer to it by many names). *Ek Prabhu Ke Anek Naam* (one God has many names). God is one though you extol Him in various names. Names and forms are not important. Feeling is the basis for devotion. God is Bahyapriya (lover of feelings) not Bahyapriya (lover of external show), which means God sees the feeling behind your activities. People from Bejawada (Vijayawada) have come here after taking part in Grama Seva (service to villages) chanting the Divine Name for the last 76 days. Thousands of devotees from Shirdi have come here on a pilgrimage. They visited various pilgrimage centres and have come here from Kanyakumari via Bangalore. *Karmanubandheeni Manushya Loke* (human society is bound by action). Why is the body given to you? God has given you the body to perform Loka Seva (service to the world). Do not misuse the body by indulging in evil thoughts and deeds. Undertake noble deeds and sanctify your lives. Man's foremost duty is to serve society with noble feelings. Consider the body as an instrument given by God in order to serve your fellowmen with love.

God is present in every being as the eternal witness. This truth is proclaimed by 'Soham' which is pronounced with each breath, 'So' with each inhalation and 'Ham' with each exhalation. 'So' means That (God) and 'Ham' means I. This process goes on for 21,600 times a day in every human being. In this manner, the inner voice reminds man of his divine nature as many times everyday. But man acts in a foolish manner without paying heed to his inner voice. Who is the doer? Who breathes, who speaks, who listens, who acts? It is the Self within, which is the same in all. Cultivate this spirit of oneness. The one who does and the one who makes you do are one and the same. Understand that you are not serving others, you are serving yourself. The same truth is proclaimed by the Vedas in the four Mahavakyas: *Prajnanam Brahma* (Brahman is Supreme Consciousness), *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am Brahman), *Tattwamasi* (That Thou Art), *Ayam Atma Brahma* (This Atma is Brahman). These are the greatest teachings given to mankind by the Vedas. Unfortunately, man today has lost faith in the teachings of the Vedas. Divinity shines in every breath of man. Truly speaking, man is endowed with Sujnana (wisdom) and Prajnana (awareness). But man, out of his ignorance, is acting contrary to his divine nature. Before partaking of food, you offer it to God with the prayer:

*Brahmarpanam Brahma Havir*



*Brahmagnou Brahmanahutam  
Brahmaiva Thena Ganthavyam  
Brahma Karma Samadhina.*

You say that the food is an offering to Brahman. Then where is Brahman? He is within. So, immediately God replies from within:

*Aham Vaishvanaro Bhutva  
Praninam Dehamasrita  
Pranapana Samayukta  
Pachamyannam Chaturvidham.*

### **Glorify Human Life by your Meritorious Deeds**

God is present in the form of Vaisvanara in everybody. So, when you help others, you are helping yourself. Similarly, hurting others amounts to hurting your own self. *Sarva Jeeva Namaskaram Kesavam Pratigachchhati* (whomsoever you salute, it reaches God) and *Sarva Jeeva Tiraskaram Kesavam Pratigachchhati* (whomsoever you criticise, it reaches God). There is no point in undertaking pilgrimages or chanting the Divine Name without understanding the oneness of divinity. You may call Him by any name and worship Him in any form, but God is one. Never forget this principle of unity. But, unfortunately, man fragments unity into diversity. Try to visualise unity in diversity. This is the true service that man is supposed to undertake. *Man Mein Ram Hath Mein Kam* (install God in your heart and use your hands in the service of society). Then whatever work you do will be transformed into worship.

Today man lacks faith in the path of service. For the past many years, you have been listening to discourses and performing various service activities. But what have you achieved? What have you known? Nothing whatsoever. Therefore, in the first instance, you should cultivate right conduct. Develop right vision, right listening and right speech. By practising these, you can develop goodness. Only then can you attain Nirvana (liberation). Do not be under the impression that God is confined only to temples. It is not enough if you merely visit temples and offer your salutations to the idols of God. Offer your salutations to all beings with the conviction that you are saluting the Lord Himself. There is no being without God. God is the Indweller of all beings (Sarvabhutantaratma). Man's foremost duty is to understand this truth and act accordingly.

You have been listening to various discourses, going on pilgrimages and reading sacred texts. But what is the use if there is no transformation in you? Man today has become stone-hearted. Heart should be as soft as butter. Mind should be as cool as moonlight and speech should be as sweet as honey. These are the main values that the Sathya Sai Organisation stands-for. These are the true ornaments of man. Though man is endowed with sacred qualities and immense powers, he is leading a meaningless life without making use of them in the service of others. Though God has endowed man with a sweet heart and a sacred mind, man is not putting them to proper use. Never utter harsh words; always speak softly and sweetly. Make proper use of the faculties given to you by God.

*Embodiments of Love!*

To be born as human being is the greatest blessing. *Janthunam Narajanma Durlabham* (out of all the living beings, the human birth is the rarest). It is the result of merits accrued over many previous lives. Such a sacred life should not be misused. Speak sweetly and offer your respects to all with a smiling face. You call yourself a devotee. But there is no truth in this statement if you lack these noble qualities. Fill your mind with noble thoughts and perform meritorious deeds. There lies the glory of human life. You should earn the respect of everybody by your behaviour.

Do not consider yourself a mere mortal. Jiva is Deva (man is divine). This is the fundamental teaching of Indian philosophy. *Easwara Sarva Bhutanam* (God is the Indweller of all beings). Fill your hearts with such noble feelings, put them into practice and sanctify your lives. Remember that you are born as a human being. Live up to your stature as a human being. Spirituality does not mean doing worship, going on pilgrimages or doing Bhajans alone. Spirituality lies in destroying the animal tendencies and rising to the level of divinity. So long as there are animal tendencies in man, he cannot rise to the level of divinity. Day by day, animal qualities are increasing in man. You are neither a wild animal to cause fear in others nor a docile domestic animal to be afraid of others. You are born as a human being with noble human qualities. So, recognise your humanness and divinity. But man today is not able to realise this truth and consequently he is wasting his life.

### **Divinity can be attained only by Love**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

It is most important for you to take note of these teachings, which I am repeating time and again. Never neglect them. The divine power latent in you is limitless. *Anoraneeyan Mahato Maheeyan* (Divinity is subtler than the subtlest and vaster than the vastest). Therefore, it is impossible to estimate the nature of divinity. Words are inadequate to describe it. Whatever description you give is only for your own satisfaction. It is a great mistake to try to gauge the infinite power of divinity with your limited mind.

However, the microcosm and the macrocosm differ only in quantity, not in quality. Here is a small example. The ocean water is saline. Go to an ocean and get a potfull of water. The water in the ocean and the water in the pot differ only in quantity but the taste remains the same. You should always have quality in mind, not quantity. God is interested only in quality. One teaspoon of cow's milk is better than barrels of donkey's milk. Don't get carried away by quantity. Do not run after material objects. Do not be greedy. Greed leads to sorrow. Aspire for quality. It is the quality and not the quantity that gives you happiness.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Today there are many who are in search of God. Where is God? He is here, there and everywhere. Such being the case, where is the need to search for Him? Prahlada said, "*Never doubt that God is here and not there. Wherever you search for Him, He is there.*" (Telugu Poem) He was a small boy. His teachers Chanda and Amarka tried to change his mind and even subjected him to punishment but Prahlada was undeterred in his resolve. His mind was always focused on Lord Narayana. He was constantly repeating His Name. One day his father Hiranyakasipu summoned him and said, "My dear one, it seems you have studied many subjects; let me have the pleasure of listening to some of them." Prahlada replied, "*Father! The teachers*

*have taught me many things, I have understood the four objectives of life—Dharma (righteousness), Artha (wealth), Kama (desire) and Moksha (liberation). I have studied many things; in fact, I have understood the very essence of education.*" (Telugu Poem) When his father asked him as to what the essence of education was, Prahlada chanted the Divine Name, Om Namo Narayanaya. Hiranyakasipu became furious. He could not tolerate Prahlada repeating Lord Narayana's Name. He punished him and sent him away. Hiranyakasipu hated God, whereas Prahlada had intense love for God. Only through love can Manavatwa (humanness) be transformed into Daivatwa (divinity).

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Never have hatred and jealousy. Kill your ego. Only then will love blossom in you. Through love alone can you attain divinity. That is why the Gopikas sang, "*Oh Krishna, play your sweet flute and sow the seeds of love in the desert of loveless hearts. Let the rain of love fall on earth and make the rivers of love flow.*" (Telugu Song) How nectarine is the song of the Divine! Only those who are filled with divine feelings can experience its taste.

### **Do Namasmarana and Redeem your Life**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

It may not be possible for you to undertake rigorous spiritual practices like meditation, penance, Yoga, etc. It is enough if you chant the Divine Name. Do not undertake practices which you do not understand. Take to the simplest path, i.e., Namasmarana. In Krita Yuga, meditation was prescribed as the means to liberation. In Treta Yuga, it was Yajna. In Dwapara Yuga, people performed Archana (worship), and in this Kali Age, Namasmarana is the prescribed path to liberation. "*In this Kali Age, chanting of the Lord's Name alone can grant you liberation. There is no greater path than this.*" (Sanskrit Sloka) So, sing His glory and cross this ocean of worldly life. Namasmarana is the basis of all spiritual practices.

#### *Embodiments of Love - Students - Pilgrims and Sevakas!*

There are nine paths of devotion: Shravanam (listening), Kirtanam (singing), Vishnusmaranam (contemplating on Vishnu), Padasevanam (serving His Lotus Feet), Vandanam (salutation), Archanam (worship), Dasyam (servitude), Sneham (friendship), and Atmanivedanam (Self-surrender). Paths may be different but the goal is one and the same. Follow any path and reach the goal. With the passage of time, you should move closer to the goal. Do not go away from it. Never act against the divine command. Do not submit to selfishness and self-interest. Selfishness takes you away from spirituality. Give up selfishness and dedicate your lives for the divine cause. When you proceed along the divine path, you will be charged with divine energy.

Today thousands of people from Shirdi have come here after visiting many Punya Kshetras (pilgrimage centres). They have been chanting the Divine Name all along. It is the power of Namasmarana that has brought them to Prasanthi Nilayam. Kshetras (fields) may be different but the Kshetrajna (knower of the field) is one. The Lord says in the Gita, Kshetrajnām Chapimāam Viddhi... (recognise Me as the knower of the field also). There can be no Kshetra without Kshetrajna. You may visit any number of Punya Kshetras but in the first instance, you have to purify your Hridaya Kshetra (field of the heart). Never utter harsh words. Do not criticise others. Give up Para Chintana (thinking about others) and cultivate Paramatma Chintana (thinking about God). This is the true Sadhana.

Serve the needy to the extent possible. The service you render should be meaningful and purposeful. Here is a small example. Many of our former students are undertaking various service activities in the neighbouring villages, e.g., Brahmanapalli, Beedupalli, Enumulapalli, etc. How should one serve? One should do it in the true spirit of service. When you go to a village for service, you should involve the villagers also in the service activities and motivate them to undertake such sacred work everyday in their village. It is not possible for you to go to the villages everyday. You may go to a village once in a month or two. Therefore, when you involve the villagers in the service activities, they will learn to serve themselves. You should teach them the importance of cleanliness. Usually, villagers live in unhygienic conditions which cause various diseases. So, you should teach them to keep their village clean. The water that we drink and the air that we breathe should be free from pollution. Only then can we lead a happy and healthy life.

Cultivate Samyak Drishti (right vision), Samyak Vak (right speech), Samyak Shravanam (right listening), Samyak Bhavam (right thinking) and Samyak Karma (right action). This will make your life perfect. Then you become deserving of Divine grace. Only then can you attain Saayujyam (liberation). Saalokyam (perception of the Divine) is the first step, Saameepyam (proximity to the Divine) is the second, Saarupyam (identity with the Divine) is the third and Saayujyam (merger with the Divine) is the fourth. Just as rivers ultimately merge with the ocean, man should become one with God. *Nadinam Sagaro Gathi* (the ocean is the goal of the rivers). What is the goal of human life? Is it to enjoy worldly pleasures? No. You may have all the comforts you like, but ultimately you should strive to become one with the Divine. The very purpose of life is to have the vision of God, experience Him and ultimately merge with Him. But today man is doing just the opposite. He has forgotten God and is wasting his life in the pursuit of worldly pleasures. Human life is highly sacred, noble and divine. It should not be wasted in such unworthy pursuits.

*Students! Pilgrims!*

Do not be carried away by worldly pleasures. Take to the sacred path and sanctify your time by chanting the Divine Name. There is no need to allocate a specific time or place for Namasmarana. You can do it wherever you are and whatever you are doing. One needs to pay tax for water, electricity, etc., but there is no tax for Namasmarana. Nobody can stop you from doing it. It is very simple, yet most effective. But man does not realise the value of namasmarana as it is so easy to practise. He thinks that God can be attained only through severe austerities. This is a misconception. Without troubling yourself or causing trouble to others, you can chant the Divine Name.

Cultivate love for God. That is true devotion. Without love, there is no devotion. Love is the basis of all spiritual practices like Japa, Tapa, Yoga, Dhyana, etc. Bereft of love, any spiritual practice is a futile exercise. For the life here and hereafter, love is most important. Love is the basic requirement for all, whether one is an Aartha (one in distress), an Artharthi (seeker of wealth), Jijnasu (seeker of knowledge) or a Jnani (one of wisdom). Love is the foundation for a theist as well as an atheist. Develop such sacred love. Do not criticise or ridicule anybody. Give happiness to all by sharing your love with them. This is the true spiritual practice. Follow this simple path, experience Ananda and sanctify your lives.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, *Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare ...*

*From Bhagavan's Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 24th February 2002*

### **Divine Cure: Stranger than Fiction**

—Dr. K. Kanwar

*Baba is the greatest healer who treads this earth. He can heal with His look or touch, a mere brush of His robe, and also when He ignores you. He is the Doctor of doctors.*

As a doctor, I have witnessed numerous patients suffering from very serious ailments who, despite treatment in the best hospitals of the world, could not be cured, but they were miraculously cured by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Towards the end of March 1995, it was my turn to be a patient of a fatal disease. I started feeling very weak and suffered from pain all over the body which remained throughout the day. I had much difficulty in micturition, and that too with frequency of burning sensation. Constant headache and drowsiness made my work in the consultation chamber a torture for me, and I had to rest for about half an hour before starting examining the patients. I consulted a number of specialists who advised me to undergo a battery of tests and ultrasound examination of the prostate gland.

#### **Cancer of the Prostate Gland Diagnosed**

The urologist whom I consulted examined my pathological reports and remarked that the results pointed to cancer of the prostate gland. The specialist advised me to undergo extensive open surgery as the disease by then may have spread to the surrounding area and elsewhere. In view of my handicaps of obesity, history of ischaemic heart disease for which I had balloon angioplasty done and the cancerous process, etc., he advised that "the cardiothoracic surgical unit was to be kept ready for any emergencies" during operation. I was completely shocked and remembered Swami in this hour of crisis in my life. "Swami," I thought, "Whatever You do is for my good as You are my Divine Mother and Father. You only know what is best for me and I would gratefully accept Your verdict."

On my returning home after the consultation, my wife inquired about my diagnosis and the result of the investigations. When I told her what had transpired, she suggested that both of us should go to Whitefield (Bangalore) to have Swami's Darshan and guidance. On reaching Swami's Ashram at Whitefield, we found Sai Ramesh Hall jam-packed with devotees, giving us little chance of attracting Swami's attention, particularly when it was difficult for me to sit on the ground. In case I sat on a bench, the possibility of Swami coming there was remote.

On the second day of our visit, Mrs. Safaya, wife of Dr. A. N. Safaya, Director, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences, happened to be sitting next to Nimi, my wife. Nimi told her about my illness and our purpose of visiting Whitefield. Mrs. Safaya informed us that after Darshan, Dr. Safaya would be in his room for a few minutes when he could be consulted. When

we met Dr. Safaya, he told us that he along with his wife was shortly proceeding to Delhi and as such he could be of little help. However, he said, before leaving he would speak to Swami about me. Later he spoke to Swami about my illness. Swami told him that I had cancer of the prostate gland for the last 10 years but He had checked its deterioration. Next day, during Darshan time, Swami spoke to my wife, Nimi and told her to proceed to the interview room. Nimi tried to call me for interview but I could not see her calling me. However, later Swami asked me too to proceed for interview. In the interview room, first He spoke to a team of officers who were working on Sri Sathya Sai Water Supply Project, a huge multi-crore project for providing water to Rayalaseema region in Andhra Pradesh, which for centuries did not have enough drinking water and efforts by the British and Indian governments completely failed to yield any worthwhile results.

### **Operation with Divine Touch**

After giving final instructions to the group, Swami looked at me and with His outstretched hand, fingers apart and palm directed to the ground, He waved His hand and materialised a beautiful ring on which AUM in Hindi was written. He pushed this ring on my right ring finger where it fitted perfectly. He then told me, "Doctor, you have had this cancer for 10 years." Again He waved His hand and materialised Vibhuti, gave some to me and the rest He distributed to the ladies sitting in the interview room. After this, He asked us to proceed to the inner interview room. The first question I asked Baba was: "Swami, how do You say that I had cancer for 10 years?" Baba looked into my eyes and I suddenly remembered that 10 years ago I had acute retention of urine and had to be kept in the Emergency Department of All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi overnight and the obstruction was relieved only the next morning. Following investigations, I was found to have adenoma of prostate, for which I had to undergo surgery by trans-urethral resection twice.

Swami lovingly looked at me and said, "Do not worry, I shall still look after you. But this time you require extensive surgery. I shall phone Dr. Bhat, the chief of Urology Department in Super Specialty Hospital at Puttaparthi. Dr. Bhat will look after you." Both Nimi and I hesitated for a moment as the weather was very hot, and so, we thought, that there was much risk for sepsis. Before we could say anything, Swami said, "Do not worry, I can make all arrangements in Bangalore also or wherever you like." I then realised my folly. It dawned on me that Swami's arrangements are always perfect and because He first mentioned Puttaparthi Hospital, why should I hesitate to go there? Moreover, it was more a temple of healing than a hospital where Swami had treated numerous cases and sanctified the entire environment. We both requested Swami to arrange surgery in the Super Specialty Hospital at Puttaparthi. Then Nimi spoke to Swami thus: "Swami, each year when we come to You, he develops a new problem. We feel very much ashamed of constantly begging boons from You." To this, Swami replied, "No, there is absolutely no shame in asking Me, because I am your Father and Mother and, in fact, everything." Nimi then prayed to Swami, "Swami, You please operate on him." Swami replied, "Do not worry; My blessings are with him. I will protect him." Swami then put His hand on my head lovingly. What a delightful experience it was! I felt very powerful as blissful vibrations passed throughout my entire body. It was a unique experience, something very difficult to describe. Next, Swami ordered me firmly, "Doctor, you go and sit on the chair outside—not on the ground." I obeyed His command, the meaning of which I understood later. When He came out of the inner interview room, He told me that He would call me again for interview. Next

morning, He again called us for interview and we found that a chair had been kept next to Swami's. As we entered, Swami asked me to sit on the chair.

### **Miraculous Cure of Cancer**

It was Tuesday. Swami told me that He had spoken to Dr. Bhat, a very famous urologist and nephrologist, who heads the team in Puttaparthi Super Specialty Hospital. He also told me that the surgery was fixed for Thursday, two days later. We were called for a thorough check-up the next morning. Next day, before leaving for the hospital check-up, we offered our Pranams to Swami. After receiving His blessings, we proceeded to the hospital for check-up. When we reached there, we found a team of doctors waiting for me. They conducted various tests. Dr. Bhat spent a good deal of time on my physical examination and reading the various reports. He then scanned through the ultrasound films very carefully. After thorough examination, he said, "Well, Dr. Kanwar, I find absolutely no abnormality in your prostate gland." I was completely surprised at this observation of Dr. Bhat and asked him in disbelief, "But doctor, what about all these reports? They are from the best specialists in Delhi." To this Dr. Bhat replied, "With all the years of experience that I have, I can very confidently reassure you that there is nothing wrong with your prostate gland. Baba must have cured you." Nimi, however, was far from satisfied and told him that we had come fully prepared for surgery from Delhi. "Moreover, why did Baba tell us that the operation would be done on Thursday—the next day?" she asked. Dr. Bhat replied, "Swami's very clear instructions to me were to operate, if necessary. I find no abnormality." To further satisfy us, he repeated uroflometry which showed excellent results. So, he asked us to return with confidence.

### **Baba: the Doctor of Doctors**

Next morning, Swami came to me and asked, "Doctor, did you not go to Puttaparthi?" Before I could answer, He had walked across several Darshan lines. Next day, He said, "I shall telephone Dr. Bhat and inquire about the results" and walked away. I smiled to myself, for I was now absolutely sure that He had cured my cancer during the interview when He had put His hand on my head, and I had felt very powerful vibrations. It was only then that I realised why He had asked me to sit on the chair for two days—perhaps then after the divine operation, the wound was not healed. Afterwards, He never asked me to sit on the chair. He gave me Padanamaskar for five days consecutively, two times in the interview room and thrice afterwards. He not only blessed me with Divine Padanamaskars but gave me a new life also. On the following day, Baba told me, "Dr. Bhat says, operation is not indicated" and then He walked up to Nimi and told her that He had cured my cancer. I was convinced that once Swami said, He had cured the cancer, then it was not necessary to repeat the tests. But because of the insistence of my colleagues, I repeated the investigations seven times, but they were found all normal.

Baba is the greatest healer who treads this earth. He can heal with His look or touch, a mere brush of His robe, and also when He ignores you. He is the Doctor of doctors. I offer my most humble obeisance at His Divine Lotus Feet. Swami explains the secret of the cure that many afflicted persons experience in His Presence. He says, "It is My experience that I am one with every sentient thing, every human being. My love flows out to everyone for I see everyone as Myself. If a person reciprocates My love from the depth and purity of his heart, My love and his meet in unison and he is cured of the affliction. Where there is no reciprocation, there is no cure."

## **News from Prasanthi Nilayam**

### **Loving Welcome to Bhagavan on Return to Prasanthi Nilayam**

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba returned to Puttaparthi on the morning of 6th February 2002 after about three weeks' stay at Brindavan. Joyous scenes were witnessed everywhere in and around Puttaparthi when Bhagavan's motorcade entered the precincts of the abode of peace. Devotees from Puttaparthi and adjoining villages lined along the route of Bhagavan in large numbers to welcome Bhagavan on His return to Puttaparthi. People offered Arati, broke coconuts and showered flowers and hailed Bhagavan's Jai on the entire route from the village Mamillapallikunta to Prasanthi Nilayam. A group of motorbike riders escorted Bhagavan's motorcade along the entire route. Banners of welcome, welcome arches and Rangoli on the route of Bhagavan exhibited people's joy and enthusiasm. Bhagavan was offered traditional welcome of Poorna Kumbham amidst Veda chanting by Institute students when He entered Sai Kulwant Hall at 7.30 a.m. School students expressed their joy by performing Bhangra dance. This grand welcome concluded with Arati to Bhagavan.

### **Showers of Divine Grace on the Pilgrims to Prasanthi Nilayam**

Thousands of pilgrims visit Prasanthi Nilayam every month from various parts of the world. During the month of February 2002 also pilgrims from various parts of the world coming from all strata of society visited Prasanthi Nilayam in small and big groups. However, on 24th February 2002, thousands of pilgrims came to Prasanthi Nilayam from Shirdi and Vijayawada. The pilgrimage of Vijayawada devotees culminated at Prasanthi Nilayam when they came here after taking part in Grama Seva (service to villages) while chanting the Divine Name for 76 days to mark the 76th year of the Avatar. The pilgrims from Shirdi came here after visiting various places of pilgrimage. Pleased with the devotion and dedication of these pilgrims, Bhagavan showered His Divine Grace on them and delivered a nectarine Discourse on the afternoon of 24th February 2002. Bhagavan's Discourse was followed by Bhajans which were led by Institute students and sung in chorus by all the assembled devotees. The programme came to a close at 4.25 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

## **News from Brindavan Ashram**

### **Bhagavan Inaugurates the New Ward of Sri Sathya Sai General Hospital, Whitefield**

Bhagavan inaugurated a 32-bed new Ward on the first floor of Sri Sathya Sai General Hospital, Whitefield on Sunday, 27th January 2002. A Ganesha idol was consecrated in the prayer area to mark the inauguration by Bhagavan.

Bhagavan surcharges the hospital with love and compassion by His every visit. This two-hour visit of Bhagavan, too, served as a great source of strength, joy and encouragement to the staff of the hospital. Completing over twenty-five years of service to the large number of patients who come here for treatment, this hospital has grown into a highly recognised institution of service. Patients from Karnataka and neighbouring States have benefited from the free of cost, multi-specialty care offered by the hospital. Increased patient attendance has resulted in the addition of



this new modern Ward. With this, the hospital has now over one hundred beds and is geared to perform over fifteen multi-specialty surgeries everyday.

On this occasion, Bhagavan spoke about the power of dedicated service and the strength one derives when serving. He graciously appreciated the good work done by all the doctors, including the visiting doctors from Bangalore City and support staff of the hospital. Recalling the services of late Dr. C. Rajeshwari, He exhorted the staff to rededicate themselves to alleviate the suffering of every patient and to view this as service to the Lord.

### **News from Inland Sai Centres**

**Andhra Pradesh:** Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Andhra Pradesh conducted an eye camp at Kurnool where 32 cataract operations were performed free of charge on old and needy villagers from six villages. Medical check-up camps were also organised on 9th, 20th and 27th January 2002 in villages of West Godavari District.

**Himachal Pradesh:** Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Himachal Pradesh organised 18 medical camps in snow clad mountains of Chamba and Kangra districts for tribal villages, viz., Mahla, Bhadian, Bharmaur, Morthea, etc. Approximately 2,300 patients benefited from the camps by the medical aid provided by the doctors.

Besides, four Bal Vikas training programmes one each in Chamba and Una districts and two in Kangra district, were organised from 25th to 28th January 2002 in which 600 ladies were trained in the methods and concept of Bal Vikas.

**Karnataka:** Gulbarga Sathya Sai Samiti of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Karnataka State organised a "Golden Age Elocution Competition" for students of degree colleges on 27th January 2002 which was inaugurated by Dr. A. B. Malakreddy, Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Government of Karnataka. A public seminar on the subject "Character Building is the Aim of Education" was also held on the same date in which a large number of students and devotees took part.

**Tamil Nadu:** Two Sri Sathya Sai Drinking Water Projects with 30,000 litres overhead tanks and eight street fountains each were inaugurated by Sri V. Srinivasan, All India President, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations at Chitherimedu and Aambakkam (Kancheepuram District) on 24th February 2002. Rural medical camps were also organised at these places for the benefit of the villagers.

**West Bengal:** Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, West Bengal conducted a service camp on the occasion of Makara Sankranti at Ganga Sagar Mela venue from 10th to 15th January 2002 in which 136 Seva Dal volunteers took part. They kept the entire area of 4 km long beach neat and clean during this holy festival for lakhs of pilgrims who took holy bath at the confluence of the Ganga with the sea in the Bay of Bengal.

### **News from Overseas Sai Centers**

**Philippines:** An International Convention on the subject of "Sathya Sai Educare - Integrating Values in Society" was organised by the Institute of Sathya Sai Education, San Pedro, Laguna, Philippines from 25th to 27th January 2002.

The formal opening ceremony of the Convention took place at the Institute of Sathya Sai Education (ISSE), San Pedro, Laguna on 26th January. Dr. Rosario Acierto, Director of ISSE gave the opening welcome remarks. Dr. Art-ong Jumsai lighted the "lamp" which was also the logo of the Convention. In his keynote speech, Dr. Jumsai elaborated on the Educare programme in the Sathya Sai Schools around the world and their role as model schools in each country. Other speakers included the Congresswoman of Laguna, Dr. Erlinda Zurita and Dr. V K. Ravindran.

The main themes discussed in the Convention included: Teachers as Parents .and Parents as Teachers, Policies for Values in Education and Government, Educare in Society, Operating Business as Trustees of Society, Professionals as Guardians of Society. The participation in the Convention was free of charge. About 1,200 participants, including 30 diplomats and government officers, 900 teachers and educators, 100 businesspersons and medical professionals and 200 teenagers and youths attended the various sessions of the Convention. All the teachers and students were awarded certificates.

### **What Does Sivaratri Convey?**

*It is not on this holy night of Sivaratri alone that you should contemplate on Siva. Your whole life must be lived in the constant presence of the Lord. Endeavour is the main thing; that is the inescapable consummation for all mortals. If you make the slightest effort to move along the path of your liberation, the Lord will help you a hundredfold. This is what' this day conveys to you. Man is so called because he has the skill' to do Manana. Manana means inner meditation on the meaning and significance of what one has heard or read. But you have given up even the little Sadhana that Sivaratri demands.*

—Baba

## Make Sivaratri Truly Auspicious

*God controls the entire creation while Truth holds sway over God. But Truth itself is under the control of the noble ones; such noble ones are the embodiments of Divinity. (Sanskrit Verse)*

Embodiments of Love!

Our ancients enquired into the nature of Divinity in several ways. As they were not able to comprehend it fully, they started worshipping Prakriti (Nature). With the passage of time, the Bharatiyas took to Murti aradhana (idol worship) in place of Prakriti Aradhana (Nature worship).

### Idols are the Symbols of Divinity

Every creature that takes birth in this universe has a form (Murti). Idols are inert and do not possess the qualities of compassion, love, forbearance, etc. It is for this reason that some people are against idol worship. This constitutes ignorance. This is a flower. This is a tumbler. You point a finger towards them to specify them. Similarly, idols are like pointers to divinity. Once you recognise divinity, you don't need the pointers, i.e., idols. Such being the case, is it not foolish to object to idol worship? Do you not hold the pictures of your parents and grandparents in reverence? Do these pictures have life in them? No. They do not have the qualities of compassion, love, sacrifice, etc. Then what is the meaning in worshipping them? It is through these pictures that we are reminded of their virtues and ideals they stood for. So, there is nothing wrong in revering and adoring the forms of mother, father, preceptor and all elders.

Take, for instance, a hundred rupee note. There is neither life nor virtues of love, compassion, etc., in this currency note. Yet people love it and would like to possess it. Is there anybody in the world who dislikes money? Irrespective of the country or religion, everyone loves money. There are innumerable instances of people who died just for the sake of money. Money is valuable because it bears the government's seal. Similarly, we respect the national flag as a symbol of our national honour though it is merely a piece of cloth, which is inert. If idol worship is considered foolish, then the same should apply to love for money and respect for flag, which are also lifeless.

### Sathya Sai Symbolises the four Vedas

*Isavasyam Idam Jagat* (the entire world is permeated by God). Every being is an embodiment of Easwara. It is also said, Easwara Sarva Bhutanam (God is the Indweller of all beings). He is present in all beings in the form of consciousness. Easwara is the master of six forms of wealth - Dharma (righteousness), Aishwarya (wealth), Yashas (fame), Shakti (power), Jnana (wisdom) and Vairagya (detachment). Easwara has another name Sankara. 'San' refers to Chidanandam (eternal bliss) and Atmanandam (bliss of the Self). 'Kara' means one who bestows. Therefore, Sankara is one who imparts eternal bliss. Every word has a deep inner meaning. Take, for instance, the name Sathya Sai. Sathya stands for Rig Veda. 'Sa', 'Aa' and 'Ya' in Sai stand for Sama Veda, Atharvana Veda and Yajur Veda respectively. Therefore, Sathya Sai is the very personification of the four Vedas. (loud applause) What is the meaning of the term Linga? It is the symbol of divinity as it has neither a beginning nor an end. Divinity is immanent in the Hridaya (heart) of every man. Hridaya means that which is suffused with Daya (compassion). So, divinity is the embodiment of compassion. Today people are unable to understand the

principle of divinity. Though people worship different forms of God and adopt varied modes of worship, their worship is directed towards the same God. You may call Him Rama, Krishna, Allah, Easwara, etc. All these names refer to the same God. Each person worships a particular form according to his/her likes. Some people worship Rama because they are attracted by Rama's Name. It is said, *Ramayate Iti Rama* (Rama is one who captivates the hearts of one and all).

Today is Sivaratri, meaning auspicious night. Siva symbolises 'Soham' which you pronounce with each breath. 'Ham' refers to 'I' and 'So' means 'That' (God). This message of 'I am God' is conveyed through your breathing process 21,600 times a day. This is referred to as Hamsa Gayatri. Such teachings have been propagated and practised since ancient times in Bharat. Such practices of the Bharatiyas should not be looked down upon. They direct you towards God.

It is the finger that points to a flower. Likewise, idols of God point to divinity. So, idol worship cannot be considered foolish. Never disregard idols just because they are inert. Even in inert objects, there is Chaitanya (consciousness). Every atom is invested with Chaitanya. *Anoraneeyan Mahato Maheeyan* (Brahman is subtler than the subtlest and vaster than the vastest). This Chaitanya is present in every object, right from the smallest to the biggest. From your point of view an object may appear to be inert, but from the point of Vedanta, everything is Chaitanya. It is foolish to overlook the existence of Chaitanya. One may question if Chaitanya is all-pervasive, why it is not visible to the naked eye. You are all well aware of the fact that there is butter in every drop of milk. Can you deny its existence merely because it is not seen by the naked eye? The process of obtaining butter involves curdling the milk and then churning it.

### **Do not Criticise others**

Man is unable to perceive this Chaitanya principle because of his two defects: (i) He overlooks his innumerable mistakes, and (ii) magnifies the minutest faults of others. One can attain divinity only when one stops hiding one's own mistakes and magnifying the faults of others. It is a great sin to search for others' faults. Instead, look for your own. Consider your smallest defect as a great blunder and try to rectify the same. Ignore the faults of others, however big they may be. Do not criticise others; instead criticise and question yourself: Is this the way I should behave, having been born as a human being? True spiritual practice lies in finding out one's own mistakes and correcting them. It involves giving up of evil tendencies and developing noble traits. That is real Sadhana (spiritual practice). 'Sa' signifies divinity which is the embodiment of all forms of wealth (Dhana). Today the number of people who find others' faults is on the rise. This is the cause of restlessness in society. All those who aspire to be peaceful should eradicate all their defects. Only then can you realise Sivatwa (divinity). Criticising others is the greatest sin. We should not fall prey to it.

Today man is becoming a victim of anger. Who is affected by anger? It is not others but you who are affected by it. It is said, "*Anger is one's enemy, peace is the protective shield, compassion is the true relation, happiness is verily the heaven and misery is the hell.*" (Telugu Poem) Therefore, make efforts to control your anger. It is foolishness to consider yourself high and consider others low as every being is the embodiment of divinity.

Where is God? He is present in every human being and in every living creature. That is why it is said, *Easwara Sarva Bhutanam* (God is the Indweller of all beings). *Daivam Manusha Rupena*

(God takes the form of man). When you consider all as divine, you will never indulge in criticism. God judges a person by his feelings. God is Bhavapriya (lover of feelings), not Bahyapriya (lover of external show). So, make efforts to turn your vision inward. *Pashyati Iti Pashuhu* (one who goes purely by external vision is an animal). A true human being is one who looks inward. The moment an animal spots a green patch of land, it immediately rushes to that spot without weighing the pros and cons of its action. It is the duty of man to act with discrimination. Man should always be conscious of his duty. It is a big mistake to forget one's duty. Here is a small example. Today you want to catch a flight. You want to catch a bus. If there is a delay in the arrival of the bus or the plane, the passengers are put to great inconvenience. This is because of the fact that those responsible for running these services did not carry out their duty diligently. If you forget your duty, you lose your human quality and human values. Man cannot be called a human being unless he practises the human values of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, Prema and Ahimsa. These are like the five life breaths of man. The absence of these life breaths amounts to a living death. Each one is responsible for his own downfall. Man destroys himself by forgetting and ignoring these human values.

### **Adhere to Truth under all Circumstances**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Love is your greatest asset. Develop love and always speak the truth. Truth sounds bitter whereas people are easily pleased by falsehood. People do not relish milk which is brought to their doorstep, whereas they are prepared to traverse miles together to consume a bottle of liquor. Falsehood has become the order of the day. Falsehood may please others but it cannot satisfy your conscience. Strive to satisfy your conscience before satisfying others. Under all circumstances, follow the path of truth. In case the utterance of truth is likely to lead to some danger, remain silent.

Here is a small example. A hermit was deeply engrossed in the contemplation of God. He had vowed to speak truth always. Easwara wanted to subject him to a test. He assumed the form of a hunter and started chasing a deer, which out of fear hid in a bush close to the hermitage. This was noticed by the hermit. On being questioned by the hunter about the whereabouts of the deer, the hermit was in a dilemma. He could not feign ignorance and say that he had not seen the deer as that would amount to uttering a lie. At the same time, he could not reveal the whereabouts of the deer, lest the hunter should kill it. In that case, he would be a partner in sin. He prayed to Easwara fervently to show him a way out. A brilliant idea flashed in his mind by God's grace. God is always with you, in you, around you, above you guiding and guarding you. Why fear when He is near? The hermit replied, "O hunter, that which sees cannot speak; that which speaks cannot see." By such a tactful answer, the hermit not only upheld his vow of truth but also protected the life of the deer. Then Lord Easwara manifested in His true form and declared, "Such Yukti (tact) which safeguards your interests as well as those of others is true Yoga." Therefore it is said, truth is the life of the tongue. Righteousness is the life of the hands. Non-violence is the life of the heart. Sivaratri is celebrated to teach man the significance of these values.

### **What is Spirituality?**

Siva also stands for humility. A person with humility is the embodiment of Sivam (auspiciousness). On the other hand, a person with ego is verily a Savam (corpse). By constant

prayer, man can overcome any difficult situation. You should develop noble thoughts and help the needy. Do not harm anyone. The harm that you do to others will boomerang on you. Criticism and accusation are worldly traits and negative in nature. Develop positive qualities. What is the use of all your education if you cannot give up your evil qualities?

*"In spite of his education and intelligence, a foolish man will not know his true Self and a mean-minded person will not give up his wicked qualities. Modern education leads only to argumentation, not to total wisdom. What is the use of acquiring worldly education if it cannot lead you to immortality? Acquire the knowledge that will make you immortal."* (Telugu Poem)

Having been born as a human being and having acquired many forms of knowledge, one should get rid of one's animal tendencies. *Paropakara Punyaya, Papaya Parapeedanam* (one attains merit by serving others and commits sin by hurting them). *Help ever, Hurt Never*. This is the essence of the eighteen Puranas as propounded by sage Vyasa. Never mind if you have to suffer but do not put others to suffering. God will take care of you. Your behaviour should be befitting your status as a human being. If you forget the divinity inherent in others, can you call yourself a human being? Conduct yourself as a human being. You belong to human race. Neeti (morality) and Nijayati (integrity) are the life principles of Manava Jati (human race). Develop morality and lead an honest life. Only then can you attain Easwaratwa (divinity). The main principle of the culture of Bharat is that the same divinity is immanent in every being. Man's main objective is to realise unity in diversity. But today man fragments unity into diversity because of his narrow-mindedness.

#### *Embodiments of Divine Atma!*

Give up the feelings of I and mine. First know yourself. Question yourself, "Who am I?" Once you know who you truly are, you will realise the oneness of all. When you realise that you are the embodiment of the Atma, you will know that all others are also the embodiments of the Atma. You cannot possibly know everyone in the world. But if you know your Self, you will know everyone. Inequality exists only at the worldly level. But at the level of spirituality, there is total equality.

What is Adhyatmikata (spirituality)? Getting rid of your animal tendencies and rising to the level of the Divine signifies true spirituality. Adhyatmikata refers to Adhi (eternal) and Atma. Therefore, true Adhyatmikata is that which relates to the eternal Atma. Recognising the fact that you and I are one is true Adhyatmikata. Do not bother about the criticism of others.

#### **Do not React when Someone Offends you**

When Dharmaraja offered Krishna the Agratambulam (prime offering) in the Rajasuya Yajna, the wicked Shishupala said that Krishna did not deserve it. He went on hurling abuses at Krishna and said, *"Do You think that You deserve this honour because You stole the Saris of Gopikas when they were having a bath? Or do You think that You deserve this because You played pranks with the Gopikas? Stop this self-aggrandisement and shut up!"* (Telugu Poem) Dharmaraja, however, felt very sad when Shishupala spoke with disrespect to Krishna in the open court. After all, what right did Shishupala have to criticise Krishna in this manner? His problem arose from his personal disappointment. Feeling deeply hurt Dharmaraja fell at Krishna's feet and said, "O Lord! How is it that you continue to smile in the face, of such harsh criticism? You may be

smiling but I am shedding tears of sorrow." Then Krishna replied, "Dharmaraja, praise or blame relate to the body, not to the Atma. Why should you feel depressed when criticised and elated when praised? Your body is the source of various diseases and makes you suffer. Hence, understand that whoever criticises your body is in fact doing you a favour." Dharmaraja was immensely satisfied with Krishna's reply and said, "Oh Lord! People are afflicted by ignorance because they cannot find a teacher like You."

There is a great merit in silence. *Mounath Kalaham Nasthi* (by observing silence you do not get involved in a quarrel). Salute those who offend you. Don't return offence for offence. If you act in the same manner as your opponent, in what way are you better than him? While saying that the other is acting wrongly, will you be right if you act in the same manner? Never act in that manner. Let those who commit offence continue their offensive behaviour. You should never react to it. Never speak ill of others. Our daily prayer is *Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu* (May all the people of the world be happy!) When all are happy, you are also included in all. We pray for the welfare and health of all. Never wish for the misfortune of anybody. There is no hatred in this world. All are friends. If you act in this sacred manner, wishing everyone well, praying for their prosperity, you will become an ideal for the whole world. You are born in this world for this ideal only. There is a purpose behind the creation of every individual. That is why God has created you. And for this, you have been given the capacity to love. Act according to your conscience. Offer every action of yours to God.

*"O Lord! That heart which You have given me, all its actions are being offered to You. What else is there for me to worship Your feet with? Please accept this with my humble salutations."*  
(Telugu Poem)

"The one valuable gift that You have bestowed on me is love. It is my duty to share this love with all my fellow beings. That is the sign of my understanding Your gift." This is the prayer you should offer to God. One who is filled with anger, hatred and envy will be shunned by all including those who are near to him, and even by his wife and children. Hence, you should avoid these evil tendencies.

### **Evil Tendencies Destroy your Humanness**

Once you understand the principle of love, all evil tendencies will leave you by themselves. Humanness is divinity in essence. When a child is born, he is naturally pure. But as he grows, he starts accumulating evil tendencies more and more. Evil tendencies are of your own making. They will ultimately destroy your humanness itself. Do not destroy your human nature. How sacred, how noble, how divine and how precious humanness is! Such a noble humanness is being willfully destroyed by you. Never harm others for the sake of your selfishness and self-interest. Be happy at the happiness of others. Then only will you realise humanness. Having been born as man, do not lead the life of an animal. Cruelty is an animal quality. By hurting others, you lose your humanness and become a beast. When you threaten others, you become a wild beast. If you are scared of someone, you become an animal of prey. You are neither a hunting beast nor an animal of prey. You are a human being. Never hurt anybody and cultivate an attitude of happiness in yourself. Then you will be doubly happy.

The Lord constantly keeps saying, "*Tathastu, Tathastu!*" (Be it so!). As you wish, so will it happen. If your intentions are evil, evil will result. If you are always filled with good intentions, you will be blessed by God in equal measure. All your actions will have their reactions; may not be immediately, but definitely sooner or later. Therefore, you should live without hurting others or getting harmed by others, and thus lead a blissful life. Glorify human life. Put your learning to good use. Give respect and take respect. Without giving respect, you can never receive respect. Love and be loved in return. This is true humanness. Your education is meant to cultivate such virtues.

These days students specialise in a particular area of study. All such academic attainments are essentially negative. What is the use of this learning in life? There is a saying in Telugu that a washerman is better than a scholar. When the washerman collects clothes from your house, you keep a detailed record of the number and type of clothes given for washing in a notebook. But the washerman does not need a notebook. He does not carry it anywhere. He carries all the information in his head and returns your clothes duly washed and pressed. What study has he made? Apart from academic learning, we should learn to help and serve others. The learning that helps us to serve others is true education. Your education should benefit society at large. Only when you help others do you become pure.

Our ancients worshipped Nature. It is not a mistake at all to worship Nature. It is Nature that gives us food, raiment and shelter. Not merely that, it also gives us precious metals like gold and silver. So, what is wrong in worshipping Nature? All the modes of worship that our ancients practised are highly sacred. Bhumata (mother earth), Gomata (cow), Vedamata (the Vedas) and Dehamata (physical mother) are to be revered. But first and foremost, man should worship God. As people have stopped worshipping God, we find chaos all over the world. Worship of God alone can safeguard the country. The country will be blessed with plenty and prosperity and people will lead a happy life once they start thinking of God. We repeat the Santhi Mantra thrice in our daily prayers. What does this mean? We should attain peace at all the three levels, i.e., physical, mental and spiritual. There is no peace in the external world; we find only pieces. Peace is within you. Make efforts to manifest your inner peace.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Today is Sivaratri, the night of Sankara. Sankara is in our heart. He is the source of supreme bliss. Enlarge the scope of this bliss by sharing it with others. Only then can human life become sacred. Spend the whole night in chanting the holy Name and spread this sacred energy to the world at large. That is the true sign of divinity. Who is Easwara? He is all-pervasive. Just as the wind blows freely everywhere, so also do we find the principle of Easwara. Share your love with all and propagate the Divine Name to the entire world.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan: *Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Shanti Nahi...*

—*From Bhagavan's Sivaratri Sandesh in Sai Kulwant Hall,  
Prasanthi Nilayam on 12th March 2002*



## Make God the Goal of Your Life

"Where there are the six qualities of contentment, courage, fortitude, intelligence, energy and valour, there manifests Divinity." (Sanskrit Verse)

### *Embodiments of Love!*

The effulgence of divinity can be seen in a person who possesses the six qualities of contentment, courage, fortitude, intelligence, energy and valour. Bhoga (sensual pleasures) and Tyaga (spirit of sacrifice) cannot ever co-exist. Bhoga will not allow Tyaga to come anywhere near it. Similarly, Tyaga would strongly resist Bhoga. One might wonder: "Is it possible to sacrifice and yet be happy?" The answer is: "Yes, it is possible." If ego is effaced and there are no expectations of reward for the actions performed, sacrifice itself becomes a joyous experience; happiness and sacrifice then merge into one. In this world, happiness is not the property of any particular individual; all are entitled to it, and everyone has the right to enjoy it. To receive your share of happiness, you must sanctify your life by serving society, using the noble qualities God has endowed you with.

### **Two Forces in the Life of Man**

The scriptures say: *Isavasyam Idam Sarvam* (the entire universe is permeated by God). Everything in this world functions on account of divine energy. Nothing else exists in this world except God. But people are not able to grasp this truth because their outlook is largely worldly and so also are their expectations.

There are two forces at work in this world. The first is Preyo Shakti (the force that promotes a material tendency) and the other is Shreyo Shakti (the force that promotes a spiritual tendency). The former is what motivates people in their worldly life. It drives them to sensual pleasures. Shreyo Shakti, on the other hand, inculcates noble virtues like Daya (compassion), Prema (love), Sahana (forbearance), Sahanubhuti (empathy), Tyaga (sacrifice), etc., in the individual.

In the Bhagavad-Gita, Lord Krishna describes the actions motivated by these two forces as Paradharma and Swadharma respectively. Paradharma relates to the actions performed by the dictates of the senses and the mind. The motivating force in this case is Preyo Shakti, which triggers the senses into useless indulgence. What is meant by Swadharma? The prefix Swa relates to the Atma; therefore, Swadharma means Dharma that is in conformity with the Atma, that is to say actions performed in harmony with the nature of the Atma. Shreyo Shakti is the driving force behind Swadharma. Man today craves for Preyo Shakti, totally ignoring Shreyo Shakti. While Preyo Shakti can secure fleeting pleasures, Shreyo Shakti can earn God's grace for you. What causes rain? God's grace is primarily responsible for it. God's grace it is that makes the sun and the moon shine, the rivers to flow, and the crops to grow. Sunshine, food and water help you to live and be happy. God has given all these and much more for the common benefit of all living beings. Every living creature has equal right to enjoy these gifts of God.

### **Be an Atmatma**

Every gift of God provides man the opportunity to go from Preyas to Sreyas. People are engaged in all kinds of worldly activities. You grow crops, you harvest them, you eat food, you study and

acquire various types of worldly knowledge, and so on. If all these mundane activities are performed with a spiritual outlook, then you can enjoy bliss. Performing action with a spiritual outlook is the essence of Atmadharma. If you enquire deeply, you would realise that everything happens not merely because of your personal efforts but by the Will of God. Right from the atom to the cosmos, everything in the universe is driven by God's Will

*Not even a blade of grass will move without divine Will,  
Right from an ant to Brahman, God pervades everything,  
But some people do not understand this and take pride in their intelligence,  
But no one however mighty knows what is going to happen in the next moment.*  
(Telugu Poem)

Bhuta and Sambhuta (gross and subtle), Vidya and Avidya (knowledge and ignorance), Prapta and Paramatma (world and divinity) are not separate from each other. They are closely interrelated. All our actions when motivated by the heart are spiritual. But modern man is dragging even spirituality to mundane levels. In this world, there are many today who are Dharmatmas (righteous), Tyagatmas (people given to sacrifice), Yogatmas (people engaged in spiritual activities), and Karmatmas (people engaged in selfless service). But there are hardly any Atmatmas (people united with the Atma) in this world. Who is an Atmatma? Not the one who follows Karma Yoga (the path of action) or Bhakti Yoga (the path of devotion) or Jnana Yoga (the path of knowledge). An Atmatma is one who follows the Atma Yoga (the path of unity with the Atma)! There are few in this world who follow this unique path.

You can see the body. You can also experience the existence of the mind. But few truly understand the depth of the Atma. He alone is Atmajnani (the knower of the Atma) who understands the real Self. No deep enquiry is needed concerning the body—it is just made up of the five elements. It is fragile and can collapse any moment. It is therefore pointless to enquire into the principle of such an ephemeral and transient entity.

Those who follow the Preyo Marga (the worldly path) are highly body conscious. Swami said the other day that the mind is the embodiment of Vishnu. What does one mean by that? Vishnu is all pervasive, so is the mind. The quality of all-pervasiveness invests it with the power of Vishnu. *Mano Moolam Idam Jagat* (the mind is the basis of this world). Brahma is born out of the lotus from the navel of Vishnu. Brahma represents speech. The speech originates from the mind, which symbolises Vishnu. As I said earlier, in the human being Easwara symbolises the heart, Vishnu, the mind and Brahma, the speech. However, there are few in this world who experience this Trinity of Godhead within.

### **See Unity in Diversity and Realise the Self**

Many people go to the forest to experience the Self which is really within. How foolish! Where is the need to go to the forest to discover the God within you and around you? "*When you have a lamp at home, why seek the light elsewhere?*" (Telugu Poem) When the Self is there right within you, there is no need to go to the forest to do penance. Such an act is a sign of sheer ignorance. It reflects the seeker's inability to cognise the nature of the Atma. The Atma is all-pervasive and universal in nature. It is the source of the five elements: wherever the elements are present, the Atma is present there. Since your body is made up of the five elements, it should be obvious that

the Atma is present in you. God has created all the five elements for the benefit of mankind. Air and water, for example, sustain life. Water and land are needed for growing crops and producing food. Without food, the body would wither away; for the sustenance of life, food is a must.

All the five elements have originated from the Self or the Atma. It is therefore necessary to examine the spiritual nature of the five elements. The Atma is present in all the five elements. *Ekatma Sarvabhutaratma* (the same Atma is present in all the beings). The Atma is one and not many.

Today man is facing various problems because he is not focusing on the underlying unity in creation. Instead, he is getting deluded and carried away by the superficial diversity. You must see unity in diversity and concentrate on the underlying divine substratum. The true seeker goes in quest of this unity, and this search in turn leads to Atmajnana (knowledge of the Self). Ignorance is just the opposite of this knowledge; its characteristic is to see diversity where there is unity. You should not fragment the One into disjointed bits and pieces. This would weaken you, though superficially you might feel strong. To comprehend the Principle of the Atma, it is sufficient to see unity in diversity.

### **God is All-pervasive**

You see clouds forming in the sky. The clouds bring rain. Rain helps crops to grow. Crops give you food grain. You cook the grain and prepare a meal, which you then eat. You have here a chain of complex but linked events. What is the driving force behind all this? Who motivates this complex but linked chain? The Atma is responsible for all this! The Atmic Principle is the same as the Divine Principle. It is also called Brahman.

Who is this Brahman? Brahman is the One who is all-pervasive. When God manifests as speech, He is called Brahma. The scriptures describe this Supreme One as follows: *Shabda Brahmayi, Characharamayi, Jyotirmayi, Vangmayi, Nityanandamayi, Paratparamayi, Mayamayi and Shreemayi* (God is the embodiment of sound, mobility and immobility, light, speech, eternal bliss, supreme majesty, delusion and wealth). This is a comprehensive description of God. This Divinity manifests in the individual as the Divine Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Easwara. The heart of man represents Easwara, the mind represents Vishnu, and speech represents Brahma. *Isavasyam Idam Jagat* (God pervades the entire creation). *Easwara Sarva Bhutanam* (God is the indweller of all beings). The same divinity is within us. Speech is an aspect of Brahma. Speech is born out of the mind, which is an aspect of Vishnu. Thoughts are shaped by the feelings of the heart, which is an aspect of Easwara. Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara are not different; they are different aspects of the same God, also called the Atma or Brahman. If man gives up ego, he becomes perfect and rises to the level of divinity. What is it that people readily give up these days? Good and sacred habits! No, no! This is not what you should do. You should embrace sacred feelings, thoughts and actions, and give up all bad thoughts and habits. You must welcome the sacred and drive out the evil. When you take in food, you retain only the nutrient part and excrete the rest. You eat a tasty fruit; but, after digesting the essence, you expel the foul waste part. Worldly things have this mixture of good and bad. But there is one thing that is totally sweet. What is that? God! *Vachanam Madhuram, Nayanam Madhuram, Vadanam Madhuram, Madhuradhipathe Akhilam Madhuram* (His speech, His eyes and His looks are sweet. He is the Lord of sweetness and sweetness itself too).

His words are sweet, His eyes radiate sweetness, His gait is sweet, and His smile too is sweet! The Lord of Mathura (Krishna) is sweet, sweet and nothing but sweet! Even ambrosia and nectar may satiate one after some time but so far as the sweetness of the Divine is concerned, one cannot have enough of it. *Yatho Vacho Nivarthanthe Aprapya Manasa Saha* (whence the words along with the mind rebound in futility without comprehending Divinity). Such is the greatness of the Atmic Principle, and that is what man is ignoring today.

### **Virtues Sustain Man's Life**

Preoccupied as he is with petty priorities, man has become totally indifferent to the real purpose of life. At the end of it all, what is it that man has achieved? Nothing. Man's action these days is like inhaling carbon dioxide and exhaling oxygen. This inversion is the result of bad thoughts flooding the mind. This is not how it should be. God has arranged for man to breathe in oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide; in the same way, man should take in what is good and reject what is bad.

Life should be based on sacrifice. Just look at the trees. But for them, where would you get the oxygen that you breathe? All beings in creation - trees, birds, animals and insects - help man in their own respective ways. But modern man has sunk below even the level of animals. There is hardly any trace of selflessness anywhere. Every action of man is driven by selfishness and self-interest. These two base qualities represent animal tendencies, and are not representative of the true nature of man. Man is the embodiment of truth, love and peace. Although he might not be aware of it, man's life is sustained by Sathya, Dharma and Prema. It is by recognising this underlying principle that the ancients of India declared: "*Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara*" (speak the truth and practise righteousness).

These declarations are a testimony to the greatness of Bharatiya culture. Never forget truth!

*The creation emerges from truth and merges into truth,  
Is there a place where truth does not exist?  
Visualise such pure and unsullied truth. (Telugu Poem)*

### **Always Have Positive Thoughts**

Where is this Supreme Cosmic Principle? It is not out somewhere there but right within you! Man today is indifferent to this remarkable and eternal truth. People read all kinds of spiritual books and engage in various types of Sadhana (spiritual practices). What does Sadhana really mean? It means the transformation of bad into good. But what happens in practice is just the opposite! People do Sadhana in such a confused and mistaken fashion that they end up forgetting all that is good and welcoming bad! Sadhana = Sa + Dhana. Sa means the Atmic Principle, and Dhana means wealth. Thus, the principle of the Atma is true health, wealth and happiness. Where is this true happiness or bliss? Bliss is where you came from. You were born of bliss. Why don't you recognise your roots? You are prepared to believe anyone and everyone but not your own heart! Your inner voice keeps proclaiming Soham, Soham (I am God, I am God) 21,600 times a day. This is the spiritual message conveyed to you by your breathing process. You are foolish to ignore this inner voice and pay heed to what others tell you. Where is God?

He is in you! Swami said earlier, *Deho Devalaya Proktho Jeevo Deva Sanathana* (body is the temple and the indweller is God).

All bodies are temples, and the same God is the presiding deity in all these temples. Why then do you differentiate between people? Why do you hate some and love others? Do not entertain such feelings of difference, because the same God resides in all. Do not abuse or criticise anyone. To do so is a sign of evil. The quality of a true human being is love for all. The best way to love God is to love all, and serve all. The love principle inherent in every being is the same. You must try to foster love. Love is God. Love is Awareness. Love is Divinity.

God has so many names. Aham or I—that also is a name of God. The scriptural axiom Aham Brahmasmi (I am God) proclaims this truth. But there is a slight tinge of duality in that statement. Here, there is a reference to I as well as God. A better declaration would be: "I am I!" That is all there is to it. This is true Advaita (non-dualism). I am not this or that; such statements imply duality. If you say, "This is mine," it implies that you are separate from the thing you are referring to. "I am I," is the correct and proper way of declaring your innate divinity. This is I, that is I, that also is I, and so on (here, Swami was pointing to various people and objects). Everything is 'I'! Superficially, different people may have different names but at the basic level, they all have the same name—'I'. There is only One!

*Jewels are many, but gold is one.  
Cows are many, but milk is one.  
Living beings are many, but the Indweller is one.  
Flowers are many, but worship is one.  
Paths are many, but goal is one.*

Immersed in illusion, people worship this and that. Such actions are based on external perceptions and feelings. If you have a worldly outlook, you will get worldly results. Worldly feelings and thinking are negative. Do not entertain negative thoughts. Always have positive thoughts—positive, positive, positive! Positive thinking alone is the foundation of the Atmatattwam (principle of the Atma), which is the same as Chaitanyatattwam (principle of consciousness), which is the same as Prematattwam (principle of love) and also Anandatattwam (principle of bliss). See how all these different principles are one and the same!

### **Follow Swadharma to Attain Bliss**

Bliss is not separate from you; it is in your body because God is the Indweller. It should be obvious that you are not the body. You say: "This is my body." This clearly implies that you are separate from your body. The human body is just a machine, an instrument. Like a water bubble, it is transient. Can you identify your immortal Self with this body? You must say: "I use this machine for my sake! I do not use it for the sake of any other person for the simple reason that there is no other person! It is 'I' everywhere!"

Let us say you have a desire for something. You say: "I desire this or that thing." Ask yourself: "Do I want this thing for my sake or for the sake of the thing or the object concerned?" You feel like eating an apple. Is it for your sake or for the sake of the apple? You eat for your satisfaction. In the ultimate analysis, every individual acts for his or her personal satisfaction, and not really

for the sake of the world. The world is generally neutral - it has neither satisfaction nor dissatisfaction. Whatever one does is for one's own self-satisfaction. Self-satisfaction promotes self-sacrifice which in turn leads to self-realisation.

### *Embodiments of Love!*

You are separated from God under the influence of the Gunas (intrinsic qualities) which are the result of your food and habits. These Gunas cause body attachment. Due to attachment to body man becomes the victim of his six deadly enemies, Kama (desire), Krodha (anger), Lobha (greed), Moha (attachment), Mada (pride) and Matsarya (jealousy). The Divine qualities of Prema (love), Daya (compassion), Sahana (patience), and Sahanubhuti (empathy), all manifest in the heart. These virtues constitute the essence of Swadharma. Swadharma leads you to experience the bliss of the Self or the Atma.

Bliss is within, and you do not have to go elsewhere in search of it. In fact, there is nothing other than you! What you think you see outside is only a reflection of your own inner being. Some of the reflected images may appear distorted but that is the fault of the mirror, and has nothing to do with your real Self. Prakriti (Nature) is the mirror in which you see yourself. Looking at the distortions, you draw wrong conclusions. This is not correct. One who understands the principle of the Self will recognise these distortions and aberrations. He will not be deluded by them. There is a mole on Swami's left cheek but in the mirror, it appears as a mole on the right cheek. Can one straightaway accept what one sees in the mirror? If you have self-confidence, then you will not be deluded. But if the self-confidence is lacking, then you will be easily swept by the opinions of others. You have a mind of your own, and you have been blessed with the power of discrimination. Why then should you allow yourself to be misguided by others? You should follow God and not others. First know thyself, i.e., your innate divinity.

### *Embodiments of Love!*

Each and every one of you is the embodiment of love. There is no individual without love. But each one has his own likes and dislikes. That is why people have diverse attitudes, despite the common underlying divine basis. Those having worldly outlook take to Preya Marga (worldly path). Sreya Marga (spiritual path), on the other hand, makes one turn to God; such a person has no other interest, especially of a worldly nature. Therefore, always follow Swadharma which brings you close to your real Self. Do not follow Paradharma, which takes you away from your Self.

### **God must be your Goal**

If you immerse a pot in water, there is water in the pot and also outside it. The water inside is not different from the water outside. The same is true of God. The scriptures say: *Antarbahischa Tatsarvam Vyapya Narayana Sthita* (That all-pervasive God is present within and without).

God is present inside, outside, everywhere. It is the same God who is within as well as without. You must have unshakeable faith in this truth. Never forget God, no matter what the problems or difficulties. You do have a mind. You have aspirations and goals. Be firm; be resolute. God must be your goal, and you must pursue it with steadfast determination. Today man is not doing that; he is following goals set by others, by foolish and thoughtless people. What do you achieve by this? Nothing! On the other hand, you lose even what you have.

### *Students - Boys and Girls!*

You all study in the hope that the degree acquired by you will get you a good job. Employment is necessary, no doubt. But remember this; what you are taught in the class relates only to the external world. It constitutes secular knowledge. This secular knowledge must be supplemented with spiritual knowledge, which comes only by following the Shreyo Marga (spiritual path).

Every man is endowed with two hands. Preyas and Shreyas are like the two hands of man. You have been given a left hand and a right hand so that the two may work together in harmony with each other. Swami has mentioned this many times before - when you do Namaskaram, you bring your two palms together. One palm represents the worldly path and the other the spiritual path. Namaskaram thus symbolises unification of the two paths. Some people greet others by taking one hand to the head as if they are hitting their head to repent at their fate. Namaskaram = Na + Ma + Skaram. The first two words mean, "I am not", and the word in full implies, "I do not have any ego." Ego brings ruin and must therefore be totally avoided. May be, you have some worldly desires, but excessive desires would breed ambition, which in turn would make you wicked. The only desire one must really have is for God.

Saints like Meera and Sakkubai clearly understood this, and made God their first priority. They realised that God is the Indweller, and worshipped Him with great devotion. God alone can be within; no one else can. A person may claim to be your friend; but can this friend of yours be within you? Worldly friends are external but your true friend is inside; that is God! Your heart is a single-seat sofa, not double-seat sofa or musical chairs. It has only one seat. That one seat must be reserved for God. If you lead your life filled with this feeling, not only will your life be always happy but, in addition, you will be able to spread that happiness all around you. Your family would be happy. If families are happy, the whole village would be happy. When all villages and towns are at peace, the whole country would be peaceful. Today we mechanically repeat Santhi, not just once but three times. One who leads the chant is himself not at peace! Whom else is he praying for? Peace does not come with mere chanting. Peace will enter the heart only when it is swept clean of wicked qualities. Once bad thoughts are given some room, they would rapidly multiply. The best way of keeping bad thoughts away is to cultivate the feeling of oneness.

### **Experience Oneness with God like the Gopikas**

The Gopikas of Brindavan always strove to experience oneness. They said, "O God, we have this body that is transient. It may collapse any moment. We must make proper use of it while it is with us. You have now taken a form and have come amidst us. We would like to take advantage of this and develop a proper relationship with You." They then sang:

*O Lord! If You are a gigantic tree,  
I will be a creeper around You,  
If You are a fragrant flower,  
I will become a bee and hover around You;  
If You are the infinite sky,  
I will become a tiny twinkling star,  
If You are a mighty mountain,*

*I will become a waterfall;  
If You are the infinite ocean,  
I shall become a river and merge in You! (Telugu Poem)*

This was the intense devotion and the sense of unity that the Gopikas had. You too should feel the same way because, truly speaking, there is no plurality; there is only unity. You should never be deluded by diversity and superficial differences. Your father, mother, Guru, etc., are all different only at the body level; but the Divine Principle in all of them is the same. Why then do you entertain a feeling of difference? Why do you experience diversity instead of unity?

Here is this body (Swami points to His body). It is made up of the five elements. There is another body (Swami points to a person nearby). That too is made up of the same five elements. Therefore, both are one; where is the scope for difference? Your mother, father, friend, every one of them is made up of the same five elements. Thus, even from the purely material point of view, there is only one, reflecting Advaita (non-dualism). In the entire universe, there are only five elements; there is no such thing as a sixth element. No matter where you search, you cannot find a new element; everywhere, it is only these five, and five alone. Yet, within a human being, there is a separate and distinct element. And that is supreme love! This supreme love is the sixth element; it symbolises the Divine Principle. The Vedic aphorism *Tattwamasi* (That thou art) reflects this Divine Principle. You must aspire for this unity between yourself and God. You should neither be exuberant with nor be overwhelmed by body consciousness. It should neither send you into raptures nor plunge you into deep depression. Supreme love rises far- above duality and transient experiences as well as feelings. With this spirit of love, you can attain indescribable bliss.

### **Secure God's Love with Love**

*Students!*

The more you love humanity, the greater would be the happiness that you experience. On the other hand, if your love is limited, so would be your joy. Therefore, love all. What do you lose by loving all? Nothing whatsoever. Love can give so much joy. If you smile, others would do the same. Therefore, all of you must go through life with smiles and joy. When someone scolds you, you normally feel hurt while the person who is scolding gets some satisfaction. Don't feel hurt when you are criticised or abused. Instead, react by just smiling. You may wonder: "Why should I smile when that person is saying so many unpleasant things about me?" The answer is simple. You must smile because you have given the other person a chance to derive some satisfaction, even if it is by hurting your feelings. Be happy that you were an instrument to make the other person happy. This is the positive attitude that you have to develop. You must be charged with Santosham, Sahasam, Dhairyam, Buddhi, Shakti, Parakramam (contentment, courage, fortitude, intelligence, energy and valour). These are the six forms of wealth that you must go after. Where these are present, there one can see the effulgence of divinity.

God is omnipresent; so are the five elements created by God. There is no place where God is not; the same is true of air and water. You might not always be able to see the presence of water, but it is there nevertheless. In the atmosphere, it is present as water vapour, while below the surface of the earth it is present as underground water. When man turns wicked, the water table starts going down, indicating that divine water does not wish to see the face of man! Water feels



disgusted. It says, "Why should I see and be useful to such an evil fellow?" and then hides itself! Or else, it becomes brackish and unpotable. Man then sheds tears, which too are salty! What is described as Toyam (water) in the scriptures is not this type of useless water but crystal clear and pure water as God Himself made it. What is the Toyam you must offer back to God? Sing the glory of God with love and shed the tears of joy! God gave water to man with love. Man must offer back love to God; God's love can be secured only with love.

### **Shed Duality and Achieve your Goal**

The other day, Swami mentioned that God is described as Chitta Chora (the One who steals the heart). If a devotee happens to say, "God, You are a big thief," then others would object to it.

They would ask, "How dare you describe God as a thief?" and even thrash the devotee!

However, if the devotee sings with love *Chitta Chora Yasoda ke Bal, Navaneet Chor Gopal*, then others too will join in the singing with great joy. Let your speech and actions be expressions of your love. March resolutely forward in love, no matter what the obstacles. Welcome troubles; welcome, welcome, welcome! If sorrow comes, welcome it; if pleasure comes, welcome that also. *Sukhadukhe Samekruthwa Labhalabhau Jayajayau* (one should remain equalminded in happiness and sorrow, gain and loss, victory and defeat).

Both are the same; they are not really different. *Pleasure is an interval between two pains*. If there is no pain, how then can there be pleasure? Without darkness, light has no meaning. Hence have the faith that whatever befalls you is for your own good. If people blame or criticise you, do not get upset. Criticism should spur you to work better, so that later you earn praise. This is a dual world, and pairs of opposites are inevitable in it. However; it does not mean that you should be overcome by duality. *A man with dual mind is half blind*. Duality is a part of Nature, and the world cannot be non-dual. But, using your discrimination, you must be able to see through this duality; that is the only way to secure happiness.

### *Embodiments of Love!*

Swami always addresses you by the endearing term 'Embodiments of Love'. You must strive to become worthy of that appellation. Conduct yourself accordingly. Do not get angry with anyone; do not hate anybody; do not be jealous of others. Be happy with everybody. You will then experience divinity described by the scriptures as: *Brahmanandam, Parama Sukhadam, Kevalam Jnanamurtim, Dwandwateetam, Gagana Sadrisham, Tattwamasyadi Lakshyam, Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee Sakshibhutam, Bhavateetam, Trigunarahitam* (God is the embodiment of supreme bliss, He is wisdom absolute, the One without a second, beyond the pair of opposites, expansive and pervasive like the sky, the goal indicated by the Mahavakya Tattwamasi, the eternal, pure, unchanging, the witness of all functions of the intellect, beyond all mental conditions and the three Gunas of Satwa, Rajas and Tamas). How can one after experiencing the bliss of divinity ever be in sorrow?

### *Students!*

Time flies! Time is fleeting, but are you getting closer to the goal? If you want to go to Bangalore, you must drive in that direction. If instead you are driving in the opposite direction, how can you ever get to Bangalore? Life's journey may be slow but it must be towards the proper goal. Do not get disheartened by obstacles that are bound to come en route. You must be determined to reach the goal. Where exactly is this goal? It is within you. How is the goal to be

attained? Simple—removal of bad thoughts would get you there. Once bad thoughts are given up, you would have reached the destination. Do not entertain bad thoughts. See good in all.

Everyone must love God. Do not waste your time by looking for God elsewhere; He is right within you, around you, behind you, above you, and below you. Is it ever possible to get away from such an omnipresent God? God is everywhere but what you see of Him outside is just a reflection of the inner divinity. That is why Swami often says: Art is outside while heart is inside. God is in the heart. That is why Vedanta advocates the development of inner vision.

At the conclusion of the Discourse, Bhagavan sang two Bhajans. First He sang: *Pibare Rama Rasam...* and then He sang: *Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin ...*

—From Bhagavan's Summer Course Discourse in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, Brindavan on  
22nd May 2000

## News from Prasanthi Nilayam

### Divine Phenomenon of Lingodbhava on Sivaratri

The holy festival of Sivaratri became the holiest of holy when the Divine phenomenon of Lingodbhava was manifested by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba this year also before a vast multitude of devotees gathered in and around Sai Kulwant Hall at Prasanthi Nilayam from all parts of the world to celebrate this event of great spiritual significance. This is the fourth consecutive year since 1999 when Bhagavan mercifully restarted giving a glimpse of His Divinity to mankind by the manifestation of Lingodbhava.

On the morning of 12th March 2002, Bhagavan came to Sai Kulwant Hall at 7.00 a.m. to shower the bliss of His Divine Darshan on the mammoth gathering of devotees. Besides showering His blessings on the devotees in the fully packed Sai Kulwant Hall, Bhagavan went out of all the main gates of the Hall to give His blessings to the devotees sitting outside the Hall. After showering His grace on the devotees for nearly 25 minutes, Bhagavan sat in His chair on the dais and gestured to the students to start the Sivaratri programme. The chanting of Stotras in praise of Siva thus commenced at 7.25 a.m. This included Lingashtakam, Bilvastotram and Visvanathashtakam. Chanting of Stotras was followed by songs in praise of Siva and Bhagavan Baba. After this programme of chanting and singing for about one hour, the students started Bhajans at 8.20 a.m. which were followed in chorus by hundreds of thousands devotees surcharging the milieu with divine vibrations. At the end of this programme, Prasadam was distributed to all the devotees. The morning programme came to a close at 8.45 a.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

The afternoon programme commenced after Bhagavan's Darshan at 3.25 p.m. The students recited Vedic chants to begin the programme. Thereafter, Dr. M. Sainath, a faculty member of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, introduced the two speakers who were blessed by Bhagavan to address the gathering before His Divine Discourse. The first speaker was Sri V.

Srinivasan, All India President, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations. Sri Srinivasan observed that true Sivaratri for man was the day when he started his journey towards Siva. Man should redeem his life by immersing himself in the ocean of bliss of Bhagavan's Leelas (divine play) and by putting His teachings into practice, he said. The second speaker, Dr. G. Venkataraman, former Vice-Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, referred to the model service projects undertaken by Bhagavan Baba in the areas of village uplift, drinking water supply, health care and education by calling them the four Vedas for modern man—Grama Care, Aqua Care, Medicare and Educare. After these two brief speeches, Bhagavan blessed the devotees with His Divine Discourse (given elsewhere in this issue). At the end of His Discourse at 5.30 p.m., Bhagavan sang the Bhajan "Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahi" which the devotees followed in chorus.

The night-long Bhajan session of Sivaratri started with this Bhajan of Bhagavan. After this, the students led the bhajans in praise of Siva and the entire Hall resounded with Divine Name recited in chorus by the mammoth gathering of devotees. All eyes were however fixed on Bhagavan as He started drinking water. This indicated that the divine phenomenon of Lingodbhava was going to take place. Bhagavan showed some uneasiness and started drinking more water. The Linga was now due to emerge and the devotees held their breath in excitement. Soon after this, out came the oval-shaped golden Linga from Bhagavan's mouth with great force. The time of the Lingodbhava was 5.47 p.m. By providing a glimpse of His Divinity to the devotees by this divine manifestation of Lingodbhava, Bhagavan again reminded mankind that God had incarnated on earth to redeem the life of man.

Sivaratri vigil and Bhajan continued throughout the night. Groups of devotees and students took turns to lead Bhajans, in which a large number of devotees took part. Bhagavan Baba who had retired to His abode in the evening at 6.20 p.m. came to Sai Kulwant Hall on the morning of 13th March 2002 at about 5.00 a.m. for the concluding part of the Sivaratri programme. The programme started with Veda chanting by students at 6.00 a.m. Both Sri V. Srinivasan and Dr. G. Venkataraman who spoke before the Discourse of Bhagavan on the previous evening addressed the devotees again. After these two brief speeches, Bhagavan gave His second Sivaratri Discourse. Before starting His Discourse at 6.15 a.m., Bhagavan provided another glimpse of His Divinity to the devotees by manifesting another golden Linga by waving His right hand. A wave of ecstasy ran through the entire Hall as soon as this Divine phenomenon was witnessed again by the fortunate devotees. Holding this Linga in His right hand aloft, Bhagavan facilitated its easy viewing by the devotees who stood at far-off distances. Bhagavan concluded His Discourse at 7.05 a.m. with the Bhajan "*Prema Mudita Manase Kaho...*" The programme came to a happy conclusion with Arati to Bhagavan at 7.10 a.m. Prasadam was distributed to all the devotees in the end.

### **News from Inland Sai Centers**

**Andhra Pradesh:** Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Warangal District conducted mass marriages of 26 couples on 21st February 2002 at Hanumakonda. Bhagavan had earlier blessed the Warangal devotees at Whitefield. Mangal Sutras intended for the marriages were also blessed by Bhagavan. Wedding dress was supplied to all the couples. 50 relatives of each couple took part as guests in the lunch arranged for them.

**Kerala:** A team of Sai Youth of Palghat District organised a medical camp, Nagarsankirtan and Narayana Seva in a colony named Kottathara having 90 families located in the tribal area of Attappadi. 200 needy tribals were provided medical help in ophthalmology, skin care and general medicine. Narayana Seva was arranged for 400 persons including 300 tribals. Nagarsankirtan was conducted in the village in which Swami's photograph was carried in a Ratha in a procession with everyone chanting the Name of Sai. The organisers carried provision kits and dress kits which were distributed to the villagers along with Swami's photo and Vibhuti.

**Orissa:** Bhubaneswar Samiti participated in the biggest Book Fair of the capital in order to disseminate awareness of Sai ideals and literature among the visitors. The Book Fair was inaugurated on 26th February 2002. Books of different languages, photographs, Vibhuti and other materials were sold in the stall allotted to the Samiti. A leaflet containing the regular activities undertaken by the Samiti and affiliated Seva Group was distributed to the public.

### **Triveni Sangam**

*There is no Sathyam without Sivam; there is no Sivam without Sundaram. To realise this, you must purify Buddhi, Chitta and Hridaya—the three centres of Jnana, Karma and Bhakti respectively. Upon this triad, the Mokshasaudha (mansion of liberation) can be erected. The effulgence of Sathyam will reveal Sivam and the experience of that Sivam is Sundaram. That is My Reality. My life is Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram. Undertake Karma based on Jnana, suffused with Bhakti. Let Bhakti be born out of Jnana and let it be expressed through Karma. Jnana, Karma and Bhakti—this is the Triveni Sangam where you must bathe and get immersed, and become sanctified for life's pilgrimage. —Baba*

AVATAR VANI

SIVARATRI SANDESH - II

### **Divine Magnetic Power and Hiranyagarbha Linga**

*The Lord of Kailash has manifested his Divine form with the crescent moon adorning his head, the cool water of the Ganga flowing between the matted locks, with his radiant eye in the middle of the forehead and the purple neck gleaming like the sheen of a blackberry. He wears serpent bracelets and a snake belt, his entire body is smeared with Vibhuti, his forehead is adorned with a kumkum dot, his ruddy lips glow with the juice of the betel, diamond-studded gold earrings dangle from his ears and his whole swarthy body glows with divine effulgence. (Telugu Poem)*

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Magnetic power permeates the entire earth. All the living beings and objects on this earth possess this magnetic power. The rivers that flow, the wind that blows, the flowers that blossom are all endowed with magnetic power. It is the magnetic power that causes the rivers to flow close to the earth and also the wind to blow on this earth. This magnetic power is all pervasive.

### **Divine Magnetic Power of Temples**

People with Bhakti and Prapatti (devotion and surrender) visit temples. Magnetic power is generated by their devotion and faith. The flowers and fruits that people offer with devotion in temples also have this magnetic power. As thousands of devotees gather here, an enormous amount of magnetic power gets accumulated in this Mandir. The all-pervasive magnetic power shines with added brilliance in this Mandir. This magnetic power is ever on the rise as there is a continuous flow of devotees to the Mandir.

Iron filings acquire magnetic power because of their association with a magnet. In a similar manner, people who visit the Mandir are filled with magnetic power. It is only from the magnetic power of the devotees that the Mandir gets charged with mighty powers. Every individual is filled with magnetic power from head to toe. But man does not realise his innate potential and visits temples for blessings and grace. The temples by themselves do not have any special powers. It is one's own inner magnetic power that is reflected outside. People visit various pilgrimage centres like Tirupati, Haridwar, Rishikesh, etc. The power that is present in pilgrimage centres is due to the power of devotion and faith that pilgrims carry in their hearts.

God is the embodiment of six forms of opulence: Dharma (righteousness), Aishwarya (wealth), Yashas (fame), Shakti (power), Jnana (wisdom) and Vairagya (detachment). These are latent in man also, but he is losing them as he is unable to put them to proper use. Divinity shines resplendently in man when he makes proper use of these Shad-aishwaryas (six forms of wealth). There is a divine effulgence on the face of such a man.

As Venkataraman mentioned, every man is a combination of materialisation, vibration and radiation. The human body with all its limbs and muscles is known as materialisation. The Prana Shakti (life-force) is known as vibration. These two are coordinated by the Atmic power known as radiation. All the divine powers are latent in man. But man is not focusing his attention on them. He identifies himself with the body but in reality he is not the body. Otherwise, why would he say, 'this is my body'? When you say, 'this is my body', you are different from it. Man is deluded by thinking that he is the body. He is losing his divine effulgence because of his mistaken notion about his identity.

Vibration represents the breathing process. Sometimes, people say, 'my breathing is not proper'. It shows that you are different from your breathing process. Man is immersed in ignorance as he identifies himself with something, from which he is totally different. *Pashyannapicha Na Pashyati Moodho* (he is a fool who sees with his eyes yet does not recognise the reality). This mistake in identity leads to foolishness.

Radiation is divine and that is man's true nature. This is the magnetic power which is latent in every man. This magnetic power is full of divinity. It is the same divine power that is present in all temples and which attracts all. Hence, magnetism is the quality of all temples.

### **The Process of Linga Formation**

Where does this magnetic power come from? It does not come from anywhere outside. It is present within every man. Similarly, metals like gold, iron, etc., are present in him. The Vedas declare, *Raso Vai Sah* (God pervades everything in the form of essence). God is known as

Hiranyagarbha (one having a golden womb). The Rasa (gold essence) present in his womb undergoes a vigorous churning process and assumes the shape of a Linga. What is the significance of Lingodbhava? Linga means a symbol or a sign. (Showing the golden Linga that He created in the beginning of His discourse, Bhagavan said) As you can see; the Linga has no distinctive features like eyes, face, etc. It has neither feet nor head. It can be turned in any manner. Where is its head and where are its feet? It symbolises the formless Divinity. *Leeyathe Gamyathe Ithi Linga* (Linga is that which is the source and goal of everything). It is the substratum of everything. The gold essence after assuming the shape of a Linga emerges out. You need fire in order to melt gold. Similarly, the fire within melts the gold. It is then moulded into the shape of a Linga. Hence, the difficulty at the time of its emergence. It has to assume the form of a Linga and come out. You feel Swami is put to a lot of Badha (suffering) at the time of Lingodbhava. It is not really Badha (suffering) but Bodha (teaching) for you. (loud applause) Is it not natural for a mother to undergo labour pains while giving birth to a child? Will any mother feel bad in bearing her child just because she is put to a lot of suffering? She is happy to bear the child and always prays for its well-being. In the same manner, Swami does not feel any pain at the time of the emergence of Linga. I don't consider it a Badha. I am happy that I am imparting a significant Bodha to so many of you.

God has absolutely no suffering, no worries and no difficulties whatsoever. But you feel that Swami is undergoing a great pain and suffering. In order to facilitate the formation of these Lingas, My body has turned into a powerful magnet. It is for this reason that I was finding it difficult to walk for the last three days. My feet were getting stuck to the ground because of the magnetic pull of My body. Likewise, whatever objects I touched were getting stuck to My hands. It was not a trouble for Me. It is but natural because My whole body became magnetic. Such power of attraction cannot be experienced by all. It is only in Divinity that you find such highly powerful magnetic force. These things cannot be revealed to all. Though this divine magnetic power is present in every human being, it is under certain limitations in him. But Divinity has no limitations whatsoever. Though Divinity transcends all limits, you try to imagine certain limits for it.

### **Realise the Magnetic Power of the Body**

Magnetic power is present everywhere. Air, water, food, sound, everything is suffused with magnetic power. *Daivadheenam Jagat Sarvam* (the whole universe is under the control of God). *Sathyadheenamtu Daivatam* (God is under the control of Truth). Everything is contained in the principle of Truth. When you uphold Truth, all the divine powers will manifest in you. *Tatsathyam Utthamadheenam* (Truth is controlled by the noble souls). Who is a noble man? A noble man is one who is full of peace, love and compassion. *Utthamo Paradevata* (such noble souls are verily God).

Man goes on pilgrimages in search of God as he is ignorant of his latent divine power. One who recognises one's latent divine power need not undertake any such spiritual practices. A Russian lady by name Brigitte acquired immense magnetic power. Whenever she walked on the road, iron objects would get attracted to her. She was not allowed to enter any shop because the items there would get attracted to her. It is not enough if one has magnetic power, one should be able to keep it under one's control. She had no control over her magnetic power. She could not even have her food. She died a premature death because she did not have the capacity to control her

magnetic power. One who drives a car should also have the ability to control it. If one has no control over the vehicle one is driving, one is sure to meet with accident. Our body can be compared to a car. The eyes are the headlights, the mouth is the horn, the mind is the steering and the stomach, the petrol tank. The four objectives of human life—Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha are like the four tyres. You should fill these tyres with the air of faith. The pressure of air in the front tyres should be different from that in the rear tyres. The petrol (food) that is filled in the tank (stomach) should be pure and unpolluted. When the petrol is impure, it can cause a blockade. Hence, one should eat only Satwic food. The water that we drink should also be pure and unpolluted. Only then will the vehicle of the body be in good condition and will take us to the destination. Man's life will be redeemed only when he understands the principle of his body. For this, man should realise the magnetic power of the body. Lack of understanding of this principle is the cause of man's worry.

*"To be born is a worry, to be on the earth is a worry; world is a cause of worry and death too; entire childhood is a worry and so is the old age; life is a worry, failure is a worry; all actions and difficulties cause worry; even happiness too is a mysterious worry."* (Telugu Poem)

Happiness or worry is based on your feelings. If you consider the body to be a cause of worry, it will be so. On the other hand, if you consider it as sacred, it will be a source of happiness for you. In fact, there is nothing bad in God's creation. Everything is sacred and full of magnetic power. The body is like a temple with magnetic power. So, whatever actions you undertake should be sacred. When you perform unrighteous deeds, you have to face their consequences also. Spiritual practices like Japa and Dhyana give only temporary mental satisfaction. They cannot reveal the magnetic power. There are nine paths of devotion. They are: Shravanam (listening), Kirtanam (singing), Vishnusmaranam (contemplating on Vishnu), Padasevanam (serving His Lotus Feet), Vandanam (salutation), Archanam (worship), Dasyam (servitude), Sneham (friendship), and Atmanivedanam (Self-surrender). Atmanivedanam comes only after Sneham. Hence, you should try to cultivate the friendship of God. Without Sneham, you cannot reach the state of Atmanivedanam. Until you reach Atmanivedanam, you cannot understand the all-pervasive principle of divine magnetic power. Magnetic power is the basis of all your actions.

Temples are nothing but Ayaskantha Mandirs (centres of magnetic power). The power that you experience in a temple is, in fact, magnetic power. You feel there is a great power in Tirupati. It is not the power of Lord Venkateswara, the presiding deity. It is the power of devotees' faith and devotion. Take any temple for instance. The magnetic power is present there. One can experience it only in temples and not in other places. What is the reason? The deities installed in temples, the priest, the water used for Abhishekam, the flowers and the Akshata (sanctified rice) used for worship, everything is full of magnetic power. That is the reason why people are attracted to temples.

### **Hold on to the Fundamental Principle of Divinity**

Our body is also like a temple with magnetic power. Hence, it has to be utilised for sacred purposes. When you give room to evil traits like anger, jealousy and hatred, much of your magnetic power is wasted. The sense of smell, touch, taste, etc., is but the effect of magnetic power. The programmes that are being broadcast at Delhi or Chennai Radio Station can be heard here simultaneously. How does it happen? The divine magnetic power carries the sound waves to

all places. No scientist or engineer can understand this. Can a scientist explain the process of digestion and blood circulation in the body? No. In every being, the heart beats for a particular number of times. Which scientist can explain this? All this is ordained by God. Doctors feel proud of their achievements. But, in fact, nobody can achieve anything without Divine Will. They know how a heart beats, but they do not know why it does so and who makes it function. It is not because of human effort but by Divine Will that the body functions. But man is not able to understand this because of his ego and sense of doership. No doubt, human effort is required to perform all actions but nothing can be achieved without Divine grace. Here is an example. God has created paddy. But you cannot eat it as it is. You have to remove the husk, boil the rice and prepare the food. This process of refinement is known as Samskara. It signifies human effort. But creation is in the hands of God. Everybody should have firm faith in God. Some ignorant people do not believe in the existence of God. Even such people agree that there must be some transcendental power behind this creation. That very power is God without whom man cannot exist.

As I have said earlier, man is the combination of materialisation, vibration and radiation. With the help of radiation (Atma) and vibration (life-force), man is able to carry out his life using materialisation (body) as the instrument. The body is the basis for performing action. It symbolises Karma Yoga. Vibration helps man to think. Radiation is responsible for the functioning of vibration and materialisation. This is referred to in the Vedas as *Prajnanam Brahma* (Brahman is awareness). This is not just awareness, but Constant Integrated Awareness. It exists everywhere, at all times totally. It has no distinction of day and night. It transcends the three states of Jagrat (waking), Swapna (dream) and Sushupti (deep sleep). It is one and the same in all the three periods of time. *Ekam Sath Viprah Bahudha Vadanti* (Truth is one but scholars refer to it by many names). This is the divine magnetic power. It can assume any form like Rama, Krishna, Easwara, etc., depending on the feelings of the devotees. All such names and forms are the products of your imagination but in reality God has no name and no form. Take, for instance, water. It has no specific shape, but assumes the shape of the vessel into which it is poured. Likewise, air is formless but assumes the form of a balloon or a football when it is filled in them. The names and forms are of your own making and are bound to disappear sooner or later. All that you achieve through human effort is worldly in nature. But the fundamental principle is the principle of Divinity. Hence, hold on to the fundamental principle of Divinity.

*Embodiments of Love!*

### **Magnetic Power of Faith Attracts Divinity**

You may forget anything, but never forget God. Forgetting God amounts to forgetting yourself. In ancient times, people lived for 110-120 years because they led their lives in constant contemplation of God. They never suffered from any diseases. They ate simple food. They did not bother about vitamins and proteins, and never gobbled tablets of Vitamin A, B, C, etc. They would get the required vitamins and proteins because they offered their food to God. You can achieve anything in life if you strengthen your faith in God. In fact, you will become God yourself. You are no different from God. Understand this truth and attain the state of oneness.

(Showing the golden Linga to the devotees, Swami said), As you all can see, this Linga is rather bigger in size. There is a meaning behind this. This is five Tolas in weight. Every human being possesses five Tolas of gold essence known as Hiranyagarbha. You may be aware that there are



some medicines with gold content. Gold represents energy in man and is the cause of his radiance. The gold content within each body is of this size only. It is this gold essence in the body that makes the eyes see, ears hear, etc. There are 3 lakh taste buds in our tongue and 40 lakh light rays in the eyes. The eyes, the tongue and other sense organs derive their strength from the magnetic power present within. The gold essence pervades the entire body as a shield of protection. Beneath the normal skin there is a thin layer of white skin which acts as a protective sheath for the blood. There will be bleeding only when the white skin is cut. God has kept the white skin below the normal skin for the sake of protection. Whatever God does is for the welfare of all. This is the meaning of the prayer, *Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu* (May all the beings of the world be happy!)

The Bhagavata says, "*The stories of the Lord are most wonderful and sacred in all the three worlds. They are like sickles that cut the clinging creepers of worldly bondage.*" (Telugu Poem) The Gopikas had unwavering faith in Lord Krishna and thus could redeem their lives. Faith is the magnetic power that attracts Divinity. Though the mothers-in-law abused them and the husbands were angry with them, the Gopikas never reacted to their rebukes. They were neither angry nor afraid. The sweet form of Krishna was imprinted on their hearts just like a picture printed on paper. Can the picture and paper be separated from each other? No. Likewise, Krishna was firmly installed in the hearts of the Gopikas. Such firm faith and devotion is the result of merits accrued over many births. The Gopikas had firm faith in the Vedic axiom *Raso Vai Sah* (God pervades everything in the form of sweetness). One should imbibe the feelings of love and compassion to experience this nectarine sweetness of God. The taste of love is beyond description. It is highly sacred and makes one forget oneself in ecstasy. Sage Narada described it thus: *Yallabdhwa Puman Ichchharamo Bhavathi Trupto Bhavathi Matto Bhavathi Atmaramo Bhavathi* (having attained That, man gets total satisfaction, fulfillment, ecstasy and bliss.)

When you chant the Divine Name with love, you forget yourself. Man attains fulfillment only when he becomes the recipient of Divine love. In order to attain Divine love, develop love in you more and more. When you have the magnetic power of love in you, whatever you study will get imprinted on your heart. If you do not have the magnetic power, you can never succeed in your endeavours, however hard you may try. You may study day and night but without any result. Whenever you try to study, you will be overpowered by Nidra Devi (goddess of sleep). Kumbhakarna will put you to sleep. On the other hand, when you develop the magnetic power in you, you will never feel sleepy while studying. Kumbhakarna will dare not look at you.

Students today waste a lot of time. They try to study only at the time of examinations. "*O man! Do not feel proud of your education. If you do not offer your salutations to God and do not think of Him with devotion, all your education becomes useless.*" (Telugu Poem)

Think of God at least once in a day. Do not bother about what others say. Someone may come to you and say, there is no God. Then immediately, you should ask, "Whose God? Is it my God or your God? Your God may not exist for you, but who are you to deny the existence of my God?" With such firm conviction, you should convince them. But unfortunately people today have become blind having lost the eyes of faith. Develop faith and sanctify your lives. Faith alone can protect you at all times and under all circumstances. But you forget this principle of Raksha (protection) and involve yourself in Shiksha (punishment) to others. Never entertain ill feelings

against others. Do not harm others. Do not criticise others. If you cause suffering to others, you will suffer much more. Not only you, even your family will have to face the consequences. Never forget this truth. God will confer His grace on you and your family only when you aspire for the welfare of others. Develop noble feelings, think of God and make proper use of your time.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, *Prema Mudhita Manase Kaho...*

—**From Bhagavan's Sivaratri Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 13th March 2002**

### **The Vedas Incarnated as the Ramayana**

*Rama is the Name that is sweeter than all the sweet things in Nature. It never cloy the tongue or the mind. It has vast mysterious mystic potentialities to elevate man. So, one must endeavour to keep the mind ever dwelling on it. The story of Rama, the Ramayana, is but another version of the Vedas. In fact, it is said that the Vedas incarnated as the Ramayana in order to help in the destruction of evil and the revival of righteous living, the tasks which the Lord took upon Himself during His sojourn on earth as Rama.*

—**Baba**

## Celebrate Ugadi by Purifying the Heart

*Man should enquire how the sun rises and sets with utmost regularity everyday and how the stars glitter in the sky at night though they are not visible during the day. (Telugu Poem)*

### *Embodiments of Love!*

We have been experiencing the bliss of celebrating Ugadi for the past many ages and generations. The Bharatiyas have been spreading peace and security to all the nations of the world with their strength of spirituality. Since time immemorial to this day, the prayer of the Bharatiyas has been: *Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu* (May all the people of the world be happy!) But the present-day condition is just the opposite. Man has progressed in worldly sense but morally he has regressed. He is not able to give up his narrow mindedness and criticism of others.

### **Desirelessness Leads to Bliss**

If one enquires into the reason for this, one will realise that one's selfishness and self-interest are the cause for this. Man does not love objects or individuals for their sake; he does so for his self-interest. He does not love his country and work for its welfare. All his thoughts, words and deeds are motivated by selfishness. We will be celebrating Ugadi in its true spirit only when we give up our narrow-mindedness and selfishness.

On Ugadi day, people get up early, have a sacred bath, put on new clothes and partake of sweets and various delicious items. They are interested only in external cleanliness and are not concerned about purifying their hearts which are tainted with evil thoughts and evil feelings. It is rather easy to have external cleanliness and to wear new clothes but that is not the purpose of celebrating festivals. True celebration of Ugadi lies in giving up evil qualities and purifying one's heart. Human heart in its pristine state is highly sacred and human birth is difficult to attain. *Janthunam Narajanma Durlabham* (out of all the living beings, the human birth is the rarest). Having attained such a precious life, man is not making any effort to live like a true human being. Today he has become a bundle of desires. He is spending all his time and effort in fulfilling his desires. He is under the mistaken notion that fulfillment of desires will confer happiness on him. He should realise that only annihilation of desires will lead him to ultimate bliss. True happiness lies in the state of desirelessness.

### **Unity is the Essence of Human Life**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Ages have gone by and the world has undergone many changes but there is no transformation in the human heart. Some people say that education is bringing about a change in man. No doubt, there has been a change. But what type of change is it? It is a peculiar change that is leading to perversion of human mind instead of transforming his heart. In fact, modern education has added to the confusion of man. Man is not learning what he is supposed to. He is wasting his life by cultivating bestial qualities and by indulging in demonic deeds. The culture of Bharat lays great emphasis on the underlying unity in diversity. It wants us to understand this principle of unity and work for our own redemption. But we are following what is contrary to our ancient culture. So, there is a rise today in the number of so-called educated and intellectuals who fragment unity into diversity but the number of noble souls who visualise unity in diversity is on the decline. It

is unfortunate that the Bharatiyas themselves have not understood how sacred and noble their culture is! Oh sacred souls of Bharat! Try to understand fully the value of Bharatiya culture. You are endowed with unlimited potentialities. But you are unaware of your mighty strength. The way of life of ancient Bharatiyas was such that they imbibed great concern for the welfare of everyone. They found fulfillment in giving happiness to others. But man today lacks such broad-mindedness. He is not able to realise and experience his innate noble qualities.

Time is highly sacred and valuable. Each one has to introspect whether he is making proper use of time. Time once lost is lost forever. Future is not in your hands. So, man should make proper use of the present. This is the teaching of Bharatiya culture. Time is God. Hence, the Vedas extol Him as Kalaya Namah, Kala Kalaya Namah, Kaladarpa Damanaya Namah, Kalateetaya Namah, Kalaswarupaya Namah, Kalaniyamitaya Namah (salutations to the embodiment of time, to the one who has conquered time, to the one who transcends time and to the one who ordains time). God dwells in all. He has thousands of heads, eyes and feet. Our ancients realised this unity in diversity and recognised the innate divinity of man. They sanctified their lives with such noble feelings and exemplary behaviour. Our ancient sages and seers stressed the need for unity and cooperation among human beings. They prayed, *"Let us move together, let us grow together, let us grove in intelligence together, let us live in harmony with each other without giving room for conflicts."* (Telugu Poem) This is the main principle of Bharatiya culture. But such spirit of unity is lacking in modern society. These days there is no unity even among the members of the same family. Unity is the essence of human life. One can attain the goal of human life only by putting this principle of unity into practice. This divine principle of unity is being forgotten today.

### **Faith in God is the Basis of Bliss**

Every man aspires for bliss. In order to attain everlasting bliss, he studies sacred texts, listens to the discourses of noble souls, undertakes pilgrimages and performs various spiritual practices like penance, meditation, etc. But none of these confer bliss on him. There are five sheaths in every human being, namely, Annamaya Kosha (food sheath), Pranamaya Kosha (life sheath), Manomaya Kosha (mental sheath), Vijnanamaya Kosha (wisdom sheath) and Anandamaya Kosha (bliss sheath). Though man has bliss sheath in him, he is unable to experience bliss. There is no trace of bliss in him. The happiness that man derives out of worldly comforts is limited. It is utter foolishness to think that wealth and property, comforts and conveniences can bestow unlimited joy on him. None of these can give true happiness. True happiness has no limits. How can it be attained? It cannot be attained from outside. It originates from the heart. The heart is the dwelling place of God. To experience true happiness, man should develop firm faith in God. Where there is faith, there is love. Only when man has love in him can he practise righteousness. Righteousness leads to truth which in turn leads to God.

God alone is the source and basis of bliss. Truth is the basis of God. Righteousness is the basis of truth. Love is the basis of righteousness. Faith is the basis of love. But man today has no faith. A person without Vishwasa (faith) is verily without Swasa (breath). A faithless man is virtually a living corpse. Our ancient sages and seers therefore emphasised the need for faith. But man today has become virtually blind having lost his faith. What are the two eyes of man? The two eyes of man are Shastra (scriptures) and Dharma (righteousness). But today even the Brahmins who are supposed to study the scriptures are neglecting them. All sections of society, whichever caste or community they may belong to, should perform their duty with devotion and dedication.

Instead of discharging his duty, man is wasting his life in mean pursuits. Consequently, he is unable to enjoy even a fraction of the unlimited peace and happiness he is endowed with.

Gratitude is the most fundamental virtue of man. People while performing Suryanamaskara (offering salutations to the sun), praise the sun god in various ways. One of them is *Kritaghnagnhaya Namah* (salutations to the one who punishes the ungrateful). The light of the sun god is present in our eyes in a subtle form. *Chandrama Manaso Jatah Chaksho Suryo Ajayatah* (the moon was born out of the mind and the sun out of the eyes of the Supreme Being). It is said that the sun god withdraws his light from the eyes of the ungrateful. One without the sense of gratitude can be called a blind person. Whoever he may be, one should always remain grateful to one's benefactor. One should show gratitude even without caring for one's own life. God is helping man in ever so many ways but man does not show gratitude to Him. He is all the time engaged in selfish pursuits. How can such a foolish person be called a human being? What is Adhyatmikata (spirituality)? It is not just contemplating on the Adhi Atma (primordial Spirit). True spirituality lies in destroying one's bestial nature and rising to the level of the Divine. But instead of ascending to divinity, man is degenerating to animality. He has forgotten the principles of spirituality. He celebrates festivals by merely partaking of sweets and wastes his time in pomposity. One should ponder over the inner significance of each festival and celebrate it in a meaningful manner. Man should have total faith that he is not just a human being but there is God within. Only then will the animal nature in him be subdued. As man has forgotten his true nature, he has become bestial. You may belong to any country, religion, race, caste and sex, you should firmly hold on to humanness. Do not waste your time keeping selfish goals in your mind.

### **Who is a True Devotee of God?**

Once Lord Narayana wanted Narada to search for a true devotee who spends his time in a sacred way. Then Narada asked the Lord for the qualifications of a true devotee. The Lord said, "A true devotee is one whose heart is pure and who chants the Divine Name wholeheartedly at all times. He may involve himself in worldly activities but he should not be attached to them. His mind should be constantly focused on God." Then Narada said, "Swami, I chant Your Name wholeheartedly at all times and under all circumstances. There is not a single moment when I don't remember You. Can there be a greater devotee than me?" To consider oneself as the greatest devotee is a sign of ego. Narada became egoistic with the feeling that he was the greatest devotee. Lord Narayana replied, "Narada, there are many devotees like you. You find them in every house and in every place. But this is not true devotion. True devotion is that which finds expression in every thought, word and deed of man. Just as the food partaken gets digested in the stomach and its essence is supplied to all limbs of the body, likewise when you fill your heart with the Divine Name, its effect should spread to your eyes, ears, tongue, hands, feet, etc. When the sacred effect of the Divine Name spreads to your eyes, you will develop sacred vision. Likewise, your speech will become sacred, and you will listen only to sacred words. Your hands will undertake sacred deeds and your feet will take you to sacred places. Thus, a true devotee will sanctify each of his limbs with sacred activity."

Lord Narayana wanted Narada to search for such a devotee. Narada went round the world, but his ego prevented him from accepting anybody as a devotee greater than himself. As he was returning, he found a tribesman in a forest. He was sitting under a tree and chanting the Divine Name. He was carrying a big sword in his hand. Narada out of curiosity asked him, "May I know

who you are?" He replied, "Sir, I am a hunter and 'an ardent devotee of the Lord." Narada asked, "If you are a devotee, then why should you carry a sword in your hand? Whom are you going to kill?" The hunter replied, "Sir, I want to kill four persons. The first of them is Draupadi." Narada was startled to hear this. "Don't you know that Draupadi was constantly chanting the Name of Lord Krishna? Pleased with her devotion and surrender, Krishna came to her rescue and protected her honour when Kauravas tried to disrobe her in the royal court. Why do you want to kill such a great devotee?" The hunter said, "No doubt, she was a devotee. But she called out Krishna while He was having His food. Immediately, my Lord left His food and rushed to her rescue. As she was responsible for my Lord not having food on that day, I want to kill her." "Who is the second person whom you intend to kill", queried Narada. The hunter said, "My Lord could not have proper food and rest because of Prahlada who chanted His Name continuously and time and again sought His help. When he was being trampled over by elephants, he prayed to the Lord for succour. In order to protect him, the Lord had to take upon Himself the pain of being trampled over by elephants. As he was the cause for my Lord's suffering, I want to kill him. The third person is Mira. She was all the time chanting the Name of Giridhar Naagar. As a result, all the persecutions inflicted on her had to be borne by the Lord Himself. It amounted to hurting God. So, she should be killed." Narada asked, "Then who is the fourth one?" "There is a person called Narada, who carries a Tanpura and keeps chanting the Name of Narayana. His is only Swartha Bhakti (devotion intended for selfish gains) and not Parartha Prema Bhakti (devotion filled with pure love for God). So, he also should be killed."

Narada got frightened and did not want to prolong this conversation. He realised that it was his ego which was responsible for this predicament. Narada then went to Vaikuntha and told Lord Narayana about his encounter with the hunter, "Swami, I have investigated that even those who chant Your Name continuously are guilty of causing suffering to You." Lord Narayana said, "Narada, you are mistaken. This incident only reflects the intense love the hunter has for Me. He is a true devotee who considers God's happiness as his own. He always aspires to give happiness to the Lord and does not want to cause any inconvenience to Him. Only the one who always gives happiness to the Lord is a true devotee." This incident was an eye-opener for Narada. He said, "Swami, now I realise that you enacted this play only to crush my ego." The history of Bharat contains many such sacred stories in order to spread the message of the Lord to mankind.

You should never cause inconvenience to God in the name of devotion. If you earn the displeasure of God, it will reflect on you. Consider that God's happiness is your happiness and your happiness is God's happiness. Imbibe this spirit of oneness. "God and I are one." Today most of the devotees are selfish. They have only Swartha Bhakti. They are concerned with their own happiness and not that of God. God is the embodiment of love. Such divine love is present in all. You should see to it that your love is always pure. Share your love with everyone. This is what God expects from you.

### **God Resides in every Heart**

Since ancient times, the Bharatiyas have been sharing their sacred culture with the rest of the world. They considered God as one and never nurtured the feeling of difference of one man from another. They believed in the Vedic statement: *Sahasra Seersha Purusha Sahasraksha Sahasra Pad* (God has thousands of heads, eyes and feet). It does not mean that there is someone with thousands of heads, eyes and feet, etc. It only means that all heads, eyes and feet are His. God is

present in everyone. He resides in every heart. So, do not confine God to a temple, a mosque or a church. Where man is, there God is. *Daivam Manusha Rupena* (God takes the form of man). As you do not realise this, you indulge in criticism of others. Whom are you criticising? Whom do you adore? Enquire yourself. God is present in all. So, when you criticise others, it amounts to criticising yourself. When you love others, you love yourself. If you criticise others, you criticise God. *Sarva Jeeva Namaskaram Kesavam Pratigachchhati* (whomsoever you salute, it reaches God) and *Sarva Jeeva Tiraskaram Kesavam Pratigachchhati* (whomsoever you criticise, it reaches God).

### *Embodiments of Love!*

Today is Ugadi, the beginning of the New Year. Since ancient times, people have celebrated many Ugadis, but they are yet to give up bad qualities. True Ugadi is the day when you give up bad qualities, fill your heart with love and take to the path of sacrifice. Do not limit the celebration of Ugadi to merely putting on new clothes and partaking of delicious food items. Today you may wear a new shirt, but how long will it remain new? Tomorrow it becomes old. Nobody reads the same newspaper everyday. Today's newspaper becomes tomorrow's waste paper. Our life is like a newspaper. Once you have finished reading a newspaper, you do not like to read it again and again. You have been given this birth, and have gone through varied experiences of pleasure and pain. Enough is enough. Do not ask for another birth as you would not like to read yesterday's newspaper. You should pray, "Oh God! You have given me this life and I have gone through all the experiences of pleasure and pain. I do not want to have another birth"

Adi Sankara said,  
"*Punarapi Jananam Punarapi Maranam*  
*Punarapi Janani Jathare Sayanam*  
*Iha Samsare Bahu Dustare*  
*Kripayapare Pahi Murare.*"

(Oh Lord! I am caught up in this cycle of birth and death; time and again, I am experiencing the agony of staying in the mother's womb. It is very difficult to cross this ocean of worldly life. Please take me across this ocean and grant me liberation.)

Sankara was a great scholar and was well-versed in all forms of knowledge. Yet he propagated the path of devotion. Once while he was going to the river Ganga with his disciples, he noticed a person sitting under a tree and trying to learn the rules of Panini's grammar by rote. He was repeating "Dukrun Karane, Dukrun Karane". Sankara who was very young at that time took pity on him. He went near him and said,

"*Bhaja Govindam, Bhaja Govindam*  
*Govindam Bhaja Mooda Mathe*  
*Samprapthe Sannihithe Kale*  
*Nahi Nahi Rakshati Dukrun Karane.*"

(Oh foolish man, chant the name of Govinda, the rules of grammar will not come to your rescue when the end approaches.)

Sankara authored many Vedantic texts but ultimately he also took to the path of devotion. Namasmara (chanting of God's Name) is the easiest path to liberation. This was his main teaching. Even today there are many people who do Namasmara but they are not experiencing its essence. What is the purpose of life? Is it to be born again and again?

Man is performing various tasks and undergoing many experiences in this world. But what is the use of all that he does if he is unable to enjoy the everlasting bliss? Neither by wealth nor by action nor by study of texts nor by Darshan, Sparshan and Sambhashan (vision, touch and conversation) of noble souls can man attain eternal bliss. He can visualise the manifestation of God and experience bliss only when he purifies his heart. Love all. Have faith that God is present in all. Make everybody happy. Only then can you attain happiness. It is impossible for you to attain happiness without making others happy.

### **True Significance of Celebrating Ugadi**

On this day of Ugadi, take a firm resolve to purify your heart. Past is past. It cannot be retrieved. When you are walking on the road, you should look at the path ahead of you. What is the point in looking behind? Likewise, there is no point in brooding over the past. Future is not certain. What is the guarantee that you will be alive until tomorrow? So, do not worry about your future. Live in the present. It is not ordinary present. It is omnipresent, meaning the results of past and seeds of future are contained in it. So, when you make proper use of the present, you can be rest assured that your future is safe and secure.

### *Embodiments of Love!*

Today is Ugadi, the New Year day for the people of Andhra Pradesh. Tomorrow happens to be the Tamil New Year day and also Vishu, the New Year day for the people of Kerala. There are many festivals in a year. You should celebrate them by understanding and experiencing their true significance. Right from this moment, embark on a new life, giving up bad thoughts and bad qualities. Purify your heart. Only then will your life be blissful. There is no point in reading sacred texts or visiting noble souls unless you purify your heart in the first instance. Let your thoughts, words and deeds be sacred. This is the true significance of celebrating Ugadi.

Tomorrow is the New Year day for the people of Tamil Nadu. Hence, many of them have come from Madras (Chennai) and other places of Tamil Nadu. Madras is not new. Since long it has been an important centre for the Bharatiyas. Later on, due to political considerations different States were formed and Madras was bifurcated. But I do not observe any differences between one region and the other. I adhere to the principle of unity. All are one, be alike to everyone. This is My ideal. At present, the people of Chennai are suffering from scarcity of drinking water. The rich can afford to buy water and quench their thirst. But what about the poor? They are drinking impure water and spoiling their health. Hence, I have decided to provide them pure drinking water so that they can lead a happy and healthy life. In this connection, Chakravarthi (Secretary, Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust), V. Srinivasan from Chennai (President, All India Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations) and Indulal Shah from Mumbai (Chairman, Sri Sathya Sai World Council) met the World Bank authorities yesterday and explained to them about the selfless service activities that we have undertaken. They told the World Bank authorities that all our activities were purely service-oriented and we did not expect anything in return. They repeated what Swami had told them to convey.



The World Bank people were very much impressed. They said that they had never heard about or seen such stupendous service activities undertaken by a charitable organisation anywhere else in the world. (Loud applause) They were happy that Sathya Sai Baba was providing drinking water to a distant place like Chennai. They have agreed to provide funds for this project. On this sacred day of Ugadi before I came out to give Darshan, we received a telephone call at about 7 a.m. conveying this message. If the feelings are sacred, the result is bound to be sacred. They told us, "You don't need to be concerned about the funds and you don't need to come to us again. We are prepared to meet all your requirements." With broad-mindedness, they have come forward to extend their help.

When you undertake any task with a sacred heart, you will certainly meet with success. I am the living proof of this ideal. There is no trace of selfishness in whatever task I undertake. Whatever I do is for the benefit of humanity. Many people do not try to understand this and think that it is done with some expectation. But I do not expect anything from anybody nor do I get any benefit out of it. I derive only one benefit, i.e., I feel happy when everybody is happy. As you claim to be Sai devotees, you should strictly adhere to the Sai path and make everyone happy.

When you follow in My footsteps, you will certainly achieve sacred results and earn a good name. You do not need to wait even for a fraction of a second. Whatever Sai says is bound to happen. Being Sai devotees, you should give up selfishness and dedicate your lives for the welfare of society. Fill your lives with love. Stop criticising others. Respect even those who hate you. Hatred is a bad quality. It will ruin you. Hence, get rid of this evil. Love everyone. Help the poor and needy to the extent possible. Help ever, Hurt never. Sage Vyasa has given the essence of eighteen Puranas in two sentences, *Paropakara Punyaya, Papaya Parapeedanam* (one attains merit by serving others and commits sin by hurting them). This is the main principle of Bharatiya culture. When you help others, you will receive help tenfold. If you harm others, you will be put to harm ten times more. Keep this in mind. On this sacred day, fill your hearts with love and undertake sacred activities.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, *Prema Mudita Manase Kaho...*

***From Bhagavan's Ugadi Sandesh in Sai Ramesh Krishna Hall, Brindavan on 13th April 2002***

AVATAR VANI

TAMIL NEW YEAR AND VISHU SANDESH

### **Redeem Your Life by Namasmarana**

*If money is lost, one need not be worried about it fin- one can earn it again. If a friend is lost, one can have another. If wife is lost, one can marry again. If one loses one's piece of land, one can purchase another. All these can be regained; but if body is lost, one cannot get it back.*

(Sanskrit Verse)

*Embodiments of Love!*

Time is infinite. You undergo varied experiences in the infinity of time. These experiences are momentary. At times, you may lose money but you don't need to be worried about it for you can earn it again. You come across many friends but none of them is permanent. You lose some and gain some others. At some stage in life, people get married and enter Grihastha Ashram (stage of a householder). But neither the husband nor the wife is permanent. If the wife passes away, man can remarry to carry on with his life. Similarly, if you lose your piece of land, you can buy another. But once the body is lost, it is lost forever.

### **Man's Desires are Responsible for his Suffering**

It is through the medium of this body that you experience happiness at worldly and spiritual levels. Man acquires wealth and property, experiences pleasure and pain through this body. What is the cause of all the suffering of man? His desires are responsible for this. These are: Dhaneshana, Dareshana and Putreshana (desire for money, wife and progeny). This Ishanatraya (triad of desires) is responsible for man's misery.

Kings in the past acquired wealth and property. Could they retain them forever? Wealth is not permanent. It can never redeem man. Wealth can never provide permanent happiness. Spiritual wealth is the true wealth. Man is not able to enjoy true happiness due to his greed for money. Yet he craves for money. No doubt, money is necessary but it should be under certain limits. The second is Dareshana. One may have wife and children, wealth and property and enjoy family life for some time. But such happiness is not true and eternal. It is foolish to think that one can remain happy forever in family life. The third is Putreshana. Man wants to have a son thinking that he would bring happiness to him. There is nothing wrong in aspiring to have a son but the happiness that results is only temporary. King Dhritarashtra had 100 sons, but did he enjoy happiness through his sons? No. He, in fact, had to undergo a lot of suffering and was put, to disrepute because of his sons. They brought his vast kingdom to ruin. *"King Dhritarashtra had a number of sons but ultimately what was his fate? Sage Suka was not married and had no son, but did he suffer on account of this?"* (Telugu Poem)

It is a mistake to think that a person having many sons will enjoy happiness and one without a son will suffer. It is but an illusion to think that money, wife and children will give happiness. In fact, Dhaneshana, Dareshana and Putreshana act as a binding for man and subject him to suffering. What is the use of having many sons who are wicked? It is enough if you have one son who is noble and ideal.

### **Sumitra was the Embodiment of Selflessness and Sacrifice**

Take Ramayana, for instance. According to the Telugu calendar, this is the month of Chaitra. This is the month that witnessed the advent of Lord Rama. He was born on the Chaitra Suddha Navami day. Among the three wives of Dasaratha, not much has been said about the second wife Sumitra anywhere in history. Kausalya attained a good name because of her son, Rama. Her name figures first in the Suprabhatam which begins with the words—*"Kausalya Supraja Rama..."* (Oh! The noble son of mother Kausalya ...) Kaikeyi desired that her son Bharata should be made the crown prince. But Sumitra had absolutely no desire whatsoever. She was the epitome of all virtues. She was Mitha Bhashini and Hitha Bhashini (one who talks less in a pleasing manner). Her conduct was appropriate to her name Su-mitra (good friend).

She had two sons, Lakshmana and Shatrughna. There was no way that either of them could become the crown prince. Yet Sumitra was not worried. She demonstrated the ideal of service to the rest of the world. "When Lord Rama becomes the king, my first son Lakshmana should dedicate himself to His service." This was her desire. Likewise, she wanted her second son Shatrughna to be in the service of Bharata. The servant is always by the side of the master. That is why Lakshmana followed Lord Rama, and Shatrughna was always in the company of Bharata. She understood the sacredness of service and exhorted her sons to follow this divine path. When you carefully go through the sacred story of Lord Rama, you will be able to understand and appreciate the noble and ideal character of mother Sumitra.

When Lord Rama was leaving for the forest, mother Kaushalya wept inconsolably. It was only Sumitra who did not shed tears. She tried to pacify Kaushalya and instill courage in her, saying, Dear sister, my son Lakshmana would accompany Rama to the forest to look after His needs. He will make sure that Rama is put to no difficulty under any circumstances. Just as eyelids protect the eyes, Lakshmana will take full care of Rama with devotion. You don't need to be worried about Rama's safety and security." She willingly sent her son to the forest along with Rama. Will any mother act in such a courageous and selfless manner?

As per the two promises extracted by Kaikeyi from Dasaratha, only Rama was obliged to go to forest. It was not obligatory for Lakshmana to accompany Him. Sumitra could have argued in this manner and prevented Lakshmana from going to the forest. But Sumitra did not raise any objection whatsoever. "Lakshmana is born only to serve Lord Rama. He is an instrument in Rama's hands. So, Rama is taking His instrument with Him. Who am I to send Lakshmana with Him and who is Lakshmana to decide about his going with Rama? Rama has every right to take Lakshmana with Him." These were her feelings. She blessed her son Lakshmana and said, "My dear, take proper care of Sita and Rama." When Bharata was proceeding to his uncle's kingdom of Kekaya, Shatrughna had no information whether to stay back or follow. Yet, Shatrughna got ready to accompany Bharata as he knew it was his duty to serve him. In the history of Bharat, there are many noble mothers like Sumitra who encouraged their sons to take to the path of service.

### **Urmila's Nobility and Piety**

While Sita felt extremely sad at the thought of separation from Rama and accompanied Him to the forest, Urmila showed exemplary spirit of sacrifice and felt happy that her husband Lakshmana got the rare opportunity of serving Sita and Rama in the forest for 14 years. But Urmila does not find a place of prominence in the Ramayana. Both Sumitra and Urmila were highly pious and virtuous. They led a life of sacrifice.

Lakshmana conveyed his decision to Urmila to accompany Rama to the forest. Will any wife keep quiet when she comes to know that her husband is going to the forest for 14 years? Urmila could have asked many questions: "Why should you follow Rama? You are under no obligation to go to the forest. Only Rama is ordered to go. So, you need not go with Him." Any ordinary woman would have argued in this manner. But Urmila did not raise any objection. In fact, she was very happy that her husband got an opportunity to serve Sita and Rama. She said, "You are very lucky to have got this great opportunity. Please follow them without wasting a minute." She

asked him to go with Sita and Rama, saying, "I don't want to come in the way of your going with Sita and Rama. Please do not waste even a minute. Go with them at once and be in their service."

She wanted Lakshmana to give her a promise before going to the forest. She said, "You are going to live in the forest without me for 14 years. It is possible that you may think of me and mention my name at some time or the other. So, I want you to promise that you would not think of me or mention my name at any point of time. Contemplate constantly on the Divine Names of Sita and Rama and serve them with all sincerity and devotion. If I accompany you to the forest, you may be able to devote your entire time to their service. I will stay back so as not to become an impediment in your way." Hearing the words of Urmila, Lakshmana was surprised and elated. "Can one find such a noble and devoted wife anywhere in the world?" he thought to himself. He took leave of her and left the place immediately.

### **Bharat is the Land of Unity and Divinity**

In this land of Bharat, there are many noble mothers like Sumitra and virtuous wives like Urmila. Since ancient times, Bharat has attained great reputation because of such noble women. In the northern side of Bharat, we have the Himalayan Mountains as the boundary. This land is sanctified by the perennial rivers of Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati. These three symbolise the triad of Bhakti, Jnana and Vairagya (devotion, wisdom and renunciation). Not merely this, the great epics of this land, the Ramayana, the Bhagavata and the Mahabharata shine as beacons illuminating the path of man. They teach how man should mould his life into an ideal one.

This land is the birthplace of sacred scriptures like the Bhagavad-Gita which gave the message of unity to mankind. This land has given birth to noble souls like Buddha who propagated the message of non-violence. He taught *Ahimsa Paramo Dharma* (non-violence is the highest Dharma). The syllable 'Bha' stands for light, radiance and effulgence. So, Bharatiyas are those who aspire for light and divine effulgence. Hence, you should live up to your reputation as Bharatiyas by making your lives sacred and attain divinity. When you make an enquiry into the sacred history of Bharat, you will know that since ancient times this country has been propagating the sacred message of divinity and has been radiating peace and security to the other nations of the world.

### *Embodiments of Love!*

Neither any individual nor wealth can give you eternal bliss. Bliss originates from your heart. So, turn your vision inward. *Antarbahischa Tatsarvam Vyapya Narayana Sthita* (That all-pervasive God is present within and without). When you develop inner vision, you will automatically experience eternal bliss. Man is Ananda Pipasi (one who thirsts for bliss). He need not go in search of bliss. It is in him and with him. Happiness is not related to the body. "*This body is a storehouse of dirt, and prone to diseases; it cannot cross the ocean of Samsara. O mind, do not be under the delusion that body is permanent. Instead take refuge at the Divine Lotus Feet.*" (Telugu Poem) How can such a body give you eternal happiness? Only the Lotus Feet of the Lord can grant you true happiness. There is no devotion and sense of surrender among the Bharatiyas today. People are deluded by the worldly, physical and ephemeral things. Are they able to derive any happiness out of these? Nothing whatsoever. The darkness of ignorance is the root cause of man's delusion. How can you understand the Satwic (pious) principle when you are immersed in Tamo Guna (ignorance)?

### *Embodiments of Love!*

To be born in Bharat is in itself your good fortune. To live here is a greater fortune. You should take pride in the fact that you are the children of Bharat. If someone were to ask you your qualification, you should proudly say, you are a Bharatiya. This is in itself the greatest qualification. There is a sacred inner meaning in this word Bharatiya. But you are not making efforts to understand this. Oh the children of Bharat! Lead your lives in an exemplary manner and radiate peace and happiness to the rest of the world.

### *Embodiments of Love!*

You should never forget the sacred history of Bharat. Don't brush it aside saying it is rather old. It is not easy to understand the subtle principles contained in our history. You might have gone through the Ramayana many times, but have you understood the nobility of Sumitra and sacredness of Urmila? Today people remember the names of Kaikeyi and Manthara but not that of Urmila. Urmila demonstrated sacred ideals and set an example of ideal life before the world. She remained in the same room for 14 long years where Lakshmana had left her while going to the forest. She did not stir out till the return of Lakshmana. She never had any worldly desires. Being the daughter of King Janaka, she had no body attachment. King Janaka was known as Videha, one without body attachment. When you enquire deeply, you will know that there are many hidden secrets in the Ramayana. But the Bharatiyas themselves are not making any effort to understand them. Once a person, after listening to many discourses on the Ramayana, was asked to tell the name of Rama's consort. He replied, "Mrs. Rama", as he did not remember her name. Such is the sorry state of affairs. Bharatiyas are leading a life of ignorance. They are ignoring their ancient culture and are being carried away by modernism.

We have only one friend and He is God. There is only one sacred text and that is the ancient history of India. You should study this sacred text. Do not spoil your mind by reading meaningless novels. He who has purified his heart alone can inculcate sacred feelings.

### **Imbibe Noble and Divine Feelings in the New Year**

Today you are celebrating the commencement of the New Year. But, in fact, you should treat every moment as the beginning of a New Year. Many people are worried as to what changes would the New Year bring in the social, political and economic fields. Any change, if it were to take place, will not wait for the arrival of the New Year. In fact, many changes are taking place from moment to moment. You may wonder as to what are the big changes that would take place in this New Year. Whatever happened in the previous year would take place this year also. One need not be worried about these things. You should be worried that there is no transformation in your heart though years have rolled by. You have to get rid of your evil thoughts, words and deeds. You should celebrate the arrival of New Year by inculcating noble and divine feelings. You should experience bliss by visualising the unmanifest Atmic Principle in this manifest world.

From this New Year day onwards, contemplate on the sacred ideals demonstrated by the great men and women of the Ramayana. Follow in their footsteps. Attain happiness and share it with others. Uphold the glory of Bharat. Develop the feeling of nationality. Never forget your motherland. If someone were to ask you who you are, you need not say, I am Ramayya,

Krishnayya, etc. You should proudly proclaim that you are a Bharatiya. Ramayya, Krishnayya are Pettinna Perlu (names given to the body), whereas Bharatiya is your Puttina Peru (name acquired by birth). Who is a Bharatiya? 'Bha' means effulgence, light and divinity. Hence, Bharatiya is one who basks in the light of divinity. Bharat is the centre of peace and security. That which is not present in Bharat is not present anywhere else in the world. Bharat has attained the highest reputation in the world. The glory of this country has to be upheld. Follow the teachings of the Ramayana and make your lives sacred. This sacred epic has a great message to convey. Many histories could not stand the test of time but the Ramayana, though thousands of years have passed, continues to remain ever fresh in the minds of people. The name Rama given by Sage Vasishtha has immense inner significance. When you utter the word 'Ram', you first open the mouth with the sound 'Ra'. All your wicked qualities go out when your mouth is open. When you utter 'M' by closing the mouth, the entry is barred against wicked qualities that have gone out. This is the inner meaning of chanting the Name of Rama. On this New Year day, you have learnt many new things. Sanctify your lives by putting into practice whatever you have learnt.

(Here Bhagavan sang the Bhajan, *Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin ...* After this, Bhagavan added):

### **Drive out your Wicked Qualities by Namasmara**

*Embodiments of Love!*

Yesterday happened to be the Telugu New Year, Ugadi. Today we are celebrating Tamil New Year and also the Malayalam New Year, Vishu. Names are different but the inner significance is one and the same. When we understand the inner meaning of these celebrations, everything will appear to be new to you. Celebration of a festival does not merely mean getting up early in the morning, having a sacred bath, wearing new clothes, partaking of sweet dishes, etc. When you understand their inner significance, only then can you say that yoga have celebrated the festivals in their true sense.

*"That is the place encircled by the sacred river Chitravati which meanders its way in its pristine beauty. That is the place around which there are beautiful mango groves symbolising auspiciousness. Standing on guard on four sides are the deities Parvati and Parameswara protecting the place. Nearby is the town of Bukkapatnam which speaks of the glory of Bukkaraya. There stands Puttapuram (Puttaparthi) in its divine majesty, spreading its grandeur and glory all over the world."* (Telugu Poem)

What is the meaning of the name Puttaparthi? Parthi means effulgence. So, Puttaparthi is the place of effulgence. It is the beacon of light. Earlier it was called Puttavardhini. Putta means anthill. There used to be anthills and snakes everywhere. The Ramayana has a close relationship with anthills in the sense that anthills grew over its composer, Sage Valmiki. He was completely covered by anthills, and snakes were moving in and out of them. There are many snakes of wicked qualities in the anthill of your heart. When you do Namasmara (remembering the Divine Name), all the 'snakes' of bad qualities will come out. Namasmara is like Nadaswaram which attracts snakes and brings them out of anthills. This Nadaswaram is your Jeevanaswaram and Pranaswaram (breath of life). One has to repeat God's Name in order to get rid of evil qualities.

Today there are many who do not attach any importance to Namasmarana. It is a great mistake. *"In this Age of Kali only chanting of the Divine Name can redeem your lives. There is no other refuge."* (Sanskrit Sloka) Singing the glory of the Lord is highly sacred. Today the country is facing a lot of problems because people are not doing Namasmarana. Let each and every street reverberate with the singing of Divine glory. Let each and every cell of your body be filled with Divine Name. Nothing else can give you the bliss, courage and strength that you derive from Namasmarana. Even if some people make fun of you, do not bother about it. People may say, "He is an I. A. S. officer. How is it that he is also doing Namasmarana?" Whoever has a heart has the right to do Namasmarana. Heart is the same in everyone. What is wrong if an I. A. S. officer does Namasmarana? Be he young or old, rich or poor, everybody has to do Namasmarana. Only fools make fun of people doing Namasmarana. Do Namasmarana with full mind and total dedication.

Do not be afraid of anyone. Sing the glory of God wholeheartedly without any inhibition. Only then can you experience divine bliss. Begin this sacred Namasmarana right from this moment on this New Year day. You may not have any musical instruments for this. It is enough if it emerges from the core of your heart. Play on the Veena of your heart and sing the glory of God. Take care that you do not have evil thoughts as they will produce discordant notes. Only then will you become the recipient of divine grace and energy.

Today the people of Kerala are celebrating their New Year, Vishu. On this auspicious occasion, I bless you all to enjoy peace, happiness and prosperity. This also happens to be the New Year day for the people of Tamil Nadu. May you all sanctify your lives by leading an ideal life and giving happiness to all! May you lead a blissful life! You don't need to search for bliss outside. It is within you. From this day onwards, develop your devotion and sense of surrender. Be fearless and sing the glory of the Lord wherever you are. Only then can you lead the life of a true human being. Having been born in this sacred land, lead your lives in a befitting manner. Very soon all the countries of the world will follow Bharat. Bharat should become the leader of the entire world in the field of spirituality. This is what I desire.

**—From Bhagavan's Divine Discourse in Sai Ramesh Krishna Hall, Brindavan on 14th April 2002 on the occasion of Vishu and Tamil New Year**

## **News from Brindavan**

### **Ugadi, Tamil New Year and Vishu Celebrations**

A huge gathering of devotees particularly from the southern States of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala congregated at Brindavan, Whitefield (Bangalore) to celebrate their New Year in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. While Ugadi was celebrated on 13th April 2002, Kerala New Year, Vishu and Tamil New Year were celebrated on 14th April 2002.

Ugadi celebrations at Brindavan commenced early in the morning with Suprabhatam and Nagar Sankirtan surcharging the entire milieu with divine vibrations. Bhagavan Baba came to Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, the venue of celebrations, at 7.20 a.m. to shower His blessings on and give

His Divine Message to the devotees. Beautiful decorations were made in the Hall for this important festival with flowers, festoons and buntings. Elaborate flower decorations on the dais were specially very attractive. As soon as Bhagavan came to the Hall, the students started Bhajans. While the devotees followed Bhajans with devotion and dedication, Bhagavan gave Darshan and blessings to the devotees sitting in the Hall and outside it. As Sai Ramesh Krishna Hall was completely packed to its capacity with devotees, a large number of them were sitting outside the Hall where a huge Pandal had been set up to accommodate them and close-circuit TVs were fixed for their easy viewing of the programme.

Bhagavan commenced His Divine Discourse at 7.35 a.m. after the chanting of Vedic hymns by the students. (Full text of Bhagavan's Discourse has been given elsewhere in this issue.) Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close at 8.30 a.m. with the Bhajan, "*Prema Mudita Manase Kaho...*" Special Prasadam of Poorana Poli was distributed on this occasion. The programme came to a close at 8.40 a.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

As Tamil New Year and Vishu (Malayalam New Year) both fell on the same date, i.e., 14th April 2002, devotees from both the States jointly organised their New Year celebrations in the divinely surcharged atmosphere of Brindavan. The celebrations began with Suprabhatam and Nagarsankirtan early in the morning in which a large number of devotees took part. By about 6.00 a.m., Sai Ramesh Krishna Hall and the adjacent sprawling Pandal were completely occupied by the devotees eagerly awaiting Bhagavan's Divine Darshan and blessings on this auspicious day. Bhagavan Baba came to Sai Ramesh Krishna Hall at 7.00 a.m. As soon as Bhagavan came, Sundaram Bhajan Group started their Bhajan singing programme. Meanwhile, Bhagavan showered His love and blessings on the devotees and went up to the end of Hall to enable the devotees sitting outside to have His Divine Darshan.

The programme started at 7.25 a.m. with Veda chanting. Before Bhagavan's Divine Discourse, Madras High Court Judge, Justice N. V. Balasubramaniam made a brief speech in Tamil congratulating the devotees on their rare good fortune as they were the contemporaries of the Avatar of Kali Age, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba who had incarnated to redeem the life of man on earth. After this, Bhagavan Baba gave His nectarine Discourse revealing some of the hitherto unknown aspects of the Ramayana. (Full text of Bhagavan's Discourse has been given in this issue elsewhere.) Before concluding His Discourse, Bhagavan filled the devotees' hearts with ecstasy by singing the Bhajan, "*Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin ...*" in His mellifluous voice. Bhagavan further elaborated on the real significance of New Year celebrations and exhorted the devotees to eradicate evil qualities from their hearts. After the conclusion of Bhagavan's Discourse, Prasadam was distributed to all the devotees. The morning programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 8.55 a.m. Soon after this, Bhagavan performed Narayana Seva and distributed food and clothes to the poor and needy.

The afternoon of 14th April 2002 came alive with a magnificent presentation of devotional music by Sri Ramani Bharadwaj and his troupe. The programme began in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba at 3.50 p.m. with a song in praise of Lord Ganesha. This was followed by an excellent rendering of Kabir, Mira, Purandaradasa and Sai Bhajans by the members of the troupe. At the end of the programme, Bhagavan came on to the dais, blessed the artistes and posed for photographs with them. He also materialised a gold chain with a locket for Sri Ramani



Bharadwaj. The glorious celebrations of New Year came to a conclusion at Brindavan with offer of Arati to Bhagavan at 5.00 p.m. Prasadam was distributed to all the devotees in the end.

### **Sri Ramanavami Celebration**

Sri Ramanavami, the birthday of Lord Rama, the Treta Yuga Avatar was celebrated with gaiety and piety in the Divine Presence of the Kali Yuga Avatar, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba at Brindavan on 21st April 2002. Sweet notes of Mangalvadyam welcomed Bhagavan to Sai Ramesh Krishna Hall, the venue of the celebrations, on the morning of Sri Ramanavami when He came to shower divine grace on the devotees by His Divine Darshan, and to bless them with His Divine Message on this auspicious day.

The Hall was aesthetically decorated on this occasion with flower motifs, colourful buntings and green plantain leaves. The decoration on the dais was simply marvellous. Soon after Bhagavan's arrival in the Hall, Bhajans were started by groups of ladies and gents at 7.15 a.m. After about 25 minutes of Bhajan singing, the programme commenced with chanting of Vedic hymns in praise of Lord Rama. Before the Divine Message of Bhagavan, Commerce Lecturer of the Institute from its Brindavan Campus, Sri Sanjay Sahni was blessed by Bhagavan to speak a few words. Sri Sahni dwelt on the efficacy of chanting the Name of Rama who was the embodiment of Dharma and who reestablished Dharma when it was on the decline. After this brief speech, Bhagavan Baba gave His Sri Ramanavami Message (given separately in this issue). At the conclusion of His Discourse, Bhagavan sang two Rama Bhajans, "Rama Kodanda Rama..." and "Rama Rama Rama Sita..." to the delight of the devotees. Before the conclusion of the programme, Laddu Prasadam blessed by Bhagavan was distributed, which Bhagavan declared as "Rama Prasadam". The glorious celebrations of Sri Ramanavami came to a close at 9.20 a.m. with offer of Arati to Bhagavan.

### **Eighteenth Anniversary of Trayee Brindavan**

Eighteenth Anniversary of Trayee Brindavan, the abode of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, was celebrated with great piety and solemnity on 26th April 2002 at Brindavan. Bhagavan Baba, who is the embodiment of the Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Easwara, will reside in the Brindavan of our heart if we make it a fertile field filled with love and compassion. The same message was conveyed by the electronic display board in Sai Ramesh Krishna Hall in the words "A Heart Filled with Compassion is the Abode of our Lord Sai" on the morning of 26th April 2002 when Bhagavan came to the Hall amidst sweet notes of Nadaswaram music. The programme in Sai Ramesh Krishna Hall included Bhagavan's Darshan, Bhajan singing and Prasadam distribution.

The highlight of the programme, however, was the celebration in the lawn in front of Bhagavan's abode which was magnificently decorated by the Institute students. There were big sunflowers, creepers and artificial doors surrounding a golden Ganesha statue. A waterfall around the statue enhanced its beauty manifold. In the centre was the chair for Bhagavan Baba. The celebrations came to a happy conclusion with profuse blessings of Bhagavan who spent nearly 15 minutes with students, spoke to them and posed for photographs with them.

### **News From Inland Sai Centres**

**Andhra Pradesh:** Narayana Seva was carried out for 8 days from 4th March to 11th March 2002 at SRBC Colony, Kurnool District for pilgrims going on foot to Srisailem for Maha

Sivaratri festival. About 1000 pilgrims were fed by the members of Atmakur and other Samitis. Medical camp was also organised for the pilgrims.

**Assam and North Eastern States:** The Guwahati Samiti organised a free medical camp in an interior village called Bhati Kurua situated in Darrang District of Assam on 31st March 2002. Deprived as they were of basic medical facilities, the villagers felt greatly elated when 54 doctors arrived in their village supported by 100 odd Seva Dal volunteers and with adequate stock of medicines. Over 1200 patients were beneficiaries of free treatment and free medicines and the camp ended with smiles of patients as well as doctors.

**Orissa:** Free medical camps were organised in village Pampalo (Bhubaneswar District), Ananthashram (Boudh District) and in five villages of Malatiputtapur, Ambapur, Gola Raghunathpur, New Buxipalli and Markundi (Ganjam District) in the month of March 2002. More than 2000 villagers benefited from these camps.

**Tamil Nadu:** A workshop on Sri Sathya Sai Educare Programme was conducted on 2nd and 3rd March 2002 at Kanyakumari. Bal Vikas Gurus and selected members of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations in the districts of Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli, Tuticorin and Virudhanagar took active part in the deliberations of the workshop.

AVATAR VANI

SRI RAMANAVAMI SANDESH

### **Imprint Rama's Name on Your Heart**

*Sweeter than sugar, tastier than curd, sweeter indeed than honey is the Name of Rama. Constant repetition of this sweet name gives one the taste of divine nectar itself. Therefore, one should contemplate on the name of Rama incessantly.* (Telugu Poem)

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Ayodhya was the capital of the kingdom of Kosala. It was built in such a way that no enemy could enter it. Hence, it was named Ayodhya (a place secure from enemies). It was built by Emperor Manu on the bank of the river Sarayu. Sarayu was a part of Manasasarovar created by the Will of Brahma. Emperor Dasaratha ruled over this sacred place.

#### **The Vedas Incarnated as Dasaratha's Sons**

In spite of having all the wealth and comforts, Dasaratha's life was devoid of happiness as he had no children. Dasaratha had a minister by name Sumantra who was sacred-hearted and highly virtuous. One day, he approached Dasaratha and said, "Oh king! I have a plan that would solve your problems and give happiness to you and the people at large. The country will attain plenty and prosperity if you perform Aswamedha Yajna. There is another sacred ritual called Putrakameshti Yajna, by performing which you are sure to beget children." Dasaratha was happy with the advice. After seeking the approval of Sage Vasishta, he commanded Sumantra to make the necessary arrangements for the performance of the Yajnas. Sumantra requested Dasaratha to

invite Sage Rishyasunga as the chief priest to preside over the Yajnas as he was well-versed with these type of rituals.

At that time, King Romapada was ruling over the kingdom of Anga. He had pleased Sage Rishyasunga who saved his kingdom from severe famine. One day King Dasaratha, Sumantra and Romapada together went to the hermitage of Rishyasunga. As per the request of Dasaratha, Rishyasunga came over to Ayodhya and performed the Yajnas. As the Putrakameshti Yajna was in progress, there emerged an effulgent being from the flames with a vessel containing Payasam (sweet rice pudding). He handed over the vessel to Sage Vasishta, who in turn gave it to Dasaratha and told him to distribute it equally between his three wives. The composers of the Ramayana like Kamban, Valmiki, Tulsidas, etc., gave different versions of the proportion in which the Payasam was distributed between them. But none of them gave the correct version. Dasaratha gave equal share of the Payasam to each of his three queens in three different cups. Whether it is then or now, the principle of equality is most essential for man. Dasaratha told his wives to have a sacred bath and seek Sage Rishyasunga's blessings before partaking of the Payasam.

The queens accordingly took a sacred bath and sought the blessings of Sage Rishyasunga. Sumitra however went to the terrace to dry her hair in the sun. She had kept the Payasam cup by her side. In the meantime, a servant-maid came running to her and informed that King Dasaratha had asked her to come at once. She plaited her hair and was about to pick up the cup. Just then, an eagle swooped down and took away the cup in a trice. She was afraid that her husband Dasaratha and Sage Vasishta would get annoyed with her. She shuddered at the thought of being cursed by Sage Rishyasunga. So, she ran to Kaushalya and Kaikeyi and explained to them her predicament. "Sisters, an eagle took away the cup because of my negligence. No doubt, it was a mistake but it was not done intentionally." Both Kaushalya and Kaikeyi sympathised with her. Immediately, Kaushalya brought a similar cup from inside and poured half of her share of Payasam into it. Kaikeyi followed suit. Sumitra was happy at their consideration and cooperation. All this happened in a natural manner. The three queens went to the Puja room and partook of their share of Payasam. Nine months passed. On an auspicious day, Kaushalya gave birth to Rama. That was the time when the five elements were in harmony with each other. While Sumitra gave birth to two sons, Lakshmana and Shatrughna, Kaikeyi gave birth to Bharata. The four sons of Dasaratha were the very personification of the four Vedas.

### **Unshakable Bond of Love between the four Brothers**

The birth of four sons of Dasaratha brought happiness in the royal household. There were rejoicings in the entire kingdom. But Sumitra faced a peculiar problem. The sons of Sumitra were restless and cried non-stop right from their birth. They neither would drink milk nor would go to sleep. Seeing the pathetic condition of her sons, Sumitra was grief stricken. When there was no one around, she approached Sage Vasishta and explained to him the sad plight of her sons. She said, "Guruji, I don't expect anything from my sons. It is enough for me if they lead a happy and healthy life. They don't seem to be having any physical ailments. I am unable to understand why they are restless and continue crying right from their birth." Vasishta closed his eyes to contemplate on the reason for the children's strange behaviour. After some time, he opened his eyes and said, "Mother Sumitra, you are very fortunate. You are endowed with the noble virtue of Samadrishti (equanimity). As your name suggests, you are a good friend of all.

You don't need to be worried at all. With the permission of Kaushalya, put Lakshmana in the cradle of Rama. Likewise, seek Kaikeyi's permission and put Shatrughna by the side of Bharata in the same cradle. Then, they will stop crying and behave in a normal way."

Kaushalya and Kaikeyi readily consented to Sumitra's request. They said, "Sister, bring Lakshmana and Shatrughna at once. They are also like our children. Is it not a matter of joy for us to watch the four brothers grow together?" Sumitra did as per the advice of Sage Vasishta. No sooner did she put Lakshmana by the side of Rama in the cradle than he stopped crying. The same was the case with Shatrughna too. He stopped crying as soon as he was put by the side of Bharata. Lakshmana and Shatrughna were extremely happy in the company of Rama and Bharata respectively. They were all smiles and started moving their hands and legs in a blissful manner. Watching her sons enjoying themselves thus, Sumitra felt greatly relieved.

After a few days, Sumitra approached Sage Vasishta again and requested him to explain the strange behaviour of her sons. She wanted to know why Lakshmana and Shatrughna were crying continuously till they were placed by the side of Rama and Bharata respectively. Sage Vasishta started explaining in this manner: "Oh Sumitra! You are a noble soul. Your heart is pure and unsullied. You are totally selfless. So, it is not difficult for you to understand the reason behind this. Do you remember when your share of Payasam was taken away by an eagle, Kaushalya and Kaikeyi came to your rescue by sharing their Payasam with you? As a result, you bore two sons. Lakshmana is born from Kaushalya's share of Payasam and Shatrughna is born from that of Kaikeyi. It means Lakshmana is an Amsa (aspect) of Rama and Shatrughna is an Amsa of Bharata. So, it is natural that Lakshmana is blissful in the company of Rama and so too is Shatrughna in the company of Bharata." Lord Krishna says in the Bhagavad-Gita, *Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana* (the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being). Lakshmana, being an aspect of Rama, was in His company always. Likewise, Shatrughna and Bharata were always together.

### **Rama and Lakshmana Protect the Yajna of Vishwamitra**

Years rolled by and the four brothers grew up as young men. Dasaratha thought of performing their marriages. One day when he was thinking on these lines, a messenger entered and informed him about the arrival of Sage Vishwamitra. Everything happens according to time, situation and circumstances. God creates the necessary circumstances to fulfill His Divine plan. Dasaratha personally went up to the entrance and welcomed the sage, saying, "Swami, it is our great good fortune that you have come today. I am contemplating on performing the marriages of my sons. So, I am extremely happy and indeed blessed to have you with us today. Please tell me what I can do for you. I will certainly fulfill your desire." Vishwamitra said that he had come to take Rama with him to protect his Yajna from demons. Vishwamitra's words were like a bomb blast for Dasaratha. He thought to himself, "I begot these children as a result of performing several rituals and sacrifices over a number of years. Moreover, Rama has never entered a forest or seen a demon. He has no hatred towards anybody. He is full of love and forbearance. How can I send tenderhearted Rama to the forest to fight the demons who are very cruel?" Thinking thus, Dasaratha felt very sad.

He said to Vishwamitra, "Oh venerable sage, my son is very young. How can I send Him to forest?" Vishwamitra said, "Oh king! You promised that you would fulfill my desire. Now you

are going back on your words. Kings belonging to Ikshvaku clan never failed to keep up their promise. If you go against your promise, you will bring disrepute to your clan. So, decide as to whether you want to put your clan to disrepute or send your son with me." Dasaratha thought for a while but was unable to decide. He called Sage Vasishta and sought his advice. Vasishta said, "Dasaratha, your sons are not ordinary mortals. They are born to you because of Divine Will. They are born out of fire, which means they are the embodiments of power and wisdom. No danger can ever befall them. So, uphold your promise given to Sage Vishwamitra."

Here is an important point worthy of note. Vishwamitra had come to take only Rama with him. Rama was prepared to go with him. Rama did not ask Lakshmana to accompany Him. Neither Vishwamitra nor Dasaratha asked him to follow Rama. Lakshmana followed Rama of his own accord because he was an Amsa of Rama. Just as shadow follows an object, Lakshmana followed Rama. Seeing this, Vishwamitra thought to himself, "Everything happens according to the Divine Will." Prior to his departure, Vishwamitra said to Dasaratha, "Oh king! There is no power in this world that is not in me. I am endowed with all mighty powers and all types of knowledge. But once I undertake Yajna Deeksha (vow of Yajna) and start performing the ritual, I am not supposed to involve myself in any act of violence. This is the discipline prescribed for the one performing a Yajna. Hence, I cannot kill the demons on my own. That is why I am taking Rama with me."

When they reached the bank of Sarayu River, Vishwamitra said, "Rama come here." He called only Rama and not Lakshmana. Though he was not called, Lakshmana also went and sat by the side of Rama. Vishwamitra said, "My dear ones, I am taking you to Siddhashram where Yajna is going to take place. You have come here to protect the Yajna from demons. I don't know how many days you have to stay in the forest. You are used to royal comforts and delicious food. But there is no one to prepare food for you in the Ashram. You may have to stay awake day and night forgoing food and water in order to protect the Yajna. So, I will teach you two Mantras: Bala and Atibala. With the power of these Mantras, you can remain without food, water and sleep for any number of days."

Knowing fully well that Rama was the Divine incarnation and had the power to protect the Yajna, why did Vishwamitra teach him these Mantras? These are only external activities meant for the world. Rama and Lakshmana chanted these Mantras and consequently had no hunger, thirst or sleep during their stay in the Siddhashram. When the Yajna was in progress, there came a thunderous noise. Rama asked Vishwamitra. "Swami, what is this noise? It sounds as though mountains are falling apart." Vishwamitra said, "It has nothing to do with mountains. It is the voice of demoness Thataka. She makes everyone tremble with her ferocity. Be prepared to face her. She is coming." Rama had a doubt whether it was proper for a Kshatriya to kill a woman. Vishwamitra said, "Rama, when it comes to protecting a Yajna, you don't need to observe any difference between a man and a woman. Your main duty is to drive away all demons who come to disrupt it." As this was the command of the Guru, Rama implicitly obeyed him and killed the ogress. But she was not the one to be killed easily. A fierce battle ensued. We don't need to go into its details. Maricha and Subahu also came with their army of demons to disrupt the Yajna but Rama killed Subahu with one arrow and with another threw away Maricha at a long distance. Thereafter, peace prevailed in Siddhashram. There were rejoicings all around. Even gods of heaven showered flowers from the sky. The Yajna was completed successfully.

In the meantime, a messenger from the city of Mithila arrived and handed over a letter to Vishwamitra from King Janaka. It was an invitation to Vishwamitra to take part in a Yajna that Janaka was going to perform. Vishwamitra at once set out on the journey to Mithila. Being a Sanyasi, he had no luggage to carry with him. He asked Rama and Lakshmana to follow him. But Rama was reluctant to do so. He said, "Swami. My father has sent Me to protect your Yajna. I am not interested in the Yajna that King Janaka is going to perform." In order to arouse interest and enthusiasm in them, Vishwamitra said, "The Yajna is not an ordinary one. In the palace of King Janaka, there is a Siva Dhanush (bow of Siva) which ordinary mortals cannot lift. It is very difficult to move it even an inch. One day it so happened that Sita, the daughter of Janaka, lifted the bow. That day Janaka decided to give his daughter Sita in marriage to a man of valour who could tie the string to the bow. This Yajna is arranged in this connection."

### **Divine Plan of the Marriage of Dasaratha's Sons**

Vishwamitra persuaded Rama and Lakshmana to accompany him to Mithila. Huge crowds had assembled there. Kings belonging to various countries had also arrived. Ravana was one among them. He was very powerful and had a fearsome personality. He was the first one to come forward to lift the bow. As he was proceeding towards the bow, kings were surprised at his gait and personality. They thought, "If he is able to lift the bow, King Janaka has to give his daughter in marriage to him. The very sight of Ravana is terrifying. How can Janaka give his daughter in marriage to him? Anyway, let us see what is going to happen." Ravana in the first instance tried to lift the bow with his left hand. But it did not move. He used all his strength and tried with both his hands. Yet it did not move. In the process, he lost his balance and fell down. He became the object of ridicule. One with ego is bound to face humiliation. He cannot receive respect and honour in society. Ego leads to ruin. Seeing the mighty Ravana fall down in such a manner, all the kings were surprised. They said to themselves, "If Ravana cannot lift it, nobody else can do it." They were afraid even to come forward to try lifting the bow.

At that moment, Vishwamitra gave a meaningful look to Rama. Rama understood its implication and got up. He was only fifteen years old at that time. As He was walking majestically towards the bow, people were attracted by His divine splendour. It looked as though all powers were following Him like a shadow. People were mesmerised by His divine form and were unmindful of what was going to happen. Smilingly, Rama went near the bow, adjusted His upper garment and put His left hand on the bow. And to and behold! the mighty bow was lifted up in a flash of a moment. But the bow had to be bent to tie the string. As Rama was bending it, the bow broke with a deafening sound. The onlookers were stunned at the mighty power of Rama. Immediately, Sita was brought by her maids with a garland in her hand.

Vishwamitra enquired, "Rama, are You ready for the marriage?" Rama said, "Swami, My father sent Me to Siddhashram to safeguard your Yajna. I did not have his permission even to come here. I am unable to accept this proposal without his consent." Vishwamitra whispered this into the ear of Janaka. He also supported Rama's view as he was well-versed in Rajaneeti (royal protocol). Immediately, he sent his messengers to King Dasaratha to bring him and his family to Mithila with royal honours. King Dasaratha, his family and their entire entourage reached Mithila in three days. Rama and Lakshmana did not move out of their room during this period. The four brothers were extremely happy to meet each other. The holy wedding took place on the

fourth day. I have described this event in great detail many a time. Sita was born of mother earth and Urmila was Janaka's real daughter. Sita was to wed Rama and Urmila was to marry Lakshmana. Janaka's brother had two daughters Mandavi and Shrutakeerti. Their wedding was fixed with Bharata and Shatrughna respectively. It looked as though they were perfect divine couples.

During the wedding, Sita had to garland Rama. Sita being short in stature could not do so as Rama was Ajanubahu (tall personality). Rama was expected to bend His head before Sita so that she could garland Him. However, He would not do so, lest people should say that Rama, one of valour, bowed His head before a woman. Women in those days did not look into the face of men. Hence, Sita was looking down holding the garland in her hand. Lakshmana is the incarnation of Adishesha who carries the mother earth on his hood. Rama looked at Lakshmana as if to say, "Look, why don't you raise that part of earth where Sita is standing to enable her to garland Me." Then Lakshmana indicated to Rama that it was not possible to raise any particular area. If he tried to raise that part of earth where Sita was standing, simultaneously Rama would be raised and so also others. The onlookers became anxious and were wondering as to why Rama was not bending His head so as to enable Sita to garland Him. Lakshmana, being one of intelligence, thought of a plan to solve the problem. All of a sudden, he fell at the feet of Rama and did not get up for a long time. Rama bent down to pick up Lakshmana. Seizing this opportunity, Sita garlanded Rama.

Saint Thyagaraja sang a song extolling the mighty power of Rama: "*But for the power of Rama, could a mere monkey cross the mighty ocean? Would Lakshmi Devi, the goddess of wealth, become His consort? Would Lakshmana worship Him? Would the intelligent Bharata offer his salutations to Him? But for the mighty power of Rama, would all this happen? Indeed, Rama's power is beyond all description.*"

The wedding was celebrated in a glorious manner. All of them reached Ayodhya safely in spite of a minor clash with Parasurama on the way. As the saying goes, "*Pleasure is an interval between two pains.*"

### **Unparalleled Spirit of Sacrifice of Sumitra and Urmila**

People of Ayodhya rejoiced to see the royal couples. One day at three o'clock in the morning, Dasaratha had a dream. It was his belief that whatever one saw in a dream in the early hours would come true. He had dreamt that he had become very old and that his hands and legs were shaking. He woke up in a disturbed state of mind considering this as a bad omen. Dasaratha felt that he might not live long. Hence, he decided to coronate Rama immediately. When the king decides to do something, who can stop him? He thought that there was no time to make elaborate arrangements for the coronation. He sent word for Sage Vasishta and obtained his permission. When Dasaratha informed Rama that He was to be made the crown prince the following day, Rama remained silent. Rama was omniscient and knew what was going to happen. But being an obedient son, He did not want to say anything against His father's wish.

People go through Ramayana. They have books on Ramayana as big as pillows. They learn the Slokas by rote, but what is the use? They don't understand the essence. Mother Kaushalya was highly virtuous. Being the eldest queen, everyone respected her and obeyed her command.

Though Kaikeyi was the youngest queen, nobody could go against her wish as she exercised great influence over Dasaratha. Dasaratha could not deny any of her wishes. But Sumitra was not given much importance in spite of her numerous noble qualities. In fact, the qualities of Sumitra and her sons cannot be described in words.

The coronation of Rama did not take place. According to the wish of Kaikeyi, Rama was to spend fourteen years in exile. Before going to the forest, Rama went to mother Kaushalya to seek her blessings. She wept inconsolably. Not only she, everyone in the Antahpura (inner chambers) was in tears. When Lakshmana went to mother Sumitra and sought her blessings, she said, "My dear one, do not think that you are going to the forest. In fact, this Ayodhya is like an Aranya (forest) without Sita and Rama. The forest where Sita and Rama live is verily Ayodhya. Rama is your father and Sita, your mother. Let nothing come in your way of serving them." Will any mother speak in such a manner? She would have argued, "As per the boon granted to Kaikeyi, only Rama is supposed to go to the forest. You don't need to go with Him." Any other mother would have stopped him from going to the forest. But Sumitra, being a noble mother, did not think on those lines. She had all the virtues of an ideal mother.

Then Lakshmana went to his wife Urmila to inform her about his decision to go with Rama. Urmila was highly virtuous. Her spirit of sacrifice and generosity was unparalleled. Being unaware of the happenings, she was painting a picture of Rama's coronation. She wanted to send it to her father Janaka. As she was deeply engrossed in her work, all of a sudden Lakshmana entered and called her in a raised voice. She was startled and at once stood up. As she got up in a hurry, she accidentally spilled over the paint on the picture she was painting. She felt sad for having spoiled the picture. Then Lakshmana said, "Rama's coronation is stalled because of Kaikeyi, and the picture of coronation that you are painting is spoiled because of your husband Lakshmana. So, don't worry about it." He informed her that he was accompanying Rama and Sita to the forest to serve them. She was happy with his decision. She entreated him to serve Sita and Rama with utmost devotion. She said, "Dear husband, my mother-in-law Sumitra gave birth to you and your brother Shatrughna to tread the path of service. You are meant to serve Rama, and Shatrughna has to serve Bharata. So, discharge your duties. But at no point of time should you remember me during your stay for fourteen years in the forest. If you think of me even for a moment, you will not be able to serve Sita and Rama wholeheartedly."

She did not pressurise him to allow her to accompany him. She entreated him to serve Sita and Rama with utmost devotion. She said, "Think of their wellbeing always and serve them diligently. Forget me altogether for the next fourteen years." Will any wife speak in such a selfless manner? No. Her broadmindedness and utter selflessness moved Lakshmana to tears. He praised her, saying, "Urmila, I never knew that you were so broad-minded. I will always treasure your noble intentions in my heart." Urmila said, "Don't think of my noble intentions. Think of the nobility of Sita and Rama and obey their command. See to it that they are never put to any inconvenience." It is difficult to find many examples of nobility and sacrifice set before the world by Sumitra and Urmila.

During the war between Rama and Ravana, Lakshmana fell unconscious one day. Seeing His dear brother in such condition, Rama was very sad. He shed tears, saying, "If I search in this world, I may be able to find a wife like Sita but not a brother like Lakshmana. How can I live



without him?" The doctor present there said, "Lakshmana can be revived with the help of a herb called Sanjivini which is available on a particular mountain." Hanuman at once flew to the mountain. As he could not identify the herb, he uprooted the entire mountain and started his return journey. As he was flying over Nandigrama with the mountain, Bharata mistook him for a demon and shot an arrow at him. Hanuman fell down along with the mountain. People of Nandigrama and Ayodhya came running and surrounded him. Hanuman offered his obeisance to everyone. He turned to Bharata and said, "Your brother Lakshmana has fallen unconscious in the battlefield. The doctor there wanted Sanjivini herb to be brought in order to revive Lakshmana. As I could not locate the exact herb, I am carrying the entire mountain with me." On coming to know that Lakshmana had fainted and Rama was grief-stricken, everyone assembled there started shedding tears; the ladies in particular were inconsolable. When Hanuman looked around, he found everyone in tears except for one lady. She was none other than Sumitra, the mother of Lakshmana. "Lakshmana can never be put to any harm. He constantly chants Rama's Name. Every cell of his body is filled with the Divine Name of Rama. So, nothing untoward can happen to him." With such conviction, she was composed.

Bharata took Hanuman to Urmila and introduced him. She never stepped out of her room. Wherever she was at the time of Lakshmana's departure to the forest, she remained in the same room for fourteen long years until his return. Such was her determination. She asked Hanuman as to where he was coming from. Hanuman narrated to her in detail whatever happened right from the time Lakshmana fainted in the battlefield. On listening to Hanuman's narration, Urmila laughed and said, "Hanuman, don't you know even this? The very breath of Lakshmana is filled with the Divine Name of Rama. How can any danger befall such a person?"

The sense of devotion and surrender of Urmila and Sumitra have not been given any place of prominence in the Ramayana. They were the embodiments of truth, righteousness and sacrifice. Their ideals are the beacons of ideal life for the world. Everyone should become a Su-mitra (good friend) and a Su-putra (ideal son). The country today needs ideal men and women. Though thousands of years have passed, the glory of Ramayana has not diminished a bit. It has remained ever new and ever-fresh in the hearts of people. One who chants Rama's Name and has the vision of His Divine Form will not be born again. That is why Sage Valmiki has extolled the greatness of Rama's power and His Name.

(Bhagavan sang the Bhajan, *Rama Kodanda Rama* ... Then He continued the Discourse.)

### **Always Chant the Divine Name**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

There is no Amruta (ambrosia) greater than Rama's Name. Today people have forgotten Nama Chintana (contemplation on the Divine Name). They repeat only film songs. That is why the country is facing hardships. The educated, intellectuals and scientists do not think of God at all. They deem it below their dignity to apply Vibhuti on their foreheads. Some of them have it on their foreheads when they are at home and rub it off the moment they step outside. This type of conduct is responsible for degeneration in society. Why should one be afraid of chanting God's Name? Let people talk as they like. You don't need to be afraid. Spread the glory of Rama's Name in every nook and corner of the world. You can chant any Name of your choice - Rama, Krishna, Govinda, Narayana, Siva, Vishnu, etc. As people have forgotten the Divine Name,

every home is in turmoil. There are conflicts even among brothers. Since there is no purity within, unsacred feelings have crept in. People are running after money and high position. Can money and position give you protection? You find so many in this world who have plenty of money and are occupying positions of authority. Are they able to enjoy peace and happiness? No, no. Only the Divine Name can grant you peace and happiness. Those who neglect God's Name bring about their own ruin.

There is an inner significance of the word Rama. The letter 'Ma' is the life-force of the Panchakshari Mantra, "Om Namah Sivaya." If 'Ma' is removed, it reads as 'Na Sivaya', which connotes inauspiciousness. Likewise, the letter 'Ra' is the life-force of the Ashtakshari Mantra, "Om Namo Narayanaya," without which it loses its meaning. The life-force of the Panchakshari Mantra 'Ma', and that of the Ashtakshari Mantra 'Ra' together form the Divine Name RAMA.

*Students! Devotees!*

Chanting of the Divine Name alone can protect you. Money and high position are like passing clouds. You should not clamour for them. One may join politics and attain some position of authority, but how long can one remain in power? Any moment one may be dislodged from power. One should not get carried away by politics. Instead one should take refuge in the Divine Name. He alone is truly blessed whose heart is filled with the Divine Name. People who do not relish the Divine Name may make fun of you. Somebody may tell you there is no God. What should be your reply? "God may not exist for you but He exists for me. Who are you to deny the existence of my God?" No one has any right to deny God. Never forget the Divine Name wherever you are and under any circumstances. *Sarvada Sarva Kaleshu Sarvatra Hari Chintanam* (everywhere, at all times, under all circumstances contemplate on God). Imprint the Divine Name on your heart firmly and permanently.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, *Rama Rama Rama Sita ...*

—*From Bhagavan's Sri Ramanavami Sandesh in Sai Ramesh Krishna Hall, Brindavan on 21st April 2002*

### **Triple Purity**

*Satsang does not mean merely association with good people. Sat refers to the Divine. What is required is to seek the company of God who is the source of all bliss. When one's thoughts are centred on God, one's feelings, speech and actions get sanctified (Samyak Bhavam, Samyak Vaak, Samyak Kriya). This leads to the purity of inner sense organs. Purity in thought, word and deed is the requisite for experiencing the Divine. This triple purity is considered as the essence of humanness. Buddha recognised this truth and experienced bliss.*

—**Baba**

## GURU PURNIMA SANDESH

### IMBIBE DIVINE FEELINGS AND BECOME DIVINE

*“The moon illumines the world at night and the sun during the day. Righteousness illumines the three worlds, and a noble son illumines his entire clan.”*

(Sanskrit Verse)

During the day, the sun shines resplendently and enables people to see everything in the world. During the night, the moon shows the path to the people by its light. But it is Dharma that shows the ideal path to all beings in all the three worlds. Similarly, a noble son illumines his entire clan when he sets an ideal to the world by his exemplary conduct.

#### **Sage Kanaada’s Revelations about the Power of the Atom**

One who experiences the all-pervasiveness of God and propagates this truth to mankind establishes the highest ideals in the world. It was Sage Kanaada who revealed this truth to the world. What did he discover? He discovered that God pervaded each and every atom of the universe. *Anoraneeyan Mahato Maheeyan* (Brahman is subtler than the subtlest atom and vaster than the vastest object). Right from his birth till death, he kept propagating the truth of God’s immanence in the smallest particle of the universe. He declared that the world could not exist without the atom.

Earlier, nothing existed in the universe. In the beginning, the sun, the moon, the stars, the earth, the sky, etc., did not exist. There was only pitch darkness all around. The combination of atoms resulted in the formation of hard matter of a very high density. As a result, a lot of heat was generated. Then all of a sudden, the hard matter exploded with a big bang into pieces and spread all over. This was the basic cause of creation. This was the experience of Sage Kanaada. The sound that emanated from the big bang was Pranava. That is Omkara, the primordial sound. This sound of Pranava is all-pervasive. How did Pranava originate? It originated from Paramanu (atom). In fact, there is nothing else than atoms in this universe. But how one could understand and realise this truth was enquired into by Sage Kanaada. Ultimately, he discovered that man should contemplate upon Pranava to realise this truth and to attain liberation.

*The primordial sound Pranava is subtler than the subtlest and vaster than the vastest. It is all-pervasive and eternal witness. Pranava is God and God is Pranava.* (Telugu Poem)

This truth was propagated by Sage Kanaada all over the world. It is from this Pranava that the sun, the moon, the earth, the sky, etc., originated. The atom is the fundamental basis of the entire creation. Every human being is a combination of atoms. There is no matter without atoms. But modern man is unable to understand the mystery of atoms. He considers the teachings of our ancient Rishis as mere stories and ridicules them. He does not have the ability and capacity to understand the sacredness of ancient Bharatiya culture. He is not able to understand the supreme reality that is within him. He installs the statues of ancient Rishis and noble souls as a mark of respect for them but fails to

understand their teachings and does not put them into practice. He has to install their sacred forms not outside but in the altar of his heart and follow their teachings. Kanaada recognised the principles of hydrogen and oxygen and observed that hydrogen represented the water principle, while oxygen represented the fire principle. This has been recognised by modern science also. Today people attach great value to the observations made by scientists but fail to understand and appreciate the great truths taught by our Rishis on the basis of their experience and deep enquiry.

### **Atomic Power is Highly Sacred**

How can one understand the atomic power? Atom is not visible to the physical eye but it is present everywhere. The water we drink, the food we eat, the words we utter, the sound we hear, everything is permeated by atoms. Though man treads on atoms, eats atoms, drinks atoms, he is unable to understand their mystery. He thinks that only scientists can investigate into the nature of atoms. Atomic process is highly sacred. By conducting a proper enquiry into this, one can understand Divinity. This was the teaching of Sage Kanaada. But today nobody is conducting a proper enquiry to experience the atomic process. People are leading their lives with materialistic outlook. Here is a small example.

Once Emperor Asoka and his minister were going on an evening stroll. On the way, they came across a Buddhist monk. Immediately, Asoka removed his crown and prostrated at the feet of the monk. The minister did not like this. He thought that it was improper for a great emperor like Asoka to place his head at the feet of an ordinary monk. The emperor sensed the feelings of his minister and wanted to teach him a lesson. Asoka respected all religions. He followed the path of righteousness and sacrifice and set an ideal to mankind by his exemplary conduct. Time passed like this but Asoka did not forget to teach a lesson to the minister. One day, he asked the minister to bring the head of a goat, a sheep and of a human being. The minister collected the heads of a goat and a sheep. He went to a graveyard to get the head of a dead person. He took them to the emperor. Asoka commanded him to sell them in the market. The heads of the sheep and goat were sold in no time but nobody came forward to buy the head of a human being. When this was conveyed to the emperor, he said, it might be given free of cost to anybody. The minister took the human head to the market and waited there for a couple of days. In spite of his best efforts, nobody was willing to accept it. When this was conveyed to Asoka, he said, "Oh minister, you felt very sad when I placed my head at the feet of a monk. Do you realise what would be the value of our heads when we leave our mortal coil? They would have absolutely no value. In fact, my life is sanctified by prostrating at the feet of a noble monk." Material wealth and position are momentary. Only truth and righteousness will remain with man and redeem his life.

The body will have value so long as there is Sohum (That I am) in it. That is Pranava. That is atomic energy. This energy has its origin in Divinity. None can create it. This truth was propagated by Sage Kanaada. It is very difficult to understand the power of the atom. God is present in every atom. The entire world is the manifestation of the atom. The space and sound are also the manifestations of the atom. Therefore, do not neglect the principle of the atom. All movable and immovable objects in this universe are constituted by atoms. It has mighty power in it. Scientists have been experimenting on

this principle since long. It takes twenty-two thousand crore years for an atom to go back to its source. Though the atom has been there since the origin of the universe, it is rather strange that man has not been able to unravel the mystery behind it.

The earth rotates on its axis and revolves around the sun. Who is responsible for these phenomena? Nobody can explain this. As earth rotates on its axis, we have days and nights. As it revolves around the sun, we have various seasons, which help us to grow food required to sustain our body. It is the Divine Will that is responsible for all this. It is God's masterplan for the benefit of the world. The sacredness of Anushakti (atomic power) has not been understood by man till this day. People think that the atom has no life in it. It is a wrong notion. The life-force that holds the entire universe together is present in the atom also. Hence it is said, God is present in microcosm as well as in macrocosm. Man should make an attempt to understand the mystery of creation. He should recognise his responsibilities and conduct himself accordingly. Man has to necessarily understand the principle of the atom. If he understands this, he would have understood everything else, for the atom is God. The life principle present in the atom is present in the entire universe. Sage Kanaada said that proper understanding of the principle of atom will lead to the understanding of Divinity. When you close your fist, you would have caught hold of many atoms. When you release it, the atoms will travel in different directions. The sound of Pranava that emerges from the atoms will be as insignificant as the particles themselves.

### **You and I are One**

Devotees offer their prayers to God. Some people doubt the efficacy of prayer. But, in fact, any mighty task can be accomplished through prayer. It makes impossible things possible. Here is a small example. There has been a swelling on My cheek for the past ten days. I never take any medicine. Yesterday, I observed that the attention of all those assembled here was focused on My cheek, not on Me! They were worried that the swelling had still not reduced and that Swami was undergoing a lot of pain. After I delivered the Valedictory Discourse, I retired to My room. As I was resting, a number of devotees were praying to Me that I should cure Myself at least by the auspicious day of Guru Purnima. All their prayers reached Me. All of them wanted to see Me in perfect health on the Guru Purnima day. When I got up in the morning, there was absolutely no pain whatsoever. I did not use the power of My Will at all. It is solely the result of the prayers of devotees. (*cheers*) Yesterday, many did not even take food. With tears in their eyes, they were praying continuously. My thoughts went to them for a moment. But I never willed that I should be cured. I never do it. Why? As Sanjay Sahni rightly pointed out, *You and I are one*. You are not different from Me. This is not My body, it is yours. So, it is your responsibility to take care of this body. I never think of My body and its well-being. I never make any Sankalpa (Will) so far as My body is concerned. There is no selfishness in Me from top to toe. That is why I have got every right to declare that you and I are one.

Every man is endowed with the same atomic power. He has to make every effort to understand this. Since ancient times, man has been accustomed to worshipping God in the form of idols. You worship Rama and Krishna in the form of idols. But can you see their physical forms now? No. You worship Easwara. But are you able to see Him? What

does this mean? It means that the forms of Rama, Krishna, Easwara do exist but man is not able to see them because of his narrow-mindedness. As modern man is narrow-minded, he finds emptiness everywhere. Broad-mindedness signifies creation, narrow-mindedness is death. One with narrow-mindedness is verily a living corpse. We should always be broad-minded so as to realise Divinity which is vast and expansive.

### **Guru Shows the Divine Path**

Saints and sages of yore performed various types of spiritual practices. Sage Kanaada also performed intense penance. Ultimately, he realised that he had originated from the atom and would merge into it. He gave up body attachment and identified himself with the atom. Today man is leading a materialistic life and striving for his selfish ends. So long as there is selfishness in man, he will not be able to understand the divine principle of the atom. One may do Japa (repetition of God's Name), Dhyana (meditation) and Puja (worship) but one should not forget the principle of the atom. Everything is contained in the atom. Our body, mind, intellect, Chitta (mind-stuff), Antahkarana (inner instrument), all are nothing but the manifestations of the atom which is divine.

God certainly listens to the prayers of His devotees. Some people hesitate to pray lest their prayers should cause inconvenience to God. They are mistaken, for God can never be put to any inconvenience whatsoever. God has no suffering at all. He considers devotees' happiness as His happiness. However, your happiness results from material things; whereas My happiness is related to the principle of the Atma. I consider your small offering made with full devotion as gigantic one. On the other hand, you are not satisfied in spite of receiving mighty favours.

What is the meaning of Guru Purnima? Guru is one who illumines your path to divinity. Purnima signifies the sacred light of the full moon. Full moon stands for a mind with total illumination. It is spotless and blemishless. Even if there is a little trace of blemish in the mind, it will lead to darkness. It cannot give you total bliss.

### *Embodiments of Love!*

Let your mind be filled with the radiance of divine love. Acquiring mere textual knowledge is of no avail. What you have studied is only a fraction of the total knowledge. Yet you feel proud of it. Your worldly education is insignificant as compared to divine wisdom. You cannot attain God with your education, power and wealth. He is accessible by love and love alone. You can experience Him in every atom when you develop love. To love God wholeheartedly is devotion.

### **Money, Power and Politics do not Lead you to Divinity**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

What is it that you are supposed to know on this day of Guru Purnima? You must understand that God is in you, with you, around you, above you, below you. In fact, you are God. Recognise this truth in the first instance. Do not entertain excessive desires and become beggars. Do your duty sincerely. That is true Sadhana. When you are in office, do office work only; do not think of your family matters. Likewise, when you are at home, take care of the needs of your wife and children. Do not make your home an

office. But today because of too much work in office, people take office papers to their homes to complete their work. They are facing difficulties because they mix up their office work with household work. Likewise, do not mix business with spiritual matters.

As I told the other day, Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakasipu were great scientists. Modern scientists have been able to reach the moon but Hiranyakasipu could travel up to the sun. He even touched the Pole Star and consequently suffered. One may be a great scientist but one will be put to suffering if one crosses one's limits. Scientists should develop broad-mindedness in order to experience Divinity. Ancient saints made a deep study of the mind and developed broad-mindedness.

Man has death but the mind has no death. Whatever man does during his lifetime is imprinted on his mind and gets carried over to the next birth. None can estimate the power of the mind. Do not think that the mind dies with the death of the body. The mind is imperishable. Unable to bear their suffering, many people commit suicide. They think since their mind is the cause of their suffering, they should put an end to it. But it is the worst of sins. The mind cannot be killed so easily. One should never entertain such low ideas of suicide. One should be prepared to face any difficulties with fortitude and strive hard to sanctify one's life with strong faith in God. Prahlada said, "Never doubt that God is here and not there. He is present wherever you search for Him." Atma is God and God is Atma. *"The Atma is eternal without birth or death. It has no beginning, middle or end. It is omnipresent and eternal witness."* (Telugu Poem) Hence, man should lead his life with the conviction, "I am God. Only body has death. I have neither birth nor death. So long as I am alive, let my love be dedicated to God and God alone."

One day a rich man came to Shirdi to meet Baba. He had his pocket stuffed with currency notes. Baba decided to test his devotion. He called a boy and told him, "I need five rupees very urgently. Go and ask Nandu Marwari for a loan." After some time, the boy returned saying that Nandu was not at home. Baba asked him to approach another businessman. The boy again returned empty-handed. Baba sent him to another person but he was unsuccessful this time also. The rich man saw all this but he did not volunteer to give five rupees from his pocket. He had no spirit of sacrifice.

For many people, money is God, politics is God, power is God. Will money, power or politics follow them after their death? What are they going to achieve? What is the purpose of life? Having attained human birth, do not waste it in trivial pursuits. Take part in activities that are beneficial to society. Do not misunderstand Me when I say this. Politics is the root cause of the pollution of man's mind in today's world. The minds of even small children are polluted by politics. Conflicts and agitations have become the order of the day. There is no unity even between husband and wife. Politics is polluting homes and families also. Prior to the Independence of India, people did not suffer that much. In those days, the conflict was between the whites and non-whites, whereas today Indians are indulging in factional fights among themselves. This is not what is expected of people today. Shun evil qualities and develop noble feelings.

**What is the Shape of Worry?**

### *Embodiments of Love!*

Fill your lives with love and end your lives with love. You are all the personifications of love. Recognise your true nature. That is true life. The Upanishads accord great value to human life. Manava is one who is loved and respected by all. He has to welcome happiness as well as sorrow with equanimity. In China, there is a proverb which says, “Difficulties are our friends, let us welcome them.” The happiness that we get out of difficulties cannot be obtained anywhere else. *Na Sukhat Labhyate Sukham* (one cannot derive happiness out of happiness). Many devotees come to Me saying they are facing a lot of difficulties. I feel like laughing when they say this. I want to know what difficulties and sorrow mean. Difficulties do not come anywhere near Me. I keep telling the devotees that they should not be bogged down by difficulties. I never give any scope for sorrow. This body is approaching its 77th year. Till this day, I have never experienced sorrow even for a moment. Man aspires for bliss. He is the embodiment of bliss. Bliss is his true property. Such being the case, why should he have sorrow at all? It is because he has not understood his true nature. Worldly relationships come and go. But that which comes and grows is the principle of love.

### *Embodiments of Love!*

Right from this day, try to reduce your attachment to the world as far as possible. Be happy and make others happy. Do not hurt anybody. Consider difficulties as passing clouds. You have a family and many other relationships. Losses and problems are bound to come. But do not be perturbed by them. When you look at the sky, you will find many clouds. Likewise, in the sky of your heart there are clouds of thoughts and feelings. However, when you have clouds of attachment, you are enveloped in total darkness. But the clouds just come and go. Do not worry about them. What is the shape of worry? It is a mentally created fear. It is the result of your imagination. Every man is bound to encounter difficulties and losses. We should face them with courage.

### **Fill your Heart with Divine Feelings**

Remember what Asoka taught to his minister. This body will be respected so long as there is life in it. Once the life ebbs away, it will not have any value. The same was stated by Duryodhana during his last moments. He said, “I am respected so long as I am alive. After my death crows, foxes and dogs may feast on my body.” Whatever has to happen will happen. Lead a respectable life while you are alive. Man should rise from the level of humanity to the level of divinity. Only then can you lead a truly human life. Today man is leading a purely worldly life. Worldly life is also necessary to a certain extent. But one should recognise the transcendental principle even in worldly life. Worldly life is temporary like passing clouds. We should not be worried about passing clouds. Man should always be happy and blissful.

### *Embodiments of Love!*

From this day of Guru Purnima, make your hearts pure and sacred. Just as you wave away the mosquitoes that bite you, brush aside any difficulties that assail you. Do not be depressed by sorrow or elated by happiness. Develop equanimity and strive to attain Divinity.

(Here Bhagavan sang the Bhajan, “*Vahe Guru Vahe Guru Vahe Guru Ji Bolo ...*” and then continued the Discourse.)



There is only one Guru. There cannot be two Gurus – internal Guru and external Guru. Guru is one who makes you experience truth and leads you to the path of truth.

*Gurur-Brahma Gurur-Vishnu*

*Gurur Devo Maheswara;*

*Guru Sakshat Param Brahma Thasmai Sri Gurave Namaha.*

(Guru is Brahma, Guru is Vishnu, Guru is Maheswara. Guru is verily the Supreme Brahman. So, salutations to the Guru.)

You are the embodiment of the Divine Trinity – Brahma, Vishnu, Maheswara. Hence, Guru is not separate from you. You are everything. Let your concentration not waver. Let it be steadily fixed on your goal. Be he a student, a householder or a renunciant, the goal is one and the same for all. Contemplate on the principle of Soham that your inner voice teaches. Say *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am Brahman). There is nothing wrong in this statement. Some people have a mistaken notion that to say so is a sign of egoism. In fact, that is not ego at all. It is your right. To think that you are a mere human being amounts to belittling yourself. You are all the embodiments of God. Develop such faith and become God. There cannot be any bad qualities in God. So, you should lead a pure, steady and selfless life. On this Guru Purnima, adopt pure vision, pure speech and pure action. *See good, speak good and do good.* You should be an ideal to everybody. No benefit accrues from worship if you do not purify your heart. You have been coming here and worshipping Swami for a number of years. But, is there any transformation in you? You are coming and going without any aim. Such people need not come here at all. Wherever you are, do your Sadhana. When you come here, you should imbibe divine feelings and become divine. Gradually reduce your attachment to the world. The world will not go with you when you die. You cannot take with you even a fistful of dust. You can take only the virtues you have imbibed. Respect your teachers, elders and parents. *Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava, Acharya Devo Bhava* (revere your mother, father and preceptor as God). Consider everyone as God. There is God even in a dog. Have faith that God is all-pervading. There is no greater Sadhana than this. When people develop such faith, the whole nation will be blessed with plenty, prosperity and auspiciousness. Fill your heart with divine feelings. This is what you have to learn today.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajans, “*Hari Bhajan Bina ...*” and “*Subramanyam Subramanyam ...*”

**- From Bhagavan’s Guru Purnima Sandesh in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 24th July 2002.**

**NEWS FROM PRASANTHI NILAYAM**

**GURU PURNIMA CELEBRATIONS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM**

Mammoth crowds of devotees gathered at Prasanthi Nilayam from all parts of the world to offer their homage to their Divine Guru, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on the auspicious occasion of Guru Purnima. A variety of week-long programmes presented by the Bal Vikas children and devotees from various parts of the world in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba made the celebrations a spiritual feast for the soul.

### **A Scintillating Musical Presentation**

The week-long Guru Purnima Celebrations had a befitting start with a very captivating programme of devotional music presented by a group of youth from the U.S.A. on the afternoon of 18th July 2002 in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. In this 45 minutes presentation, the youth sang nine songs, all of which were full of pure-hearted devotion to Bhagavan. This excellent programme came to a conclusion at 5.00 p.m. At the end of the programme Bhagavan blessed the six youth who presented this programme, distributed clothes to them and posed for photographs with them. This was followed by Bhajans for about 20 minutes. The day's programme concluded with Arati to Bhagavan at 5.35 p.m.

### **Sri Sathya Sai Grama Darshan**

This excellent exhibition depicting the Seva work done by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations in all parts of the world in the fields of education, social welfare, health and village uplift was inaugurated by Bhagavan Baba on the morning of 19th July 2002. Bhagavan came to the Hill View Stadium, the venue of the exhibition, at 8.10 a.m. A traditional welcome was offered to Bhagavan on His arrival amidst chanting of Vedic hymns. After inaugurating the exhibition, Bhagavan saw the exhibits in the main pavilion, took a round of the various pavilions and blessed the organisers, who offered their obeisance to Bhagavan when He came in front of each pavilion. Mangalarati was offered to Bhagavan at 8.20 a.m. Prasadam was then distributed to all. Soon after the inauguration, the exhibition was opened for devotees. The exhibition attracted a large number of devotees and was a source of inspiration for them.

The panorama of Indian rural life was presented by the Sai Organisations of the States of India and depicted how Sai Organisations were bringing about transformation in the rural masses with the Divine Message of Bhagavan Baba, "Love All – Serve All". Five pavilions in the exhibition were put up by the five international zones of overseas Sathya Sai Seva Organisations. The exhibits unfolded the inner significance of Seva as a means of transformation of the individual, society and the world through educare, sociocare and medicare.

The exhibition ground presented a village scene and depicted the cultural heritage of the various States of India as well as the Seva activities of Sai Organisations, particularly in rural areas. The content of the exhibition included exhibits of Seva from all parts of the world. In addition, there was a separate pavilion demonstrating the unique village adoption programme initiated by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning.

### **The Power of Darshan**

The Sathya Sai Organisation of Australia and PNG presented a magnificent drama “The Power of Darshan” on the evening of 19th July 2002 in the Poornachandra Auditorium at Prasanthi Nilayam. Bhagavan came to the Auditorium at 6.05 p.m., sat through the entire performance, blessed the cast at the end of the drama and posed for photographs with them.

The drama depicted how Bhagavan Baba transforms and transmutes by the power of His Divine vibrations when He passes through the rows of devotees assembled for His Divine Darshan. As He Himself has declared, His every Darshan is an act of Divine Grace which even the gods of heaven yearn for.

The drama was presented in five simple scenes, in which five aspirants from different countries and different walks of life come to Prasanthi Nilayam and realise the power of Darshan through their personal experiences. The simple story taken from daily occurrence at Prasanthi Nilayam leaves a lasting impact on the audience due to its lofty theme, natural acting of the cast and down-to-earth real life incidents which constitute the story. The presentation powerfully showed how people from all parts of the world afflicted by the woes of the world were coming to Prasanthi Nilayam and finding peace, love, truth and divinity at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. This excellent programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 6.45 p.m.

### **Ashadi Ekadasi**

On the occasion of Ashadi Ekadasi, a musical presentation on National Integration was made by about 350 members of the Bal Vikas and Youth Wing of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Maharashtra on 20th July, 2002 in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam. The Hall was decorated with flags, flowers and cloth banners, and wore a festive look.

The theme of this programme was based on Swami’s message of love for the Motherland. The musical presentation was entitled: ‘Janani Janmabhoomi’. The highlight of this programme was the emphasis on Swami’s role in establishing the grandeur of Bharat to make it the engine pulling the other nations of the world on the rails of love and light to the destination of truth.

Bhagavan arrived in the Hall at 7.00 a.m. The programme started with an invocation song which was followed by the Dindi procession by the devotees from Maharashtra. Dindi is a traditional spiritual invocation by the Varkaris. Thereafter, there was a Pawli dance and invocation Stotras.

Lofty theme, scintillating music, patriotic songs and natural acting of children made this a superb presentation. Performance of some very touching and valorous episodes from India’s struggle for Independence was really soul-stirring. The presentation earned the blessings of Bhagavan and appreciation of the mammoth gathering of devotees. The programme came to a close at 8.20 a.m. with Arati to Bhagavan. At the end, traditional Prasadam of Rajgir Chikki was distributed to all.

### **Sant Sakku**

A powerful drama on the life of Sant Sakkubai was presented by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Maharashtra (Dhulia District) on 20th July 2002, the Ashadi Ekadasi evening, in Poornachandra Auditorium in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba.

The story unfolds with the child Sakku receiving an idol of Panduranga (Lord Krishna) from Guru Madhavananda and her falling in love with Panduranga almost instantly. Her marriage brings constant persecution by her mother-in-law and sister-in-law who rebuke and beat her and ultimately throw the idol of Panduranga in the well. But the miracle happens and the idol comes out of the well automatically and hits the persecutors. When Sakku is forced to grind a huge quantity of grain, Lord Panduranga manifests and makes the hand-grinder run with His power. The climax is reached when Sakku is tied to a pole to prevent her from going to Pandharpur to have the Darshan of the Lord. In answer to her fervent prayers, the Lord comes to Sakku's house in the form of her husband, frees her to go to Pandharpur and gets Himself tied to the pole as Sakku. The Lord toils day and night as Sakku and even transforms her mother-in-law and sister-in-law. The drama shows that the compassionate Lord can go to any length to help His devotees. Melodious songs, sweet music, natural acting of the cast and perfect stage management made this drama a superb presentation which earned the loving admiration of all devotees. At the end, Bhagavan blessed the cast and posed for photographs with them. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 7.15 p.m.

#### **Devotional Music by the Devotees of Brazil**

A programme of devotional music was presented by the devotees of Brazil on 21st July 2002 in the Poornachandra Auditorium, Prasanthi Nilayam in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. Though the choir was not by professional singers, the performance was so meticulous that it earned the loving admiration of the devotees and the appreciation of Bhagavan. The participants poured out their heart in devotion to Bhagavan through this excellent musical presentation. Besides the songs in English, the choir sang two Hindi Bhajans which the huge audience joined enthusiastically in chorus. All the songs were based on human values and love for Bhagavan. At the end of the programme, Bhagavan went on to the stage and blessed the cast. The programme concluded with Arati to Bhagavan at 7.00 p.m.

#### **Cultural Programme by the Bal Vikas Children of Himachal Pradesh**

Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas children of Himachal Pradesh presented a musical dance performance entitled, "Jit Dekhoo: Ut Sai" (seeing the universe as the manifestation of Lord Sai) on the evening of 22nd July 2002 in Poornachandra Auditorium.

A group of 95 Bal Vikas children from different parts of Himachal Pradesh ranging from Himalayan heights to Shivalik ranges participated in the programme to offer their feelings of love and gratitude at the sacred Lotus Feet of Bhagavan Baba. Every item of the programme highlighted the faith in "Unity in Diversity" and depicted the grace and glory of Bhagavan.

The audience enjoyed the thrill, the spiritual zeal and musical zest of the programme. The songs sung by the children portrayed the Divinity of Bhagavan, such as this one: "Zare-

*Zare Mein Tera Hee Noor Khil Raha Hai ...*” (every atom of the universe vibrates with the glow of Thy Divine Will ...) In the end, the children were blessed by the Divine Presence on the stage when they pleaded while singing:

*“Sai Maa Tere Charanon Mein Hum Sheesh Navate Hein,  
Ab Kripa Karo Sai Maa  
Hum Bal Tumahre Hein.*

(Oh Sai Mother, we bow our heads in reverence at Thy sacred Lotus Feet;  
Oh Mother Sai, be kind to us, we are Thy tiny children  
Be amidst us: Oh Mother Sai.)

### **Vision, Mission and the Task**

This excellent musical Ballet enacted in Poornachandra Auditorium on the evening of 23rd July 2002 effectively presented the Message of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba to humanity through His life and welfare projects. The Ballet, an admirable combination of dance, drama and shadow play, was presented by the talented Bal Vikas children of the Sultanate of Oman in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba.

The story of the Kali Yuga Avatar, Bhagavan Baba is told through dance drama on the stage as also through the commentary of Sutradhar along with the display of events from the life of the Avatar. Dialogues between Krishna and Arjuna as well as between Hanuman and Vibhishana were well presented to bring out the teachings of Bhagavan Baba effectively. Besides the shadow play on the Water Project of Bhagavan Baba admirably demonstrated the concern of the Lord for humanity and its suffering. Bhagavan Baba went on to the stage, blessed the cast and posed for photographs with them at the end of the Ballet. The programme which started at 5.45 p.m. came to a conclusion at 6.30 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

### **Guru Purnima Function**

On the sacred day of Guru Purnima, the entire Mandir complex bore a festive look. Sai Kulwant Hall was tastefully decorated for the Guru Purnima function. Flower decoration at the Divine Abode of Bhagavan at Poornachandra was simply marvellous. Panchavadyam music by the Institute students added to the sacredness of the milieu. Bhagavan came to Sai Kulwant Hall at 6.55 a.m. and blessed the mammoth gathering of devotees both inside and outside the Hall with His Divine Darshan. Soon after coming to the dais, Bhagavan unveiled His beautiful statue made by an Italian devotee. After Bhagavan sat in His chair, the Institute students paid their homage to their Divine Guru by chanting Guru Stotras.

Guru Purnima programme commenced with chanting of Vedic hymns by the Institute students. Thereafter, two speakers blessed by Bhagavan addressed the gathering. The first speaker was Dr. Michael Goldstein, Chairman, Sathya Sai Organisations of North America. Dr. Goldstein observed that Bhagavan Baba had incarnated to show the divine path to mankind. He exhorted the devotees to shun the superficial, outwardly life and lead a life which could bring them close to the Avatar of Kali Age.

The second speaker, Sri Sanjay Sahni, a faculty member of Brindavan Campus of the Institute, referred to many incidents to show that Bhagavan is the Divine Guru who has incarnated on the earth to open our eyes to see what we really are.

After these two brief speeches, Bhagavan Baba gave His Guru Purnima Message (full text of the Discourse has been given elsewhere in this issue). At the end of His Discourse, Bhagavan sang three Bhajans to the delight of a huge concourse of devotees. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 8.45 a.m.

### **Bhagavan Baba's Statue Installed in Sai Kulwant Hall**

A life-size statue of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba was installed in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on the sacred occasion of Guru Purnima on the morning of 24th July 2002. The bronze statue weighing 160 kgs was made by an Italian devotee, Sri Mimmo Albergo, who did three years of constant hard work to complete it for presenting it at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan Baba on the auspicious day of Guru Purnima. Bhagavan Baba unveiled this breathtakingly beautiful statue at 6.55 a.m. amidst a thunderous applause of a mammoth gathering of devotees. Thereafter, Bhagavan blessed the sculptor and also materialised a gold chain for him.

### **Unity in Diversity**

This magnificent play was presented by Bal Vikas children and youth of Sri Sathya Sai Organisation of Canada on the evening of 24th July 2002 in Poornachandra Auditorium in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba.

The play opened with the offering of homage through a prayer song to the Universal Divine Teacher, Bhagavan Baba on the auspicious day of Guru Purnima. The play depicted how the natives of Canada coming from different races and cultures lived with love and respect for each other and how they loved and preserved Nature. The natives as forefathers of the present generation were shown in a dream which all the children get after listening to the story about them from their teacher. It was shown how sacred and pious life they had in the lap of Nature in contrast to the turmoil and agitation of the modern world. Their pure-heartedness brought about their unity in spite of their diverse racial cultural backgrounds. The play enacted by a huge cast of 150 Bal Vikas children effectively brought out the Message of Unity in Diversity. By all accounts, it was a superb presentation with a clear message of unity as given by Bhagavan Baba to humanity. The songs, costumes, music and acting were all appreciated by a packed audience in the Poornachandra Auditorium.

At the end of the play, Bhagavan went on to the stage, blessed the cast and posed for photographs with them. The programme came to a close at 6.45 p.m. with offer of Arati to Bhagavan.

### **News from Inland Sai Centres**

**Andhra Pradesh:** Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Vizianagaram district helped more than one hundred families of village Nidigallu whose houses and property were destroyed in an accidental fire in May 2002. Utensil and clothes were distributed to them on 31st May 2002 with the help of Seva Dal volunteers.

**Kerala:** 19 Sai Samithis of Ernakulam district carried out a programme of helping school children in June-July 2002 under the scheme “Serve a Child, Deserve His Grace.” More than 1000 needy children were provided books, uniforms, etc., under the scheme of the Sai Samithis.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS: INTERNATIONAL  
SEVA CONFERENCE

### **REALISE DIVINITY THROUGH SELFLESS SERVICE**

*If you lack pure mind and good character, how can you expect Sai, the bestower of peace, love, happiness and prosperity, to commend you? How can you expect that Prema Sai will treat you as His own?*  
(Telugu Poem)

Man’s heart is full of purity and compassion, and his mind is full of sweetness. Having been blessed with such sacredness, what is man supposed to do? What is the foundation on which the mansion of life is to be built? Human life is based on Samata (equality), Samaikyata (unity), Saubhratrutvam (fraternity) and Saujanya (nobility). These virtues constitute the very foundation of the mansion of life. Life will be meaningless even if one of them is missing. Everyone must therefore cultivate and safeguard these four virtues.

### **Experience Divinity by Serving the Community**

Every man aspires for peace and happiness. How can man attain peace? It is possible only when he puts human values into practice. Human values are not acquired from outside; they are latent in every man. What can you achieve in life if you forget human values? In the first instance, man should recognise the truth behind human birth and try to know the meaning of humanness.

Sathya (truth) is Neeti (morality), Dharma (righteousness) gives Khyati (reputation) and Thyaga (sacrifice) is Jyoti (light) of life. Manava Jathi (human race) is the combination of Sathya, Dharma and Thyaga. But man today is forgetting these three principles of life. He has to adhere to these principles not only for the sake of society but for his own redemption also. If you expect to be respected by all, then cultivate respect for yourself. Self-respect is the basis of human life. One who lacks self-respect cannot command respect from others. It is also necessary that man should respect others and share his love with others wholeheartedly. In fact, this is the primary duty of man. Man is not merely a Vyashti Jeevi (individual), he is a Samashti Jeevi (cosmic being). Vyashti relates to

Jeevudu (individual soul), Samashti relates to Devudu (divinity). Man has to rise from the level of individual to the level of divinity. What is the path prescribed for this? Firstly, man has to recognise the common principle of Jeevan Jyoti (light of life) that is present in all. The principle of Samatvam (equality) can be experienced and practised only when man understands the principle of Ekatvam (unity). The service activities that we undertake are meant to experience unity in the community. It is a great mistake if you think that you are serving others. In fact, you should not consider anybody as 'other' in this world, for all are the embodiments of divinity. But man is not making efforts to realise this truth. Hence, he is undergoing suffering. Once man realises that God is all-pervasive, he will be free from suffering. For this, man has to practise the principle of unity. Once he understands the principle of unity, he can attain the cosmic principle.

Man is like an object before a mirror. Nature is the mirror. What you see in this mirror is only your reflection and nothing else. Today man is leading a life of selfishness and self-interest. So, he sees selfishness everywhere in the world; selflessness is nowhere to be found. Dehabhimanam (body attachment) is on the rise and Deshabhimanam (love for one's country) is on the decline. Even spiritual aspirants and noble souls with pure hearts are unable to give up body attachment. So long as there is Dehabhimanam, man cannot develop Daivabhimanam (love for God).

*The body which is made up of five elements is weak and is bound to disintegrate. Though hundred years of life-span is prescribed, one cannot take it for granted. One may leave his mortal coil at any time, be it in childhood, youth or old age. Death is certain. Hence, before the body perishes, man should make efforts to know his true nature. (Telugu Poem)*

### **Adherence to Truth is the Greatest Dharma**

Body is given to you to know your true Self. It is foolish to waste your time and energy in worldly pursuits. If you know your true Self, you would have known everything else.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

All that you see in the external world is present in you. The mountains, oceans, cities, villages, etc., are present in your heart. All beings are in you. You are the basis of everything. Such being the case, what is it that you want to see in the external world? How foolish it is for man to get carried away by the reflection outside, ignoring the reality within!

Know the human values in the first instance. The first among them is truth. It is changeless and beyond time and space. There is nothing like American Truth, Russian Truth, Indian Truth or Pakistani Truth. Truth is one and the same for all countries at all times. You are the embodiment of truth. Truth is God. So, make efforts to understand truth. *Sathyam Bruyath, Priyam Bruyath, Na Bruyath Sathyamapriyam* (speak truth, speak pleasantly and do not speak unpalatable truth). Having forgotten this eternal principle of truth, man is in search of ephemeral things. Adherence to truth is Neeti (morality) which is nothing but righteous conduct. *Sathyannasti Paro Dharma* (there is no Dharma greater than adherence to truth). Sathya and Dharma together ensure peace.



One who adheres to truth and righteousness attains peace and prosperity. One need not search for peace anywhere. Where there is truth, there is peace. Where there are peace and truth, there is non-violence. Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, Prema and Ahimsa (truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence) are the primary human values. However, the fundamental basis of truth and righteousness is love. Love is God, truth is God, righteousness is God. One bereft of these principles is verily a living corpse. The five human values can be compared to five life principles (Pancha Pranas) of man. If you do not speak truth, you lose one life principle. Unrighteous conduct amounts to losing the second life principle. Similarly, other life principles will be lost if you do not practise the other human values. Therefore, all your efforts should be directed to safeguard these life principles, which are divine in nature.

There is divinity in humanity. Understand this. Today every field of human activity is polluted. Once man purifies his heart, he will find purity everywhere. The world outside is just a reflection of your heart. If you fill your heart with love, you will experience love everywhere. If there is hatred in your heart, the same is reflected outside. Whatever you see, hear and experience outside is only the reflection, reaction and resound of your inner being. All the good and bad that you come across in the external world are just your own reflections. So, do not point an accusing finger at others. The whole world depends on your own conduct. If you are good, so too will the world be. It is a mistake to think that there is evil all around you in the world. In fact, it is your own evil which is reflected outside. If your feelings are demonic, the world all around you will look demonic to you. If your feelings are divine, you will find divinity everywhere.

### **The Entire Humanity is One Family**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

The reflection of your yearning for God is love. When you have this love in you, then the reflection of your words is truth, and that of your actions is righteousness. When you have love, truth and righteous-ness, you will have harmony of feelings, words and actions. Only then can you attain peace. The divine principle of Sohum (That I am) connected with your breathing process constantly reminds you of your reality 21,600 times a day. Of what use is your education if you are unable to remember the truth that is taught to you so many times day in and day out? You may listen to any number of sermons, you may study any number of sacred texts, you may visit any number of noble souls, but all these will prove futile if you forget the principle of truth that your inner voice teaches.

Buddha renounced all the royal comforts and embraced Sannyasa (renunciation). He wandered in the forests, listened to the teachings of noble souls and studied holy texts. But none of these could give him satisfaction. Ultimately, he realised that his heart is the true sacred text given by God and God is his true friend. He discarded all books and stopped visiting noble souls. He turned inward and enquired into the truth. Ignoring the holy text (heart) and forgetting the true friend (God), man is going hither and thither in search of peace.

Firstly, make sacred use of the eyes given by God. The purity of your vision will make your life pure and sacred. There is nothing left to be achieved in life if you have a pure mind and sacred conduct. All your spiritual pursuits will be of little consequence if your vision is sullied. Your Nethra (eye) is the Sastra (scripture) given by God. Understand this Sastra and conduct yourself accordingly. Once you have control over your vision, you will have control over your speech. Speak only the truth, there is nothing greater than truth. Samyak Drishti (right vision) and Samyak Vak (right speech) will lead to Samyak Sravanam (right listening) and Samyak Bhavam (right feelings). The youth in particular should exercise control over their vision. Manava (human being) becomes Madhava (God) when he understands the importance of human values and puts them into practice. The youth of today are the future of the country. So, they should develop steadiness of mind and self-confidence.

*Where there is confidence, there is love;  
Where there is love, there is truth;  
Where there is truth, there is peace;  
Where there is peace, there is bliss;  
Where there is bliss, there is God.*

Without confidence, you cannot attain divinity. Your confidence is your God. So, develop unwavering confidence in the Self. Self-confidence and self-respect will lead you to Atmic bliss and the vision of the Self. You are all seated in this magnificent hall. There are so many pillars supporting it. You are enjoying its beauty. Without a strong foundation, this hall would not have been there. Likewise, self-confidence is the foundation for the mansion of life. Once you have self-confidence, you can raise the walls of self-satisfaction over which you can lay the roof of self-sacrifice and lead a life of self-realisation. Hence, make the foundation of self-confidence strong and sturdy.

The culture of Bharat proclaims *Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara* (speak truth, practise righteousness). Not only Indian culture, the cultures of all countries proclaim the same truth. Truth is the basis of every culture. There are no differences between one culture and another. The whole world is like a mansion and various countries are like different rooms in it. So, do not divide humanity on the basis of nationality. It is because of such divisions that humanness is on the decline. Sai devotees should not entertain any such differences. All should stand united. *(loud applause)* Names, forms and colours of people may be different but the entire humanity is one family. God is one. All human beings belong to one family.

*Cows are many but milk is one.  
Beings are many but indweller is one.  
Castes are many but humanity is one.  
Flowers are many but worship is one.  
Paths are many but God is one.*

Hence, you should give up all the differences based on caste, religion and nationality and develop the spirit of love. Young men and women should work for the progress of the

country. The country will prosper only when the youth develop sound character. Character is the very basis of human life. Today there are many who are heroes in precept and zeroes in practice. Your actions should be in harmony with your words. Develop sacred feelings. Only then can you perform sacred deeds. Devotion does not mean merely performing rituals like worship. Any work done with pure and selfless love is devotion.

### **I Take your Suffering upon Myself**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Right from this day, suffuse your life with love. Let your hands be involved in the service of humanity. Let your thoughts be centred on the principle of love. You should rise from the level of Vyashti (individual) to Samashti (community) and ultimately merge in Parameshti (God). In this physical and ephemeral world, wherever you see there is only restlessness. At times, your physical body may be afflicted with diseases. But you should not be unduly perturbed.

*“This body is a storehouse of dirt, and prone to diseases; it cannot cross the ocean of Samsara. Oh mind! Do not be under the delusion that body is permanent. Instead take refuge at the Divine Lotus Feet.”* (Telugu Poem)

One should not be unduly attached to the physical body but it has to be taken care of properly. Sometimes, your body is affected with ailments because of your own negligence. But I take the sufferings of devotees upon Myself because of My love for them. Here is a small example. A small boy was suffering a great deal because of mumps. The doctor said that it would take him a minimum of 20 to 25 days to get cured. He was crying bitterly as he was unable to bear the severe pain. I called him inside and consoled him, saying, “When Swami is with you, why do you cry?” (*loud prolonged applause*) I materialised a sweet for him and asked him to eat it. I took his pain upon Myself. For any other person, the pain would have been unbearable. Srinivasan was very much worried as to how to conduct this Conference when Swami was having so much pain. As the swelling was between the two jaws, it was not possible to eat or speak. How does it matter if the body is not given food for a few days? Hence, I did not care for it. I told the organisers to go ahead with the Conference. Srinivasan asked, “Swami, how are You going to deliver the Inaugural Address?” I said, “I will have pain if I identify Myself with this body. But this is not My body, it is your body.” All your bodies are Mine. Hence, I take your suffering upon Myself. That is My duty. This is not My body; so I do not care for its suffering. Not only now, at any point of time, I do not care for any suffering. I practise what I preach. That is why I say, *My life is My Message*. It is not possible for all to understand and realise My Divinity. I do not want to say it in public. I do not indulge in publicity. But the fact is, all of you are Mine and I am yours. I have no desires at all. All My desires are meant to give you happiness. I want to make everybody happy. Greatness does not lie in preaching; it lies in practice. A true Acharya (preceptor) is one who practises before preaching. That is what I am doing. I tell you everything after experiencing it Myself.

*Youngsters – Men and Women!*

Understand your true nature. Follow the path of truth. Sathyam (Truth) is the name of this body. Develop this Truth in you. *Truth is God. Love is God; live in love.* When you follow the path of truth and love, you will certainly attain bliss. Some people blame Me for their own defects. It is a great mistake. There are no defects in Me whatsoever. I am the embodiment of sacredness and purity. There is no scope for even a trace of impurity in Me. You see the reflection of your own feelings in Me as you see your reflection in a clean mirror. Purify your hearts. Only then can you understand truth.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

This Conference has been inaugurated today. Many more programmes are to follow. Hence, I bring My Discourse to a close in order to give sufficient time for other programmes. I am prepared to spend any length of time to give you necessary guidelines later.

**- From Bhagavan's Inaugural Address at the International Seva Conference in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 21st July 2002.**

### **INTERNATIONAL SEVA CONFERENCE**

*An International Seva Conference was held at Prasanthi Nilayam from 21st to 23rd July 2002. The theme of the Conference was Sai (Seva, Adoration, Illumination) which reflects the spiritual nature of Sai Service. Under this theme, various service activities were considered in three areas of interaction with society: educare for spiritual education which facilitates the emergence of our true spiritual nature from within, medicare for spiritual medical practice which includes caring for the body and mind as God-given vehicles of Divinity, and sociocare which entails the spiritual upliftment of our respective communities and nations. The Conference was attended by more than 10,000 delegates from India and overseas countries.*

#### **Inaugural Session**

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba very graciously inaugurated the Conference on the morning of 21st July 2002 in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam by lighting the sacred lamps. The deliberations of the Conference started with the chanting of Vedic hymns at 7.05 a.m. by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. This was followed by a theme song by all the delegates to the Conference. At the outset, Sri V. Srinivasan, All India President, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations and the coordinator for Indian participants, extended a hearty welcome to the delegates and expressed deep gratitude to Bhagavan Baba for His permission to hold the Conference in His Divine Presence and also for the concern He showed for the comfortable stay of the delegates. Deliberating on the theme of the Conference, viz., SAI (Seva, Adoration and Illumination), Sri Srinivasan observed that Seva was the basis of adoration (Bhakti) which could lead to illumination. So, Seva, Adoration and Illumination were intimately connected leading one to another, he said. Referring to the gloom and darkness prevailing in the world today, Sri Srinivasan observed that Bhagavan Baba was the only beacon of light to show the right path to man and usher in an era of peace and love in the world.

The next speaker, Sri Kishin Khubchandani, Chairman, Zone 5, Sathya Sai Seva Organisation and the coordinator for overseas participants emphasised that in the new millennium, Sathya Sai Organisations have not to focus on service of convenience, but of the needs of society as per the ideals set by Bhagavan Baba. He underlined the role of youth in all the three areas of service, namely, educare, medicare and sociocare.

After these two speakers, Bhagavan Baba gave His Inaugural Discourse to the delegates of the Conference, full text of which has been given elsewhere in this issue.

After Bhagavan's Discourse, students and teachers of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning presented a programme on the concept of Seva and its significance according to the teachings of Bhagavan Baba. They brought out the essence of Bhagavan's ideal of Seva and narrated their experiences and lessons learnt during Sri Sathya Sai Grama Seva organised under the direction of Bhagavan Baba for more than 600 villages and five towns of Anantapur District in the years 2000 and 2001. Referring to Bhagavan's life as a saga of service to mankind since His childhood, the participants in this programme provided a befitting start to the Conference by explaining how Bhagavan had set the ideal of selfless service before the world by putting it into practice in His own life. Those who presented this excellent programme were: Sri Rangarajan, a faculty member, Sri Deepak Anand and Sri Amit Ahuja, Research Scholars and Sri N.B. Vineet and Sri Krishna, students of the Institute.

Referring to their experiences of Sri Sathya Sai Grama Seva, the participants narrated how every household was overwhelmed by the love of Bhagavan when food and clothes were presented to them as sanctified Prasadam of Bhagavan. The participants described many touching scenes of the villagers' immense love and gratitude for Bhagavan. Bhagavan's gesture of love gave them the Divine assurance that Bhagavan is there to care for them and look after them. This sowed a seed of confidence in them that they had a direct contact with God. The Grama Seva taught the students and teachers that apart from other things, people required unconditional love and they felt that one should love others as Bhagavan loved them, because loving alone was true living. After this presentation, Dr. M. Sainath, Physics Lecturer of the Institute, gave a summary of these deliberations for the benefit of the delegates.

The deliberations of the Inaugural Session of the Conference came to a conclusion at 9.15 a.m. with offer of Arati to Bhagavan. Prasadam was distributed to all in the end.

### **Plenary Sessions**

The Plenary Sessions of the Conference were devoted to presentations by eminent speakers on individual, community and national transformation. They also included the presentation of Significant Seva Projects undertaken by the five overseas zones and the countries included in them as also the States of India. The deliberations also included interactive workshops and finalised the recommendations of the Conference to be placed before Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba for His Divine guidance and approval.

### **Special Session of the Conference**

One of the hallmarks of this Seva Conference was the special significance attached to it by Bhagavan Baba who addressed the delegates on all the three days of the Conference. The delegates were overwhelmed with joy when Bhagavan very graciously and unexpectedly decided to deliver a Special Address to the delegates on 22nd July 2002 on the second day of the Conference.

Before the Special Address of Bhagavan Baba, Sri Indulal Shah, International Chairman, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations addressed the delegates. Referring to the uniqueness of Sai Organisation, Sri Shah observed that Sai Organisation was different from other organisations because the source of inspiration of Sai Organisation was the Avatar, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, whose Divine glory had reached in every nook and corner of the world.

In His Special Address, Bhagavan confronted the delegates with some hard truths and cautioned them to beware of some people who were collecting funds in the name of Sai. Bhagavan said, “There are some people who are doing business in the name of Sai. They are cheating others, pretending to be devotees of Sai. I do not approve of such behaviour. They are not devotees at all. They are going to different parts of the country and also abroad to make money in the name of Sai. It is a big crime. I do not ask for even a single Paisa from others. I never approve of such business. Whoever it may be, if somebody approaches you with such an evil motive, tell him to get out at once. Do not allow business to enter the field of spirituality. One may do what one likes for the maintenance of one’s family, but nobody should do business using Sai’s name. But, unfortunately, such activity is on the increase. In many villages, we find people misusing the name of Sai for their selfish gains. This is happening even in many other countries like America, England, Japan, Germany, Singapore, Malaysia, etc. Do not associate yourself with such wicked people. Keep your hearts pure and sacred. Otherwise, you are like a living corpse. Such people should not be respected. Better you perform their obituary rites!” This Special Session of the Conference came to a close at 5.30 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

### **Valedictory Session**

The Valedictory Session of the Conference was held on the afternoon of 23rd July 2002 in Sai Kulwant Hall. The programme started with Veda chanting by Institute students at 2.20 p.m. Thereafter, the delegates presented two theme songs composed by the Indian and overseas delegates. Before the Valedictory Address of Bhagavan Baba, two speakers addressed the delegates. The first speaker, Sri Indulal Shah, observed that the time had come when Sai Organisation should become a movement of spiritual awakening since Bhagavan has willed to knit the entire humanity into one family under the divine umbrella of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema.

The next speaker, Sri C.Srinivas, Member, Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, spoke about Sri Sathya Sai Primary Schools Project for the children of rural areas to disseminate Bhagavan’s message of love to the future generations of India. He also announced that a pilot start of this Project would be made in Grama Seva 2002 by Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning.

After these speeches, Bhagavan delivered His Valedictory Address which was the grand finale of this International Conference on Seva. The proceedings came to a close at 4.20 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

### **Recommendations of the Conference for Overseas Countries**

*Role of Service:* Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba has declared that the purpose of human life is to serve our fellow man without desire for reward or recognition. Members of the Sai Organisation should embark on service activities for their own spiritual transformation and for the benefit of mankind.

*Practical Considerations:* Service rendered by the Sathya Sai Organisation is unique in motivation and attitude. The server sees divinity in the recipient of his service that he has recognised in his own heart. The service is rendered with selfless love.

The following fundamental considerations should be taken into account prior to the inception of all Sai Service Activities:

- Assessment of need.
- The project must focus on genuine needs of the recipient and not on the convenience of the server.
- Determination of resources required and their availability.
- All service must be feasible with the available resources, personnel and materials.
- Diligence with regards to legal and cultural issues.
- Sustainability of the project.
- An effort should be made to engage in projects that will endure and have the potential to grow in scope resulting in transformation of the community and the nation.
- Evaluation of the effects of the project.
- Periodic review of the benefits derived from the service project and steps to improve the service if indicated.

*Identification of Existing Service Projects and Innovative Recommendations under the Conference Themes: Educare, Medicare, and Sociocare.*

#### *Educare*

- Establishment of Sathya Sai Institutes for training teachers and supervising Sathya Sai Schools and adopted schools.
- Establishment of Sathya Sai Schools under the supervision of SAI 2000 and associated Sathya Sai Institutes, if they have been established. All Sai Schools will belong to the local Sathya Sai Organisation.
- Community Sathya Sai EHV Projects.
- Adoption of public and private schools under the supervision of the Sathya Sai Institute.
- Development of Sathya Sai Parenting Programme.

- Vocational Training Programmes for economically and socially deprived individuals.
- . Computer training programmes for the needy.

#### *Medicare*

- Programme to promote awareness of good health and hygiene practices and avoidance of drug abuse and other bad habits and actions.
- Blood and bone marrow donations.
- Local and national medical camps rendering free medical services by competent medical professionals.
- Promotion of vegetarian diet and cessation of alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking.
- Encourage Sai devotees to obtain training in CPR and response to disaster.

#### *Sociocare*

- Encourage young adults to engage in Sai service projects for economically and socially deprived areas.
- Encourage and assist the people in these areas to help themselves.
- Develop ecological sensitivity and appropriate projects.
- Assisting the elderly and the infirm.
- Translation of Sai Literature into Braille.
- Leadership development.
- Caring for orphans.
- Providing water for needy areas.
- Encouraging the understanding of the universality of all religions.
- Village adoption.
- Sai Community Centres to assist the poor and handicapped with food, clothing, and education.
- Aid to disaster stricken areas including natural disasters and war.
- Aid for the homeless.
- Dissemination of Sai Spiritual Principles.
- Development of appropriate literature for public interaction in Sai service activities Material aid and education for convicts.

#### *Issues and Questions to be Resolved by Forthcoming Guidelines*

- Establishment of a Sathya Sai Educare Academy as a model.
- Guidelines will include suitable material and procedures regarding interaction between Sai Organisation, the public and the media.
- Guidelines will include policies regarding interaction with NGO's and government agencies.

#### **Recommendations of the Conference for India**

1. The delegates first of all express their deep gratitude to our beloved Bhagavan for permitting this Conference to be held in His Divine Presence and for all the wonderful arrangements made for our comfort and care. It has been an unforgettable experience which we will cherish to the end of our days. On our



return to our homes, we will share this with our brothers and sisters of the Organisation who could not be here with us.

We pray to Bhagavan to grant us similar opportunities to be in the Divine Presence.

2. Bhagavan's life and message will be the only foundation of all our Seva and Sadhana activities. We shall make our life His Message.
3. Bhagavan has filled our hearts with joy and confidence. There is now no room for doubts or fear. We firmly believe that transformation of humanity by Sai will happen. The world will become a better place. We firmly resolve, Dear Bhagavan, not to be disturbed by the happenings of today in the world. We will remain as just observers. We will not participate in pessimistic discussions nor will we criticise others.
4. However, we will remain alert for opportunities to serve others, starting from our parents and family members, our friends, our neighbours and the needy in society. We will reach out to the individual rather than only to society.
5. Bhagavan, You have said that only if we transform ourselves can we transform others. From today, we will begin this journey of love and joy to You. We will spread Your message through our actions rather than only our words. We will constantly make a spiritual self-audit and place it at Your altar wherever we are. This will be our heart-to-heart report to You in the firm faith that You are omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent.
6. We have learnt from You, Dear Lord, that service without spirituality will neither be effective nor will it be Sadhana. We accordingly resolve that every member of the Service Wing and the Youth Wing will participate in the spiritual activities of the Samithi.
7. We have understood the vital importance of Sai Educare, which is truly the Veda of the 21st century. Each one of us will undergo the training programmes for educare and participate through it in bringing sociocare and medicare to our brothers and sisters in all places.
8. We also now plan, Dear Bhagavan, with Your permission, to work more closely with the Bal Vikas activities. Several of us will get training as Gurus and function as such for various periods to broaden our spiritual and knowledge horizon and to learn how to incorporate these experiences and principles in our Seva activities. We will pay particular attention to the pre-Seva Dal children who have completed the Group III Bal Vikas course.
9. We request the Organisation elders to set up a trained Disaster Management Group, which can render effective service during natural calamities.

10. We have understood that there is no one in this world who is incapable of Seva. We will by example and with love encourage and facilitate our family members, every devotee of Bhagavan and every individual we come in contact with to join this wonderful and all-fulfilling journey of Seva, which is the journey to Sai.

## ONAM SANDESH

### KNOW THE PRINCIPLE OF THE SELF

*All people aspire for easy time, high position and prosperity in life. Few aspire for good intellect, wisdom and good character. What else is there to be conveyed to this congregation of noble souls?*  
(Telugu Poem)

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Everyone in this world, right from a Pamara (illiterate) to a Paramahansa (realised soul), uses the word 'I' while referring to himself. Had the birds and beasts been endowed with the power of speech, they too would have introduced themselves as 'I'. The various names given to us are for our satisfaction and worldly utility. However, our true name is 'I'.

#### **Aham is the True Name of God**

The term 'I' is not an ordinary one; it has great spiritual significance as explained in the Upanishads. *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am Brahman) is a profound Upanishadic statement. From this statement, it is evident that the term Aham ('I') came into existence before Brahman. The names of the Avatars (incarnations of God) such as Rama and Krishna correspond only to their physical forms. Their true and eternal name is Aham ('I'). In fact, Aham is the first name of God.

In this physical and ephemeral world, people worship God by His various names and forms. But, in reality, Aham is the true and eternal name of God. The Vedas declare this truth in the four Mahavakyas (profound statements): *Prajnanam Brahma* (Brahman is supreme consciousness); *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am Brahman); *Tattwamasi* (That Thou Art); and *Ayam Atma Brahma* (This Self is Brahman). The Vedas also declare: *Ekoham Bahusyam* (the One willed to become many), *Ekam Sath Viprah Bahudha Vadanti* (Truth is one, but the wise call it by different names). Divinity is one, and that is Aham. Man attributes different names to God to worship Him only for his mental satisfaction.

The mind of man is responsible for all his delusions. It is possible to grow a tree without any bend. Similarly, a boulder can be carved into a beautiful statue. But it is very difficult to straighten and steady the mind. All our Sadhana is meant to set the mind on the right course. People undertake various types of spiritual practices which give only temporary satisfaction. One can experience everlasting happiness only when one understands the principle of Aham. People attribute various names and forms to God for ritualistic worship. But they are unable to understand the principle of divinity.

*"Is it possible to limit the One to a temple who pervades the entire cosmos? How can one hold a lamp to the One who shines with the brilliance of a billion suns? How can one attribute a form to the One whom even Brahma, the Creator, cannot comprehend? How can one give a name to the One who is present in all beings? How can one offer food to the One who has the entire cosmos in His belly?"*  
(Telugu Poem)

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Man's mind plays many tricks and makes him forget the reality. It is almost impossible for anyone to comprehend the nature of the mind. Flies and mosquitoes settle on every object but

never do they go near fire. Likewise, the mind gets attracted by material objects and goes everywhere but it shies away from God. The mind should be purified to keep it always focused on God. That is true Sadhana. All the spiritual practices are meant to control the mind. In all the nine paths of devotion, surrender of the mind to God is the chief objective. Sravanam (listening), Kirtanam (singing), Vishnusmaranam (contemplating on Vishnu), Padasevanam (serving His Lotus Feet), Vandanam (salutation), Archanam (worship), Dasyam (servitude), Sneham (friendship), Atmanivedanam (self-surrender) are the nine paths of devotion.

Control of the mind is most important in these nine paths of devotion. The mind is not just a bundle of thoughts. (Showing His handkerchief, Bhagavan asked) What is this? You say, it is a piece of cloth. It is not merely that. It is a bundle of threads. But it is not a bundle of threads either. It is cotton. Cotton is made into threads and threads are interwoven to make cloth. Likewise, you are not one person but three: The one you think you are (physical body), the one others think you are (mental body), the one you really are (the Atma). Your true Self is 'I'. That is Brahman. That is God. God has no specific name and form. *Nirgunam, Niranjanam, Sanathana Niketanam, Nitya, Shuddha, Buddha, Mukta, Nirmala Swarupinam* (God is attributeless, pure, final abode, eternal, unsullied, enlightened, free and embodiment of sacredness). Whatever names and forms man attributes to God are for his own satisfaction. Ultimately, he should see God in all forms.

### **Lord Vamana and Emperor Bali**

The sacred land of Kerala is the birthplace of Emperor Bali. Vamana, the dwarf incarnation of Lord Narayana, went to Emperor Bali and begged three steps of land as alms from him. The emperor granted the request of Vamana. Bali was a great king and an ardent devotee of God. He was an embodiment of self-sacrifice. Why did Lord Narayana assume the form of a dwarf? The reason is that he who seeks alms is considered small; he cannot be called great. So, Pakshi Vahana (the One who has Garuda as His vehicle) Lord Narayana who has Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, as His consort became very small and sought Bhiksha (alms) from Bali. And what Vamana asked was also a very small thing. He sought just three steps of land. Being small in stature, His feet were also small. Sage Sukracharya, the preceptor of Bali, cautioned him not to yield to Vamana's request. He told him that Vamana was no ordinary being but Lord Narayana Himself. But Bali did not pay heed to his counsel, saying it was not proper for one to go back on one's promise. Having given his word, he wanted to fulfil it, come what may. He even disobeyed his Guru and offered himself to God. God has infinite potentialities. Nothing is impossible for Him. Vamana occupied the three worlds with His three footsteps. The three worlds are represented by Bhur, Bhuvah, Suvah. Bhur stands for material world. Bhuvah represents the realm of thought, i.e., the mind. Suvah is the principle of the Atma. All the three are contained in man.

Kerala is Thyaga Bhumi (land of sacrifice). It is the centre of devotion and surrender. No beggar is turned away empty-handed in this land. Everyone does charity as per his capacity. It is this Punya Bhumi (land of merit) that gave birth to Bali. (*loud applause*) There are many in this world who perform Bhudana, Godana, Annadana, Vastradana, Suvarnadana (giving away land, cows, food, clothes and gold in charity). But Emperor Bali performed the supreme sacrifice by offering himself to God. With the passage of time, there might have occurred some changes, but nevertheless Kerala continues to be the land famous for devotion and surrender. It is the birthplace of Prahlada, the great devotee of the Lord. Even as Bali disobeyed the command of his Guru for the sake of God, Prahlada, too, went against the wishes of his father Hiranyakasipu and surrendered totally to the Lord. Many such noble souls have taken birth in the sacred land of Kerala.

Modern scientists deny the existence of God out of their ignorance. There is no place where God does not exist. *Sarvatah Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvatah Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Thishtathi* (with hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe). The same was stated by Prahlada, “Never doubt that God is here and not there. Wherever you search for Him, He is there.” (Telugu Poem) He had unflinching faith in God. Hiranyakasipu was a great scientist. He could even reach the sun and tried to alter the planetary positions. He was one of such valour and courage. Till this day, no scientist has been able to accomplish what Hiranyakasipu could achieve. But, in spite of his valour and knowledge, Hiranyakasipu could not comprehend divinity. One can understand divinity only through love. There is no other path that can take you to God. The path of love is the main path. It is only love that enables you to surrender to God.

### **Do not be Deluded by Names and Forms**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

The Vedic dictum *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am Brahman) reveals that ‘I’ is Brahman. It is Parameswara (God), it is the Atma. It is Jyotirmaya, Nityanandamaya, Paratparamaya, Anandamaya (effulgent, eternal, transcendental and full of supreme bliss). Everything is contained in ‘I’. When someone questions you, “When did you come?”, you say, “I came yesterday.” Does this ‘I’ refer to you or your body? It is your body that came yesterday and not you. Since you identify yourself with the body, you think that you came yesterday. Suppose you accidentally slip while walking on the road and sustain a fracture. Then you say, “My leg is fractured.” Just ponder over this statement. When you say, my leg, it implies that you are different from your leg. It means that you are not the body. You say, it is my leg, my body, my mind, my Buddhi, etc. Then, who are you? When you examine yourself in this manner, you will realise that none of these limbs represent your true Self. Your body corresponds to Akara (form), whereas your true Self (‘I’) corresponds to Ananda (bliss). The principle of ‘I’ is different from the body. Day in and day out, people make use of this term ‘I’ without actually understanding its meaning. Be he a pauper or a millionaire, the principle of ‘I’ is common to all. *Isavasyam Idam Sarvam* (the entire universe is permeated by God). God is present in everybody in the form of ‘I’. Where there is ‘I’, there is God. Have firm faith in this declaration. When you say, *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am Brahman), ‘I’ precedes Brahman. Hence, ‘I’ is the first name of God.

‘I’ is responsible for everything related to you. ‘I’ is the basis of your happiness and sorrow. Without ‘I’, there is no happiness and no sorrow. ‘I’ is the same in everyone in this world. It is present in all in the form of love. ‘I’ and love are one and the same. Man cannot exist without love. Love shines forth as ‘I’ in everybody. Without the electric current, bulbs cannot give light. Likewise, without ‘I’, the body cannot function. It is because of ‘I’ that the eyes see, the ears listen, the tongue speaks, etc. It is not the eyes that see, it is ‘I’ that sees through the eyes. When you close your eyes, you do not see anything. The light present in the eyes is divinity. In fact, there is no place where divinity does not exist. All names and forms are the manifestations of divinity. Hence, it is said, *Sarva Jeeva Namaskaram Kesavam Pratigachchhati* (whomsoever you salute, it reaches God) and *Sarva Jeeva Tiraskaram Kesavam Pratigachchhati* (whomsoever you denigrate, it also reaches God). When you accuse or criticise anybody, you accuse God. When you respect anybody, you show respect to God.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

If you want to be respected by others, you should first respect others. No other effort can succeed in securing the respect of others for you. Likewise, love all and all will love you. The effulgence of love that shines within you is divine. Love is the principle of 'I'. Keep this as your goal of life. In a house, there is a switch in every room for light. All these switches are controlled by one main switch. Similarly, the eyes, the ears, the tongue, etc., are like the various switches which are controlled by the main switch 'I', the Atma. Only when this main switch is turned on will there be life in each of the limbs of the body. This 'I' is verily the truth. Truth is God. God is truth. Love is God, live in love. No other spiritual practice is needed if you understand this truth and put it into practice. God is the eternal witness of your thoughts, words and deeds. Each one worships God in the name and form of his choice. In fact, all forms are His. Hence, respect and love everybody. Without expansion of love, you lead a self-centred life. It is narrow-mindedness. It is not good.

Man is the noblest of all creatures. *Janthunam Narajanma Durlabham* (out of all living beings, the human birth is the rarest). *Daivam Manusha Rupena* (God takes the form of man). So, man is the embodiment of divinity. But if you take only the physical form into consideration, you may not believe in this truth. Inner reality is important, not the physical form. When you go to the market, you see toys made of sugar in different forms like cat, dog, deer, etc. Irrespective of the shape, each toy has the same price. 'Cat' attracts some children while 'deer' fascinate some others. The difference lies only in names and forms but the sugar content is the same in all of them. You pay the price not for the form but for the sugar content therein. Only children are attracted by names and forms. Likewise, an ignorant person is deluded by names and forms. A true Sadhaka or a devotee keeps in view only the fundamental principle. Do not get carried away by names and forms. Know the nature of the Self and develop love for it. This Self is known as Aham or Atma or 'I'. Names and forms are different but the fundamental principle is one and the same. Man will be transformed into divine once he understands this truth. Man is all-powerful. In fact, he is God. That is why God is always picturised and portrayed in human form.

### **Fill your Heart with Compassion**

Every man is endowed with Hridaya (heart). That which is filled with Daya or Karuna (compassion) is Hridaya. When man fills his heart with love and compassion, peace will reign supreme in the world. There will be love everywhere. There will be no jealousy, hatred or anger in the world. Restlessness will disappear from the face of the earth. One who has filled his heart with compassion will always remain in peace. It is most essential to know this truth. People mistake Hridaya for physical heart. Hridaya is nothing but the all-pervasive Atmic principle, i.e., Aham. So, man should keep his heart absolutely pure and sacred. How can you maintain the purity of your heart? Here is a small example.

Nobody keeps valuables within the reach of a thief. But we are keeping the precious jewellery like compassion, forbearance, love, etc., under the custody of the mind which is no better than a thief. If you leave your precious jewellery in the hands of a thief, how can they be safe? It is impossible. The precious jewellery of virtues must be kept under the safe custody of Hridaya. Never keep them with the thief, i.e., the mind. But that exactly is what man is doing. He acts according to the dictates of his mind. He makes the mind his master and takes it as the basis for all his activities. One who goes by the vagaries of the mind is worse than a thief. Instead, one should follow Hridaya (heart). Only then can one understand the principle of the Atma. Thiruthonda Alwar laid great emphasis on purity of heart. Never follow the dictates of the mind for it is always unsteady and wavering.

Man is endowed with noble qualities and pure thoughts which are like precious diamonds. But he makes the mistake of entrusting them to the care of the mind. Consequently, he is not able to progress on the spiritual path. Make truth and love as the basis of your life. Truth is everywhere. Truth is only one; it is changeless. It has no constraints of time and space. There is nothing like Indian Truth, Pakistani Truth or American Truth. One can experience peace and bliss only when one makes the changeless and eternal principles of truth and love as the basis of one's life.

### **Kerala is the Land of Fulfilment and Success**

The two ministers (who spoke earlier) prayed to Me to visit Kerala. This time, I shall certainly come to Kerala. (*loud and prolonged applause*) Not only this, from this year Kerala has every chance to progress in the field of science and technology. People are under the impression that only Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh have progressed in the field of science and technology. But Kerala is going to excel in this field. The Prime Minister has also promised that he would extend all necessary support in this regard. Kerala is bound to attain an exalted position. The culture of Bharat exhorts: *Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara* (speak truth, practise righteousness). Kerala is the land of truth, love and righteousness. Hence, I will certainly visit Kerala this year. The people of Kerala are tender-hearted. They are full of love. In politics, people say something and do the opposite later on. Spirituality emphasises on the unity of thought, word and deed. Very soon Kerala will develop into an ideal State in the whole country in the areas of science and technology.

Kerala stands first in many respects. Even the monsoon sets in first in the land of Kerala before moving to other States. Such a land is bound to be dear to God also. One can experience the presence of divinity in the land of Kerala. Kerala is the birthplace of Emperor Bali, Lord Vamana and Sage Jamadagni. In earlier times, Siddhashram was situated in this holy land. The name Siddhashram implies that it was the place of fulfilment and success. That is why Sage Viswamitra decided to perform penance there. Siddhashram attained eternal glory because of his penance. Not merely that, many other saints and sages were born there and performed penance. Not many are aware of it that Viswamitra was initially a king. Later on, he renounced everything, took to Sannyasa and performed penance. He was called a Rajarishi. On seeing Vasishtha, who was called a Brahmarishi, Viswamitra resolved to earn the same appellation. One could become a Brahmarishi only when one gave up hatred completely. As Vasishtha had no trace of hatred in him, he could attain the state of Brahmarishi. Viswamitra also became a Brahmarishi once he got rid of anger and hatred. He was responsible for the holy wedding of Sita and Rama. His desire for bringing together Prakriti (Nature) and Paramatma (God) was fulfilled by this marriage. After the wedding, he left for the forest. Siddhashram was the centre where all the sacred wishes of Viswamitra fructified. For all this, love was the main cause.

### ***Embodiments of Love!***

Love all. Do not hate anyone. Love even your enemies. If there is any trace of anger or hatred in you, convert it into love. Then you will also become a Maharishi. Respect even your enemy if he comes in front of you. Hatred is not good; it is very bad. Talk to all with love.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, "*Prema Mudita Manase Kaho ...*"

- **From Bhagavan's Onam Sandesh in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 21st August 2002.**

## SECOND DIVINE DISCOURSE: INTERNATIONAL SEVA CONFERENCE

### **BURN YOUR DESIRES IN THE FIRE OF WISDOM**

*The Yogi who is established in union with Me and worships Me as the Indweller of all beings abides in Me, no matter what he does.*  
(Sanskrit Verse)

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

He who realises that it is the same Atma that dwells in him and in all other living beings has the bliss of experiencing divinity. Whether a renunciant, a householder, a student or a person attached to the world, he who realises the Atmic principle will lead his life in divine proximity, considering it as his greatest wealth. What is the primary duty of man? He should make efforts to understand the teaching of the Gita, *Sarvatah Panipadam Tat* (God permeates the entire universe).

You should realise the truth that the principle of the Atma which is present in all beings is one and the same. As man is unable to understand his true nature, he is facing all kinds of problems in life. He is deluded by the thinking that he is the body. Consequently, he is forgetting his true Self and is wasting his time and energy in the pursuit of ephemeral, worldly objects.

#### **Give First Place to Spirituality in Life**

Today man gives topmost priority to his individual interest. He gives second place to society and last to spirituality. This is a grave mistake. It is because of this that he is unable to realise the truth and faces hardships. What is the message of SAI? 'S' stands for Spirituality, 'A' for Association (society) and 'I' for Individual. It means that you must give first priority to spirituality, next to society and last to individual interest. But today man follows the reverse order, i.e., he holds his individual interest above his social responsibilities and gives last priority to spirituality. Consequently, he is distancing himself from God. In this manner, he is wasting his time. Time is precious. In fact, time is God.

In the first instance, man should take to the path of spirituality and then serve society, understanding the principle of unity. Only then will there be progress at the individual level. On the other hand, if you concentrate on the individual level in the first instance, you will never be able to understand spirituality. Persons like Hiranyaksha, Hiranyakasipu and Kamsa were centred on their individual interests ignoring wholly the spiritual aspect. Physically and intellectually they were mighty. Hiranyakasipu was a great scientist. But what is the use of scientific knowledge which cannot give you everlasting bliss? Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakasipu filled their hearts with negative feelings. They entertained worldly desires which are ephemeral and negative in nature. Modern scientists have reached the moon but Hiranyakasipu could even reach the sun. In spite of their mighty powers and scientific knowledge, they could not experience divinity and met their doom because of their materialistic attitude. Likewise, man is also putting his powers and knowledge to misuse. He is not focusing his attention on his real goal. Manava (human being) is endowed with



immense power. That is why the Upanishads exhort man thus: *Uttishtha, Jagratha, Prapya Varannibodhata* (arise, awake, go to the noble men and learn from them the secret of attaining divinity). Oh simpleton, wake up from this slumber of ignorance. Turn your vision towards the effulgence of Prajnana. Get rid of Tamasic quality. Give up worldly desires. Understand the ephemeral nature of the world.

Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakasipu had all powers at their command, yet they could not attain divine proximity. They investigated into the mysteries of creation and even tried to alter the planetary positions. But they could not understand even a fraction of the principle of divinity. On the other hand, Hiranyakasipu's son, Prahlada realised the divine principle at a very young age. Once Hiranyakasipu asked Prahlada what he had learnt from his preceptors. Prahlada replied, "The teachers have taught me many things. I have learnt the principles of Dharma and Artha (righteousness and wealth) and studied sacred scriptures. In fact, I have learnt the very essence of all knowledge." Hiranyakasipu was overjoyed to hear all this. He said, "Oh son! Let me have the pleasure of listening to that great knowledge." Prahlada said, "I have realised the truth that God is omnipresent. Wherever I see, I find Him there." Hiranyakasipu became furious on hearing this. He pushed him from his lap and shouted, "You said that your teachers have taught you many things. Is this what you have learnt? There are many worldly things to be learnt which are very important for us. But you have ignored them and are talking about God. Where is God?" Prahlada very calmly replied, "*Father, never doubt that God is here and not there. In fact, He is present wherever you search for Him.*" (Telugu Poem) Hiranyakasipu's ego was pricked. "How dare this young fellow teach me?", he thought to himself. "If God is all-pervasive, can you show Him in this pillar?", he challenged Prahlada. "Yes, I can", pat came the answer. Such was Prahlada's faith and devotion. Hiranyakasipu at once hit the pillar with a mace. Lo and behold! God emerged from it. What is the inner meaning of this? How can man have the vision of the Divine? There are three essential requirements for this – unwavering devotion, strong faith and pure heart. Besides, man should break the shackles of body attachment to have the vision of God. Despite his power, position and high education, man today is immersed in ignorance. Here is another example.

### **Eradicate Desires to Attain Purity**

You curdle the milk and extract butter out of it, and then heat it to get ghee. If there is water content in the butter, it will emit foul smell as you heat it. The smell will gradually diminish as you continue to heat it. So long as there is water in the butter, you cannot escape from the foul smell. The water has to completely evaporate. Butter represents Jeeva (individual soul). The evil tendencies in you can be compared to foul smell. When man performs Sadhana, the foul smell of evil propensities emanates from him during the process. He should continue with his Sadhana and overcome those evil tendencies. As he performs Sadhana more and more, all evil tendencies in him will vanish like water. Ultimately, his Sadhana will yield the desired result and he will have direct evidence of Divinity just like pure ghee is obtained from butter after all its water content evaporates on heating.

Every man is endowed with body, mind, intellect and ego. On being questioned by Hiranyakasipu, Prahlada replied, "Father, I am neither the body nor the mind nor the intellect nor the ego. I am the embodiment of the Atma." One will remain like pure ghee if one gets rid of ego, does not develop attachment to the body and does not get deluded by the vagaries of the mind. If the butter is not free from water, it will give foul smell. So long as there are worldly desires in the mind, one cannot escape from the foul smell. Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakasipu could not get rid of worldly desires in spite of all their learning. Their evil tendencies were the cause of their doom.

Today there are many who do Bhajans and give lectures on spiritual matters but they are unable to get rid of the foul smell of worldly desires. Until and unless they give up worldly desires, they cannot attain the state of purity. They have become accustomed to the bad smell of materialistic life. They do Bhajans, penance, meditation, etc., with a view to fulfil their worldly desires. They can be compared to butter mixed up with water. On the spiritual path, one should not give scope for the foul smell of worldly desires. Some people call themselves devotees but they are turning wicked because of their desires. Can such people be called devotees? No. No. If they are really devotees, how is it that they emit bad smell? Their body, mind, intellect, and their actions are tainted with impurity.

*Devotees!*

Firstly, you should enquire into the reason for the foul smell that emanates from you. Your mind should remain steady and unwavering through the vicissitudes of life. You should have strong faith. Only then can you lead a peaceful life. Prahlada was subjected to various kinds of ordeals but his faith remained as steady as a rock. His love for God never diminished a bit. He considered love for God as his very life-breath. But the devotees today stand in stark contrast to Prahlada. Their faith is so shaky that their mind is disturbed by the slightest trouble. They start entertaining doubts and lose their faith altogether. Losing Viswasa (faith) amounts to losing Swasa (life-breath) itself. Come what may, one should continue one's Sadhana with unflinching faith. This is the sign of true devotion. Devotion does not mean merely singing Bhajans, performing rituals and chanting the Divine Name. You should firmly install divinity in your heart. You should take care that worldly desires find no place in your mind. Burn to ashes all desires completely in the fire of wisdom. Even if a trace of worldliness is left in you, it will multiply manifold and lead you astray. In order to free yourself from bad deeds and bad habits, make sure that you do not have even a shred of desire in you. But due to the impact of Kali Age, even devotees are filling their hearts with desires.

*Embodiments of Love!*

Truly speaking, man is very fortunate. But he is haunted by the misfortune of worldly desires. That is why he is unable to earn the deservedness to get closer to God. He goes through many books and gives lectures, but what is the use? His actions do not match his words. He tries to deceive others by his lectures. In fact, he deceives himself. It is enough if he practises at least a fraction of what he preaches. His heart is filled with untruth. His deeds are unrighteous. Hence, he is unable to experience peace. Distance yourself from untruth and unrighteousness. The Vedas exhort man: *Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara* (speak truth, practise righteousness). Truth is God. If you forget truth, who can protect you?

*Embodiments of Love!*

You may be performing a number of spiritual practices but do not feel proud of them. First and foremost, drive away the foul smell of worldly desires from your heart. Fill your heart with the fragrance of virtues. This fragrance will give you peace. If your heart is full of evil feelings, you will spread evil in your neighbourhood. In this way, you will not only ruin others but yourself also. You do not get much benefit by merely reading books or listening to discourses. First of all, develop Sraddha (steadfast faith) and Bhakti (devotion) in you. *Sraddhavan Labhate Jnanam* (one having steadfast faith attains wisdom). So, we should develop Sraddha and Prema. Your heart becomes pure and sacred when you fill it with love.

**Doing Business in the Name of Sai is the Worst Sin**

*Embodiments of Love!*

What is the Sadhana you are supposed to undertake? First of all, make your heart pure. Thiruthonda Alwar once said, "If one lacks purity of heart, one does not even deserve to chant the Divine Name of Rama." What is the use of chanting the Divine Name with a polluted heart? Today the world is afflicted with all types of pollution. Man's thoughts, words and deeds are also polluted. How can then he develop Bhakti? Today people are wearing the mask of Bhakti and trying to cheat others. Do not deceive others. *Help ever, hurt never.* This is the essence of the eighteen Puranas. Deceiving others amounts to deceiving yourself. The feelings that spring in your heart must be as pure as the water of the Ganga. Words do not suffice; what is needed is action. There should be unity of thought, word and deed. He is a wicked person whose thoughts, words and deeds are at variance. *The proper study of mankind is man.* Today we find unity of thought, word and deed only in acts of untruth, unrighteousness and injustice. Man who is supposed to have noble thoughts and perform meritorious deeds is doing just the opposite.

In the world, the so-called devotees have increased in number. Now I feel the time is ripe to tell you a few important things. There are some people who are doing business in the name of Sai. They are cheating others, pretending to be devotees of Sai. I do not approve of such behaviour. They are not devotees at all. They are going to different parts of the country and also abroad to make money in the name of Sai. It is a big mistake. I do not ask for even a single paisa from others. I never approve of such business. Whoever he may be, if somebody approaches you with such an evil motive, tell him to get out at once. Do not allow business to enter the field of spirituality. One may do what one likes for the maintenance of one's family, but nobody should do business using Sai's name. Unfortunately, such activity is on the increase. In many villages, we find people misusing the name of Sai for their selfish gains. This is happening even in other countries like America, England, Japan, Germany, Singapore, Malaysia, etc. Do not associate yourself with such wicked people. Keep your hearts pure and sacred. Only then can you call yourself a human being. Otherwise, you are like a living corpse. Such people should not be respected. Better you perform their obituary rites! You should pray to God with sacred feelings. When you entertain worldly desires, you will be moving away from Divinity.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

You are coming here with all devotion and sincerity. Do not get deceived by people who do business in the name of devotion. In many places, we find people indulging in such mean practices. Maintain safe distance from them. *Tyaja Durjana Samsargam; Bhaja Sadhu Samagamam; Kuru Punyam Ahorathram* (run away from bad company; join good company and perform meritorious deeds day and night). That is what we are supposed to do. You may even live in the company of snakes but not in the company of evil-minded people. We are undertaking so many social welfare activities but I have never asked anybody for even a single paisa. You are all aware of this. I do not involve Myself in money matters. But people today consider money as God. How can such people be called devotees?

I told you earlier about this. I have started a service programme to look after the children who do not have parents. One lakh rupees would be deposited in the name of each child, which will take care of their needs. I have not asked anybody for any help in this regard. But today some people are collecting money, saying that they would donate the amount to Swami for this purpose. Some others are proclaiming that they have taken up the responsibility of looking after the children. Can there be a worse sin than this? All such people are betrayers of God. Better they beg in streets than use My name to collect money.

#### **Sri Sathya Sai Primary Schools Project**

This morning, a few old students came to Me. You all know C. Srinivas from Bangalore. He studied in our institution and also served as Warden of the Hostel at Brindavan for some time. He did not want to take up any job outside because he wanted to serve Swami. He always involves himself in such activities which will please Swami. He is looking after our Super Speciality Hospital at Bangalore. Today he came to Me and said, "Nowhere else education and medical care of such high standards are provided free of cost to all. You have given us free education and taken care of us with so much love and care. We want to express our gratitude to You by serving You in our own humble way." He brought a plan with him. He wants to establish schools in villages where there are no schools. He wanted Swami to commence this Project today itself. I told him not to hurry.

Youngsters today want to do things fast. That is not the right attitude. *Start early, drive slowly and reach safely*. Hence, I told him to go slow. But he said, "Swami, many of our old students are here. You have given us free education and looked after us in every possible way. Is it not our duty to express gratitude to You for all that You have done to us?" He prayed to Swami to make an announcement in this regard today itself. I agreed. I will never say "no" to any good work. Those who want to undertake such sacred tasks should take up the responsibility and discharge it diligently. That is how they can redeem their lives. In Chennai and Hyderabad, many of our old students are eager to serve Swami. Unfortunately, when the elders pursue the wrong path, the youngsters will also do the same. What to speak of the fate of our Organisation at Chennai and Hyderabad! The less said the better. I told them to select a suitable piece of land; I am prepared to construct the building. But they lack devotion and sincerity. They only pretend to have it. Such insincere behaviour is not good for them. Many devotees there are put to inconvenience. The youngsters want to do many things. But what can they do without the support of the elders? The elders neither take the initiative nor do they allow the youngsters to act on their own. I do not require any temples. I am not interested in real estate. All that I want is that you should serve society with love and without selfishness. If the elders do not accept your suggestion, do not bother about it. That is their fate. The youth should make sincere efforts. Help the helpless. Feed the hungry.

Do not go about seeking other people's help. If you need any help, come to Me. (*loud applause*) I shall provide all help without hesitation. Do not collect a single paisa as donation. There are some who donate a hundred rupees and make self-glorification worth a thousand rupees out of it. I am not interested in such activities. When Swami is standing by your side like a mountain, why should you seek any assistance from anybody? Do not run after others for help. They will merely preach high philosophy which is completely useless. It is not only in India that such a situation prevails. All over the world, it is the same. Whether you go to England, Japan or Germany, it is the same sort of business that is going on. From everywhere, it is the same kind of news of such transactions; Swami receives a lot of such information. I feel all this is nuisance. This is not the kind of information that I want to hear. What I desire to hear from you is that you are all thriving, progressing and blissful. Business in the name of Swami is highly disgusting and distressful. There can be no commerce in matters of devotion. Even the brackish ocean may yield drinking water but this kind of business-oriented devotion cannot yield anything. Do not allow anybody to come near you who asks for money. I never solicit any donations from anybody nor do I have any agents for propagating My Message. I do not have any association whatsoever with these deceitful persons. I need no material wealth. My only need is love. Give love and take love. This love is all that I want. Redeem your life with love. There is no devotion greater than love. Any little service performed with love is enough. If you give a glass of water to a thirsty person with love, it is more than enough. You can experience happiness by quenching the thirst of a

thirsty person. Many people call themselves as Swami's devotees. But the fact is that almost 90 per cent of them are false devotees. Earlier, it was quite different; the devotees were few but they were genuine devotees. Nowadays, there are too many self-seeking cheats masquerading as devotees. They adorn their forehead with Vibhuti, wear a scarf round their neck and roam about freely in the guise of devotees. Even the stray dogs scrounging around for something to eat are better than such fake devotees! Do not allow such deceitful persons to come near you.

### **Do not Turn Spirituality into Business**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Develop love in you. See that love does not diminish in you. Experience love in full and enjoy its bliss. I do not need any temples or big buildings. The temple of your heart is more than enough for Me. I shall stay happily therein. The news that I get from those so-called temples is highly distressing to Me. The amount of anguish that I undergo because of this is beyond your imagination. Do not indulge in bad acts in the name of Sai. If you are unable to do good, at least keep quiet and stay out. There is no need for you to make all kinds of wild promises. Enjoy the bliss of divinity in silence and love. As people from all over the globe are assembled here, I want to tell all this in plain words. Do not have any dealings with people who are doing commercial transactions in the name of Sai. Send them packing with a Namaskar. Those who develop friendship with such people are fools of the first water. Say goodbye to them from a distance. If you need anything, ask Me. I have never deceived or let down anybody nor will I ever do so. I will never utter untruth. I had to say all this because many sinful deeds are being committed by some deceitful persons masquerading as devotees.

Earlier when I visited Mumbai, I used to find people doing Bhajans and Nagar Sankirtan all over, unmindful of the place or time, even at the airport. Today you can hardly see anyone even chanting the Divine Name in public anywhere. Of course, there are quite a few devotees. But they are shy of doing Namasmarana. In early days, I used to travel to various cities like Chennai, Mumbai, Hyderabad, etc. But these days, I have no inclination to go anywhere. All these places have become overcrowded with such wicked people. It is of foremost importance for us to get rid of them and encourage the godly-minded people. God never abandons anybody. He helps and supports all. God does not observe differences. Other people may have the feeling of hatred; God has no hatred in Him. God is love, love and love alone. All of you should also try to develop love in your hearts. I am not interested in seeing this hall packed to its capacity. I want only quality, not quantity. One teaspoonful of cow's milk is better than barrels of donkey's milk. It is enough if we have a handful of people with noble hearts. The State Presidents and Trust Conveners should take necessary steps in the right direction. Otherwise, they should resign. We will ourselves take up the responsibility. The All India President of Sai Organisations is also here. He should deal firmly with such people. He should relieve them of their responsibilities immediately. I am deeply anguished over the current state of affairs in our Organisation. Though this feeling has been there in Me for quite some time, I have been waiting for a suitable opportunity to express it. Since so many of you from various parts of the world have gathered here today, I felt that this was the right time to express My feelings.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Develop love and kill hatred. *Help ever, hurt never.* Eschew evil tendencies. Being members of Sathya Sai Organisation, you should follow the path of truth. Some people pretend to be humble devotees so long as they are within the precincts of Prasanthi Nilayam. Once they leave its portals, they get back to their old ways. Such evil traits should be burnt to

ashes. Develop godly feelings in you. God is ever ready to answer your prayers. Never entertain doubts in this regard. God is always in you, with you, around you, above you and below you. God will never be away from you. So, develop faith in God. Never turn your devotion for God into a business.

I have spoken to you in this manner only out of My immense love for you. Understand what has been conveyed to you and explain to your fellow devotees. Devotion has to be cultivated in a silent and sincere manner. Do not spoil your lives by resorting to untruthful ways. *Sathyam Bruyath* (speak truth). Truth is God. Hence, lead a truthful life so as to merge in truth ultimately.

Tomorrow, bring to Me all your doubts and I shall clarify them. First of all, keep away from bad company. Leave bad company immediately. I will be very happy if you do so. I am not asking you to work for My sake. I do not want anything for Myself from you. I do all My work Myself. I do not seek others' help. If only I Will it, the whole world will help Me (*loud applause*). I do not need your help. Help yourself, serve society and mould your life into an ideal one.

(Here, Swami sang the Bhajan, “*Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin...*” and continued His Discourse.)

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

For the last four days, many devotees have been feeling sad that Swami is suffering because of the pain He has taken upon Himself. Understand that Swami has no pain at all because He has taken it upon Himself out of His love. How can I have pain when I have alleviated the suffering of My devotee? However, there are certain rules and regulations to be observed in this regard. I have taken it from somebody. Hence, I have to put up with it for as many days as the person would have suffered in the normal course. I have no difficulty whatsoever. If I were really suffering due to pain, would it be possible for Me to speak to you so long? I have no suffering; it has dissolved in My love. All should be happy, blissful and comfortable. This is what I desire. Do not be worried over this matter. I have no suffering. In fact, I am ready to accept all your sufferings. Be happy that I have no suffering whatsoever.

- **From Bhagavan's Second Divine Discourse at International Seva Conference in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 22nd July 2002.**

## DASARA DISCOURSES - 3

### **DIVINITY IS PRESENT IN THE FORM OF LOVE**

*Fish is born in water, is sustained in water and ultimately dies in it.*

*Though milk is superior to water, yet no fish can survive in it.*

(Telugu Poem)

*Due to the absence of fear of sin and love for God, humanness has declined in human beings.  
This is detrimental to universal peace. (Telugu Poem)*

### *Embodiments of Love!*

Though human beings have different names, forms, colours, and they conduct themselves in many ways in this world, yet basically all belong to one race, that is, human race. In order to visualise God, one should cultivate the qualities of truth and righteousness. God is the personification of love; the same love is immanent in the heart of all human beings. Just as God loves all equally, likewise man should share his love with all. It is the foremost duty of man. One should not make use of the God-given love for selfish purposes but should share it with everyone. Only then can one become the recipient of God's love.

### **Recognise the Divine Principle of Love in Man**

By sharing his love with others, man is benefited in two ways – he makes others happy and receives God's love since God confers His love and grace on those who love their fellow-beings. So, if one wants to become the recipient of God's love, one must necessarily recognise the principle of love immanent in all. Just as sunlight is composed of seven colours, humanness is a composite of virtues like truth, righteousness, morality, love, etc. Human love should be like a compass. Wherever the compass is placed, its needle will always point towards the north. Similarly, man's love should always be directed towards God. Man should get rid of his selfishness; transcend the feeling of mine and thine, recognise the principle of unity of all beings and conduct himself accordingly. In order to understand the principle of love, he must recognise the divinity that is immanent in all. Such a person alone is a true human being.

Love is highly sacred, valuable and vast. It is present universally in all beings. It is the primary duty of man to recognise the divinity present within him in the form of love. But man is making no effort in this direction. He is facing hardships because he thinks that God is different from him. God is not separate from the individual. He dwells in all living beings in the form of love. One has to make every effort to experience this truth. There is no one in this world without love. Love is truly divine. But man fails to understand the divine nature of love and limits it by associating it with worldly and ephemeral things and physical relationships. The love of a mother towards her child is called Vatsalya (affection), the love that exists between husband and wife is called Moha (infatuation). The love of a person towards his friends and relatives is known as Anuraga (attachment), the love towards material objects is referred to as Ichchha (desire). All this is worldly love. But true love is essentially divine. One should always remember this. As man has forgotten this fundamental truth, he is developing differences on the basis of physical relationships. This is the main cause of man's suffering. So long as there is such feeling of difference in man, he cannot attain divinity. I have been repeatedly exhorting you to give up body attachment. Daivabhimanam (attachment to God) decreases as Dehabhimanam (attachment to body) increases. Attachment to the body is worldly in nature, whereas divine love is related to the heart. Every man has equal right to experience this love.

Man cannot understand God's love because he tries to compare it with his narrow and selfish love. Such comparison is incorrect because God's love is totally selfless. It is infinite, immortal and immeasurable. In Vedantic parlance, divine love is referred to as Angirasa that circulates in the form of essence in every limb of the body. At the same time, the love of man and the love of God are the same in quality as well as quantity (i.e., limitless). It is a folly to see difference between them. Man tries to understand divine love from worldly

point of view. But there is no relationship whatsoever between worldly activities and divine love. They are entirely different from each other.

Divine love is immanent in man but he fails to understand this. *Janthunam Narajanma Durlabham* (out of all the living beings, the human birth is the rarest). God is present in the form of love in every human being; *Daivam Manusha Rupena* (God takes the form of man), yet man fails to recognise divinity. Man has emerged from God. Such being the case, why does man consider himself different from the Divine? God is your Father. His essence flows in you. He who understands this truth will never distance himself from God. *Love is God, live in love.* God has no particular form.

### **Attachment is Artificial, Love is Divine**

In this world, nothing exists without a form. Here is a small example. Flower gives fragrance. You may say that flower has a form but not its fragrance. But without flower, how can there be fragrance? So, flower is the form of fragrance. Similarly, mother is the form of love because one cannot experience love without the mother. Therefore, everything has a form in this world. God is present in all. *Anoraneeyan Mahato Maheeyan* (Brahman is subtler than the subtlest and vaster than the vastest). You perceive differences in quality and quantity but in reality there is no difference whatsoever. "*Poornamada Poornamidam Poornat Poornamudachayte Poornasya Poornamadaya Poornameva Avashishyate*" (That is whole, this is whole. When the whole is taken out of the whole, what remains is again the whole.) Everything is essentially divine. It is because of his body attachment that man is unable to perceive divinity. No doubt, attachment is necessary for worldly life but one should not get too much attached to the world and in the process get detached from God. Attachment is bound to exist between mother and child, wife and husband, brothers and sisters. One must understand that attachment is of one's own making; it is not innate. So, attachment is artificial. Love alone is innate and divine.

In this drama of life, God is the actor and also the director. It is God only who plays different roles. You may think that you are playing a particular role in this drama of life but, in reality, it is God who plays your role. God protects somebody and punishes another. But, in fact, He is the one who experiences both. In this world, something may appear to be good and some other thing as bad but, in reality, good and bad are only relatively true. In fact, God is the basis of everything. He acts, He directs, He experiences and He sets an ideal in every aspect. First of all, you should understand this truth.



You study and appear in an examination. On the basis of physical form, people say someone has passed and someone has failed. But, in reality, one who passes with 'O' grade is God, and one who fails in the examination is also God. From the Atmic point of view, all are one. Everything is God. One who praises is God, one who censures is also God. One who respects and one who rejects is also God. Everything in this world is God's play. One who recognises this truth is alone a true Vyakti (individual). Earlier I told you the meaning of the term Vyakti. One who manifests the latent divinity is a true Vyakti.

There are many paths to understand unity. *Ekam Sath Viprah Bahudha Vadanti* (Truth is one but scholars refer to it by many names). People call God by different names. All such names are their own creations. God has no specific name or form. He is love personified and beyond all attributes. He has no trace of hatred or differences. Whatever difference you find in God is the reflection of your own inner feeling. But when God assumes human form in this world, He observes certain differences in order to set an ideal to others.

### **Have Atmic Vision**

To recognise that God is present in all is true humanness. The Upanishads refer to man as Nara, meaning one who is eternal and immortal. Man is a combination of the five elements. It is the divine love that expresses itself in the form of the five elements. The Gayatri Mantra begins with Bhur, Bhuvah, Suvah. Bhur refers to materialisation (body), a combination of materials. Bhuvah refers to vibration (life-force) that makes the body function. Suvah refers to radiation, which is the fundamental basis. All the three represent the same divinity. Similarly, though people call Him by different names, God is essentially one. One who is engaged in worldly activities is called a human being. One who is engaged in divine activities is called God. There is no one in this world who is not divine. All are the embodiments of divinity. All forms are a part of the Divine Cosmic Form (*Viswa Virat Swarupa*). But because of your body attachment, you consider yourselves as human beings. Give up body attachment, only then can you realise your true identity. The term Atma is common in Dehatma, Jivatma and Paramatma. When Atma is associated with Deha (body), it is known as Dehatma. When it is associated with the individual soul, it is called Jivatma. When it is associated with Divinity, it is called Paramatma. The Atma is eternal and immortal. Though such divine principle is present within, man considers himself weak and low. In fact, you are not weak or low; you are God. When you are yourself divine, why do you search for God elsewhere? *Pashyannapicha Na Pashyati Moodho* (he is a fool who sees yet does not recognise the reality). Though you see God everywhere, still you feel that you have not seen Him. Is it not foolishness? Whomsoever you see is a form of the Divine. You are unable to see God around you because you consider yourself a mere human.

Once Vivekananda asked Ramakrishna Paramahansa whether he had seen God. Ramakrishna replied that he was seeing God even at that moment. Vivekananda asked, "In what form?" Ramakrishna said, "In your very form." Pointing to his disciples, he added, "This Brahmananda, that Nityananda... all are the embodiments of God. I am seeing God in all of you." Unable to comprehend the implication of Ramakrishna's words, Vivekananda asked, "Swami, we are mere mortals. How can you consider us as divine?" Then Ramakrishna said, "Oh simpleton, you look at everybody from a physical point of view, but I see everyone from the Atmic point of view. Hence, all appear to me as divine."

I often tell you, you are not one person, but three. The one you think you are (the body), the one others think you are (the mind) and the one you really are (the Atma). From the physical point of view, you are a human being but from the point of view of the Atma, you are God. Once you change your view from the physical to the Atmic, you will see God in

yourself. Mistake lies in your Drishti (vision), not in Srushti (creation). Whatever defect you find in the creation is the reflection, reaction and resound of your inner feelings. When you eat a mango, you will get the belch of mango and not that of cucumber. Likewise, whatever you see outside is a reflection of your inner being. So, first of all, develop divine feelings in you. Only then can you perceive the reality of human birth.

### **Love is the very Form of the Atma**

What is the meaning of the term 'Manava'? 'Ma' stands for ignorance, 'Na' for without and 'Va', to conduct oneself. So, one who conducts oneself without ignorance is a true human being. Truly speaking, you are the embodiment of wisdom. What is wisdom? *Advaita Darshanam Jnanam* (perception of the One without a second is true wisdom). Such wisdom is verily divine. When you are everything and everything is in you, why do you go in search of God elsewhere? As our Sanjay Sahni pointed out in his speech, God is in you, with you and around you.

The same principle of love is present in all. This love is not related to the body, mind, senses or intellect. It is related to the Atma. Love is the very form of the Atma. The Vedas describe the Atma as love. One who is standing in neck deep water will be able to speak something, but one who is totally immersed in water cannot speak. Similarly, one who has experienced divine love partially will start describing it in various ways. Such a person has not understood divinity at all. The Atma is present everywhere. Divine love is all-pervasive. One who understands this truth and gets immersed in divine love completely will not be able to describe it. If you are able to talk about divine love, it only means that you are not totally immersed in it. It also means that you are only at a superficial level. How can such a person understand divinity? One should transcend superficial level and reach superior level, which means one should understand the principle of unity. Everything lies in unity. One who cannot understand the principle of unity becomes the victim of doubts. One who attains the principle of oneness is immersed in the ocean of love. So, man should be the embodiment of love. He should share this love with all.

### ***Embodiments of Love! Students!***

You are all young and have various plans for your future. You may undertake any activity but never forget that love is God. You should also remember that you all belong to the same family. The entire mankind belongs to one human race. Human race has one Father, God. So, all are the children of God. Once you recognise this truth and act accordingly, there will be no scope for differences or conflicts. Nations may be different, colours of men may vary, but understand that humanity is one. Different shapes of toys like dog, parrot, swan, deer, etc., are made of sugar and sold in the market. These shapes are made to attract the children. The hawker sings a song and sells these toys, "Take whatever you like, a dog or a parrot, a swan or a deer, the price is only two annas (1/8th of a rupee)." Names and forms vary but the sugar content is the same in all. One pays the price for the sugar content and not for the shapes. Likewise, human beings may vary in names, forms and colours but the principle of Atma is the same in all of them. *The Atma is changeless. It is eternal, without birth or death. It has no beginning, middle or end. It is omnipresent as the indweller of every being.* (Telugu Poem). God is present in the form of Atma in everyone. You have to recognise this fundamental truth. Only then can you understand the principle of unity.

### **Avoid Hurry, Worry and Curry**

Some people go to the sea and take bath in it. But after they return home, they again take a fresh water bath. They do not know the benefits that they get out of sea water bath. After you take a bath in the sea, do not again take a fresh water bath for the whole day. The salt

that gets stuck to your skin will cure you of various skin diseases. God has created natural remedies for various ailments. In fact, every object created by God in this world has some curative effect or the other. But man is unable to understand this truth. You find grass lawns in many places. They are lush green, soft and cool. You find white grass in the midst of green grass. If you eat just two blades of white grass, you will be free from diarrhoea. Even dogs know more than what man knows in this respect. When people free their pet dogs, they go to the lawns and eat white grass. They do so as they are aware that white grass cures their indigestion. There is divinity in dog also. Whenever a dog has high temperature, it does not eat anything. Even if you offer milk, it does not drink. What is the reason? The dog knows that when it has fever, it should not eat. But today even educated persons do not observe dietary regulations when they are sick. They go to a hotel and eat Idli and Dosa even when they have fever. Don't they know that they should not overload their stomach when they have fever? Even a dog is careful in this respect but not man. There is divinity in all beings. The Vedas declare *Prajnanam Brahma* (Awareness is Brahman). It is not just Awareness, but Constant Integrated Awareness. But modern man has no time to think about these matters. He is always in haste. Haste makes waste, waste makes worry. So, do not be in a hurry. Hurry, worry, curry, these are the main causes for heart diseases. Never be in a hurry. Give up all worries and reduce the intake of curry (fat). Then you will be free from heart diseases. When a fat person goes to a doctor, the first thing the doctor tells him is to reduce his weight. It is said, *Vaidyo Narayano Hari* (doctor is verily God). God is your doctor, God is your friend and God is your relation. You are the very forms of God. Forms are different, but God is one. *Ekatma Sarvabhutantaratma* (the same Atma is present in all beings). *Ek Prabhu Ke Anek Nam* (one God has many names). So, all human beings are essentially divine. Never think that you are different from God.

### **God is Close to you**

Yesterday, I mentioned in My Discourse that truth is God, *Sathyannasti Paro Dharma* (there is no Dharma greater than adherence to truth). God is where truth is. So, one need not search for God. Where is the need to search for God who is everywhere? Consider yourself as God. Never see any difference between the Jeeva (individual soul) and Deva (God). So, never criticise or ridicule anybody. The Upanishads declare, *Sarva Jeeva Namaskaram Kesavam Pratigachchhati* (whomsoever you salute, it reaches God). Equally, *Sarva Jeeva Tiraskaram Kesavam Pratigachchhati* (whomsoever you denigrate, it also reaches God). The Upanishads define God and speak of the principle of oneness. What is the meaning of Upanishad? Upanishad means that which brings you close to God. God is very close to you. Even your physical mother may be distant from you but God is always with you and in you. He follows you like your shadow wherever you go.

When you serve others, you serve God. So, serve others wholeheartedly. That is true penance and meditation. "*Neither by penance nor by pilgrimage nor by study of scriptures nor by Japa can one cross the ocean of life. One can achieve it only by serving the pious.*" (Sanskrit Verse) Do not look down upon any human being, because God is in everyone. Do not go by name and form. See the Spirit within. From the Atmic point of view, all are one. When you consider everyone as God, you will lead a blissful life. Evil qualities like hatred, jealousy, ego develop in you when you consider the individual different from God. Once you realise that divinity is present in all, there will be no room for praise or blame. You will experience ultimate bliss.

*Brahmanandam, Parama Sukhadam, Kevalam Jnanamurtim, Dwandwateetam, Gagana Sadrisham, Tattwamasyadi Lakshyam, Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee Sakshibhutam* (God is the embodiment of supreme bliss, He is wisdom absolute, the One

without a second, beyond the pair of opposites, expansive and pervasive like the sky, the goal indicated by the Mahavakya Tattwamasi, the eternal, pure, unchanging, the witness of all functions of the intellect).

You are really fortunate to have been born as human beings. Blessed are those who strive for their redemption. But we misuse human life as we follow the wrong path and indulge in wicked activities. Then how can we know the Self? You can know the Self only when you give up body attachment.

*Embodiments of Love!*

Sanjay Sahni said, *Loka Samasta Sukhino Bhavantu* (May all the people of the world be happy!) God is the embodiment of happiness. Such happiness should be experienced by one and all. Love can ensure this happiness. When man cultivates love, the world will be free from all types of conflicts and wars. After the Dwapar Yuga, during the last 5000 years, the world witnessed 11,000 wars. Even now, wars are being waged. The reason for this is that man is not able to understand his true nature thereby giving room to differences. He is being carried away by the feeling of mine and thine. When he is born, he does not bring even a small piece of cloth with him. When he leaves the world, he does not even give his address. Then what is there in the world that he can claim as his own? Nothing. So long as he is alive, he feels something as his. When he departs from the world, he does not know what will happen to all his possessions. Such being the case, why should he develop ego and attachment? It is sheer ignorance. Merit and sin are the only things that accompany him after his death.

You are born because of the sins committed in previous births. You should undertake meritorious deeds in this birth so that you will never be born again. You should strive hard to attain liberation. How is it possible? So long as the husk is not removed from the paddy, it will germinate wherever it is sown. *Punarapi Jananam Punarapi Maranam* (to be born and to die again and again). Once the husk is removed, it will not sprout. *Punar Janma Na Vidyate* (there is no more rebirth). So long as man is covered by the husk of Maya or attachment, he is born again and again. Once the husk of attachment is removed, there is no rebirth for him. All spiritual practices are meant to remove this 'husk'. Everyone has to make efforts in this direction. To make efforts is your duty, success or failure is in the hands of God. In order to attain success, you have to do your duty. Without asking, even your mother will not feed you. Without knocking, the door will not be opened. Ask and be fed. Knock and the door shall be opened. Likewise, you should pray to God to grant you liberation.

Today, though God Himself is coming closer to man, man is distancing himself from God. There is no greater misfortune or sin than this. It is the result of sins accumulated from past births. Never commit such a sin. Earn merit. Be closer to God. The Upanishads exhort man to make sincere efforts for his redemption. Man should wake up from the sleep of Ajnana (ignorance) and visualise the sun of Prajnana (awareness). This is the teaching of every Upanishad. But few follow the instructions of the Upanishads. The truth will be realised and experienced only when you put the teachings of the Upanishads into practice.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, *Bhaja Govindam* ...

- **From Bhagavan's Dasara Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 22nd October 2001.**

## **NEWS FROM PRASANTHI NILAYAM**

### **MUSICAL PRESENTATION BY SRI SATHYA** **SAI MIRPURI COLLEGE OF MUSIC**

An excellent musical presentation was made by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music, Prasanthi Nilayam in Sai Kulwant Hall on the afternoon of 15th August 2002 in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The programme commenced with a brief speech by Sri Anil Kumar, a faculty member of the Institute. Dwelling on the teachings of Bhagavan Baba, Sri Anil Kumar said that Bhagavan Baba has always referred to Bharat as Punya Bhumi, Karma Bhumi, Yoga Bhumi and Thyaga Bhumi sanctified by the advent of saints, sages and Avatars. He exhorted the students and devotees to do their best to restore the pristine glory of Bharat. Thereafter, students of Sri Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music made a musical presentation. The first item of the programme was Rama Katha (story of Rama) presented by two 1st year students of the Music College. Their excellent performance earned the appreciation of the gathering as also the blessings of Bhagavan Baba who materialised a gold ring for one of them and a gold chain for the other at the end of their presentation. This was followed by group singing by senior students of the Music College. It consisted of three Thyagaraja Kirtans, one composition of Purandaradas in Hindola and another of Bhadrachalam Ramadas in Yamuna Kalyani. The function concluded with a folk song which had been set to music by the Principal of the college.

### **ONAM CELEBRATIONS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM**

The people of Kerala celebrate Onam to commemorate the advent of Vamana, the incarnation of Lord Narayana, on earth. Sai devotees from Kerala have a rare opportunity of celebrating this sacred festival in the Divine Presence of the Kali Yuga Avatar, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. This year, a mammoth gathering of devotees celebrated Onam at Prasanthi Nilayam with piety and gaiety for three days, from 19th to 21st August 2002. On all these days, recitals of Nadaswaram, Panchavadyam and Thayambaka were conducted in Sai Kulwant Hall creating a vibrant ambience similar to that of the temples of Kerala.

The celebrations, organised by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Kerala, started on the afternoon of 19th August 2002 with a musical presentation in Sai Kulwant Hall in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. The programme commenced with the chanting of Vedic hymns by Bal Vikas children of Kerala at 3.45 p.m. Thereafter, a group of Bal Vikas children gave an excellent musical performance of Vadyam. This was followed by a Carnatic musical concert by Master Sreekrishnan Mohan, Master Ramkumar Mohan and Party. A magnificent item of the programme was the devotional songs sung by Sri Muralidharan in his mellifluous voice. This excellent musical programme concluded with a presentation of Carnatic music by Dr. Sreevalsan and Party. This was followed by Bhajans led by Institute students. The programme came to a close at 5.25 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

The programme on the second day of the celebrations was conducted on the evening of 20th August 2002 in Poornachandra Auditorium. This included a musical concert and a dance

drama entitled “Goddess Durga”. The musical concert commenced at 5.40 p.m. after the arrival of Bhagavan Baba in the Auditorium. The concert was presented by Smt. Arundhati and Party who enthralled the audience with their excellent performance. This was followed by the play “Goddess Durga” which was presented by the Bal Vikas children of Trichur District. The play depicted how Devi saved her ardent devotees who prayed for her help. The story how Adi Sankara did penance to please the goddess and how Devi in the form of a Jyoti was brought to the present Sri Raja Rajeswari Temple at Chottanikkara was beautifully presented in this dance drama. Another episode of the drama showed how Devi Durga manifested and saved a Brahmin devotee when he called her with all his heart. The dance drama earned the appreciation of the audience and blessings of Bhagavan Baba, who blessed the children at the end of the drama and also materialised a gold chain for the child who played the role of Sankara. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 6.45 p.m.

On the morning of 21st August 2002, the Onam day, Sai Kulwant Hall was richly decorated in Kerala style to welcome Bhagavan Baba. A traditional welcome was offered to Bhagavan with Poornakumbham amidst Veda chanting as He entered the Hall to shower the bliss of His Divine Darshan to the eager devotees. Bhagavan was led to the dais in a grand procession with the accompaniment of Poornakumbham, Veda chanting and Nadaswaram. Bal Vikas children offered welcome to Bhagavan with the traditional Thalapoli, holding plates with flowers and lighted lamps. Bhagavan graciously inaugurated the function by lighting the sacred lamp.

The programme commenced with Veda chanting by Bal Vikas children. The devotees of Kerala offered a song of welcome, incorporating the traditional tunes and musical instruments of Kerala. It was followed by a dance in praise of Sai Ganesha by the Bal Vikas children of Kozhikode district. Dance by the Bal Vikas children of Palakkad followed, where they offered Pranams in the various cultural and traditional dance forms of the State. Then Master Akhil, a village Bal Vikas student, gave a short speech. Swami blessed him by materialising Vibhuti for him.

After this, Prof. E. Mukundan, State President, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Kerala, addressed the gathering. He called upon the devotees to transform Kerala into Sai Samrajya by seeing Swami in everyone and by working relentlessly with unity. He also narrated an incident where Swami gave Darshan to the chief priest of Guruvayur Temple as the deity of the temple. He also introduced the two speakers, Sri Sankaranarayanan, Minister for Finance and Sri Sankaran, Minister for Health, Government of Kerala. Both of them congratulated the devotees for being blessed with the opportunity of celebrating Onam with Swami and invited Swami to come to Kerala. Sri Sankaran added that the Government of Kerala had leased out 90 acres of land at Koyilandi to the Sathya Sai Trust and earnestly requested Swami to construct a super speciality hospital and a medical college there. After these speeches, Bhagavan blessed the gathering with His Divine Onam Sandesh (given separately). It was followed by Bhajans by the Kerala Bhajan Group. Prasadam was distributed to all, and the programme concluded at 9.15 a.m. with Mangalarati to Bhagavan.

On the evening of 21st August 2002, an excellent cultural programme was presented in Poornachandra Auditorium in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. The programme commenced at 5.30 p.m. with a Carnatic musical concert by Sri Kaithapram Damodaran Nambudiri, a music director. It was followed by a drama entitled “Path of Dharma” by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Vidyapeeth, Srisailam. They enacted the transformation that Lord Buddha brought about in Angulimala, a robber. The last item was an offering by the Sai youth of Kerala, a dance drama entitled “The Garland for Sai”. They offered the garland of love at

the Divine Lotus Feet and acknowledged that Swami is the unseen and unfathomable force binding them together and helping them overcome the external negative influences. Swami blessed the cast and graciously materialised two rings for the main actors of both these dramas. The programme came to a happy conclusion with Arati to Bhagavan at 7.25 p.m.

By all accounts, it was a memorable Onam at Prasanthi Nilayam. Those who had the good fortune to celebrate it at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan Baba would surely cherish its sweet memories for a lifetime.

## NEWS FROM INLAND SAI CENTRES

**Andhra Pradesh:** More than 7000 devotees from 18 Sai Samithis and 45 Bhajan Mandalis of Srikakulam district participated in the regular spiritual activities of the Sai Organisation in the month of July 2002. About 3000 devotees from Srikakulam visited Prasanthi Nilayam in July 2002, conducted Sri Sathya Sai Divya Vratam and received the blessings of Bhagavan.

**Rajasthan:** Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Rajasthan conducted a service camp to provide medical facilities and drinking water to pilgrims proceeding from villages of Rajasthan to Diggi Kalyanjee Temple on 14.8.2002. The camp, set up at Jaipur enroute to the temple, was served by 15 Seva Dal members, and benefited more than 5000 pilgrims.

Sri Sathya Sai Educare Training Camps for active workers were conducted at Jaipur and Jodhpur on 4.8.2002 and 18.8.2002 respectively, and were attended by about 50 workers in each camp.

## NEWS FROM OVERSEAS SAI CENTRES

**Medical Camp in Russia:** A Medical Camp was held from 2-9 June 2002 in a Regional Centre called BaBa-evo, Russia. From England came 14 doctors and nurses. As for Russians, there were about 150 devotees, also doctors, medical workers, builders, Sai cooks, etc.

The doctors served more than 3000 patients. Clothes and food were provided to those in need. Some Russian devotees repaired and painted the buildings in the kindergarten, in disabled people and veterans' homes. Doctors gave medicines and spectacles free. Some brigades went to villages up to 120 km. There Sai devotees helped patients and gave concerts. But most importantly, they gave love and selfless service. The work was done during one week. Sometimes, they worked from 8 in the morning till 2 at night although not all devotees from England and Russia and other countries were young. But everybody was happy. There were many miracles, and the atmosphere of unity. Bhagavan Baba's Presence was very much felt. He helped to solve many questions.

**Sai Seva in Lithuania:** After Sai Centres in Vilnius and Kaunas had been established in 1996, one of the most important activities (besides Bhajan singing and study circles) was search of new forms and possibilities of serving society and needy people.

At the beginning, Sai Centre in Vilnius distributed food and clothes to the poor, supported the families in need by collecting clothes for them and bringing food. In 1998, Berlin Sai Centre sent in a big charity package for a boarding school for children from socially backward families in Vilnius. Meanwhile, Kaunas Sai Centre supported a large family in helping to raise the adopted children.

Since September 1999, Vilnius Sai Centre has been doing Seva in Vilkipedes Hospital. The members of the Centre come to talk with the patients who are mostly of senior age, help them to take bath, assist them in recovering their walking habits after different injuries, listen to the complaints of lonely people, pray together and gladly perform other services. Their service has been noticed by the authorities of the hospital and the staff; they were several times mentioned in the press. Constant Seva is Swami's gift to his followers, an important practical school of mind and sense control, character development and love sharing.

In all these service activities, we feel Swami's constant care, love and guidance which gives profound meaning to being together with Him and in Him on the path of love to the Lord.

### **KRISHNA JANMASHTAMI AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM**

The sacred festival of Krishna Janmashtami was celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam with gaiety and piety on 31st August 2002 in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The venue of the celebrations was Sai Kulwant Hall which bore a festive look on this day with decorations of flowers, buntings and festoons. A beautiful idol of Krishna adorned the dais. Sweet notes of music welcomed Bhagavan Baba when He came to bless the devotees with His Divine Darshan on the morning of this auspicious day. As soon as Bhagavan came to the dais, the Institute students started reciting stotras and hymns which included Pandurangashtakam, Krishnashtakam and Madhurashtakam. After these chantings, they commenced Bhajan singing which the devotees joined in chorus with great devotional zeal, surcharging the entire milieu with spiritual vibrations. As the Bhajans progressed, richly caparisoned Sai Geeta (the dear elephant of Bhagavan Baba) entered the Hall, led by Nadaswaram players and followed by Veda chanting and Bhajan singing students. At the rear of this grand procession were cows from Gokulam, led by the students dressed as cowherds, and accompanied by two students dressed as Krishna and Balarama. Bhagavan Baba went near the gate and lovingly fed Sai Geeta and the cows with fruits. It was a unique sight to see how Sai Geeta reciprocated Bhagavan's love. After feeding the cows and Sai Geeta, Bhagavan returned to the dais and sat in His chair. He then gestured that Sai Geeta may be taken back. But the elephant did not budge and gestured with her trunk to Bhagavan for more love and caressing. After receiving Arati at 8.20 a.m. to mark the conclusion of the morning programme, Bhagavan again went to Sai Geeta and caressed her. All felt ecstatic to witness this unique bond of love between Bhagavan and Sai Geeta.

In the afternoon, Bhagavan came to Sai Kulwant Hall at 2.25 p.m. The programme commenced with chanting of Vedic hymns by school students. Before the Divine Discourse of Bhagavan Baba, Sri V. Srinivasan, All India President, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations, addressed the gathering. Sri Srinivasan observed that as Lord Krishna incarnated in Dwapar Yuga to establish Dharma, Bhagavan Baba had come to re-establish Sanathana Dharma on earth. The best way to celebrate this holy festival was to install Krishna in one's heart, said Sri Srinivasan. For this, he added, one had to fill one's heart with love. After this brief speech, Bhagavan gave His Divine Discourse and concluded it with three Bhajans in His golden voice sending the devotees into divine ecstasy. The programme came to a close at 4.15 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan. Before going to His abode, Bhagavan graciously showered profuse blessings on the assembled devotees by raising both His hands in blessing posture.





## **GANESH CHATURTHI DISCOURSE**

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF VINAYAKA WORSHIP**

*Theism is on the decline and atheism is on the rise. Righteousness, respect for elders and teachers are nowhere to be seen. Devotion and ancient wisdom have become extinct. This is the sorry state of affairs today.* (Telugu Poem)

today is the sacred festival of Ganapati Chaturthi. ‘Ga’ symbolises Buddhi (intellect), ‘Na’ stands for Vijnana (wisdom). So, Ganapati is the master of Buddhi and Vijnana. The universe is sustained by Ganas (celestial beings) and Ganapati is their master. In this world, everybody has a master but Ganapati has none. He is the master by himself. This is the birthday of the master of masters.

#### **Understand the True Meaning of Vyashti**

Ganapati is also called Mooshika Vahana (one who has a mouse as his vehicle). You may wonder how a small Mooshika can carry on its back a hefty personality like Vinayaka. Here Mooshika does not mean a mere mouse. It symbolises the darkness of ignorance because it is in darkness that the mouse moves about. Hence, Mooshika Vahana is one who subdues ignorance and dispels darkness. It is only when we understand the inner significance of the Vinayaka principle will we be able to celebrate Vinayaka Chaturthi properly.

One of the main principles propounded in the Bhagavadgita is given in the Sloka:

*“Sarvadharmāṇaṁ Parityajya Maamekam Saranam Vraja,  
Aham Twa Sarvapaṇebhyaḥ Mokṣaiṣhyami Ma Suchah.”*

(Surrender unto Me and perform all your actions as an offering to Me. I shall absolve you of all sins, worry not.)

So long as man is obsessed by body attachment, he will be tormented by all types of hardships, worries and troubles. All Sankalpas (thoughts) are caused by body attachment. Krishna therefore exhorted man to give up body attachment. The inner meaning of this is that man should experience unity in diversity. Without Vyashti (individual), there cannot be Samashti (society). Without Samashti, there cannot be Srishti (creation). So, first of all we have to recognise the role of Vyashti. Only then can we understand the principle of Samashti, which will in turn lead to the understanding of Srishti. One who understands Srishti becomes one with Parameshti (God). Today no one is making any attempt to know the principle of Parameshti, the fundamental force behind Vyashti, Samashti and Srishti. Parameshti is the master of all. In fact, the principles of Samashti, Srishti and Parameshti are very much present in Vyashti. Hence, one has to make efforts to understand Vyashti in the first instance. Vyashti symbolises Jeeva (individual) whereas Samashti is the embodiment of Deva (God). There is not much difference between the individual soul and the Cosmic Spirit. So long as Vyashti identifies himself with the body, he leads a very ordinary life. It is only when he identifies himself with Samashti can he understand the

principle of creation. So, firstly man should make efforts to understand the true meaning of Vyashti. This is the message of Vinayaka.

Today people perform Vinayaka worship without actually understanding its significance. Vinayaka symbolises the qualities of a true leader in all respects. He is regarded as the supreme master. In this world, Vinayaka is worshipped by many. However, Vinayaka does not worship anyone as he has no master above him. Even Easwara worships His son Vinayaka.

In this world, people perform good and bad actions. Their Sankalpa (thought) is the root cause of their actions. Good thoughts lead to good actions and bad thoughts are responsible for bad actions. Man is the embodiment of Sankalpas and Vikalpas (thoughts and aberrations). True spiritual practice lies in keeping them under control and maintaining a perfect balance. Every man faces bad situations at one time or the other. So, no one is free from worries.

*“To be born is a worry, to be on the earth is a worry; world is a cause of worry and death too; entire childhood is a worry and so is the old age; life is a worry, failure is a worry; all actions and difficulties cause worry; even happiness too is a mysterious worry.”* (Telugu Poem)

Happiness is born out of worries. Man cannot attain Santasa (happiness) without Chinta (worries). *Pleasure is an interval between two pains.* It is impossible to experience happiness without undergoing difficulties. There is divinity in every human being. The power latent in man is not present anywhere else. However, he is unable to make use of the divine power in him. The power of Buddhi is stupendous. Far greater than this is the power of Vijnana. In the first instance, man should properly understand the principles of Buddhi and Vijnana.

### **Follow Vinayaka for Healthy and Long Life**

On this day of Vinayaka Chaturthi, people make Kudumulu and Undrallu as special dishes and offer them to Vinayaka. They are special and unique in the sense that they are cooked in steam without any oil. Til (sesame) seeds, rice flour and jaggery are mixed, made into balls, cooked in steam and offered to Vinayaka. You should enquire into the purpose of making such an offering. Til seeds are good for the eyes. Steam-cooked preparations without any oil are good for your digestive system. One who partakes of such food will be free from blood pressure and blood sugar and will always enjoy sound health and happiness. Food items, which are cooked on fire with oil, are harmful for digestion. Such foods are the cause of various diseases. One can lead a long, happy and healthy life if one avoids oily and fried foods.

Vinayaka is also called Vighneswara (remover of obstacles). No obstacle can come in the way of one who prays to Vinayaka. Worship of Vinayaka confers success in spiritual as well as worldly endeavours. God confers His grace at two levels, Pravritti (outward) and Nivritti (inward). Pravritti relates to physical body whereas Nivritti, to intellect. The former undergoes changes with the passage of time, whereas the latter

remains unchanged. Hence, one should try to reduce body attachment with proper food and good habits.

Excessive intake of food results in obesity. Consequently, the heart will be subjected to greater strain to pump blood to all parts of the body. Blood travels a distance of 12,000 miles in the body with each heartbeat. Obesity causes problems for the circulation of blood, and pressure on the heart affects its functioning and makes it weak. We should see to it that the heart is not put to overwork. Our health is related to our food habits. Hence, one should exercise control over one's food habits.

People worship Vinayaka by offering Garika (a kind of white grass). What is the origin of this worship? Once Parvati and Parameswara were engaged in a game of dice. Nandi was asked to be the referee. Nandi declared Easwara the winner each time. Mother Parvati thought that Nandi was biased in Easwara's favour. She became furious and pronounced a curse on Nandi that he should suffer from indigestion. At once Nandi fell at her feet and prayed, "Mother, I have not cheated you, nor did I show any favouritism towards Easwara. I have been highly impartial in my judgement. It is because of the power of His Will that Easwara emerged victorious each time. Easwara's Sankalpa is Vajra Sankalpa (His Will is bound to succeed). Hence, I seek your pardon and pray that I may be freed from the curse." Parvati took pity on him and said, "Nandi! On the fourth day of the month of Bhadrapada, you worship Vinayaka with Garika. You will be freed from indigestion."

People who maintain pet dogs know this well. When they leave them in the lawns, the dogs search for white grass and eat it. What is the reason for this? The white grass is beneficial to their digestive system. Hence, we see that the offering made to Vinayaka ensures good health to one and all. Since times of yore, people have been having this belief that Vinayaka confers his grace on those who worship him on the fourth day of Bhadrapada month.

### **Eradicate Evil Qualities**

Today man is not making proper use of his Mathi (mind), Gathi (destination), Stithi (position) and Sampatthi (wealth). As a result, he is losing the sacred energy that God has given him. Not merely that. He is subjected to misery and grief because of his evil traits like Kama, Krodha and Lobha (desire, anger and greed). He has absolutely no control over his desires. When his one desire is fulfilled, he craves for another. Man's desires are endless. Anger is another evil trait which ruins man. In fact, anger will distance you from your relations and friends. *"One with anger will not be successful in any of his endeavours. He will commit sins and will be ridiculed by one and all."* (Telugu Poem) *"Anger is one's enemy, peace is the protective shield, compassion is the true relation, happiness is verily the heaven and misery is the hell."* (Telugu Poem) Hatred is more dangerous than anger. It gives rise to many evil qualities which come in the way of experiencing divinity. Man is supposed to live for a hundred years but his life-span is cut short by these evil qualities. When these evil traits are totally subdued, man can enjoy a long and happy life. He will not lose his life even if he were to meet with a serious accident. Man is put to suffering by the reflection,

reaction and resound of his own evil qualities. Desire, anger and hatred are not human qualities; they are bestial tendencies. Man becomes a beast if he allows these wicked qualities to overpower him. He should constantly remind himself that he is a human being and not a beast. In this manner, he can keep a check over his bestial tendencies. Unfortunately, the youth of today are developing excessive desires and are thereby ruining their future.

### **Brahmacharya is the Foundation of Human Life**

Human life can be compared to a four-storeyed mansion. Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha and Sannyasa (celibate, householder, recluse and renunciant) are the four stages into which human life has been divided. Brahma-charya is the foundation of life. If the foundation is strong, the mansion will be safe and sturdy. But modern youth do not have a strong foundation of Brahmacharya. Weak foundation cannot sustain the other three storeys of the mansion of life. When elders advise them to pray to God for at least five minutes, they say they have no time but they have all the time in the world to indulge in bad qualities and bad habits. Students, youth in particular, should make every effort to build a strong foundation of Brahmacharya. Merely remaining unmarried is not Brahmacharya; constant contemplation on Brahman is true Brahmacharya. Think of God and chant His Name under all circumstances. Lead a life of purity. Dedicate your life to the principle of love. This strengthens the foundation of the mansion of your life. You see the walls, you see the roof, you see the entire building but you do not see the foundation. It is hidden underneath. However, the safety of the mansion which is seen from outside, rests on the unseen foundation. When you build a house, you design the walls and roof in such a manner that it looks attractive. But the foundation which bears the entire building does not require any beautification. Yet, it is the most important part of the building. Today man is not bothered about the foundation of life. He is more concerned about the external appearance. In the word Brahmacharya, 'Charya' means to conduct oneself. So, you should conduct your life at this stage in constant contemplation of Brahman. In olden days, the preceptor was referred to as Acharya, meaning one who practises before preaching. One who merely preaches without practising is only a teacher. He may be able to teach a few lessons but he will not be able to render any help in controlling your mind and attaining spiritual progress. Only a true Acharya can help you to control your mind. When we talk of Acharyas, two names readily come to our mind. One is Bhishmacharya and the other is Dronacharya. Dronacharya was the Guru of the Kauravas and the Pandavas in the sense that he taught them the art of archery. Bhishmacharya was their spiritual teacher. He was a great Jnani (wise). Jnana does not mean acquisition of textual knowledge. *Advaita Darshanam Jnanam* (perception of non-duality is supreme wisdom). A true Jnani is one who dedicates his body, mind and intellect to God. He thinks only of God and nothing else. He performs his activities with the sole purpose of pleasing God. *Sarva Karma Bhagavad Preethyartham* (all your actions should be to please God).

### **Bhishma's Devotion to Krishna**

You should not crave for personal satisfaction. You should make every effort to please God. This was the only endeavour of Bhishmacharya. He was the son of

Mother Ganga. All his life he obeyed the command of his mother and ultimately when his end approached, he wanted to experience the love and grace of his mother. He was wounded by the arrows shot by Arjuna and was lying on the bed of arrows for 56 days. His entire body was pierced with arrows. Before leaving his body, he requested Arjuna to bring his mother Ganga and quench his thirst. Arjuna means one with a pure heart. He had earned many appellations like Phalguna, Partha, Kiriti, Svetavahana, Bibhatsu, Savyasachi, Dhanunjaya, etc. On hearing the request of Bhishma, Arjuna with all his might shot an arrow into the earth. Immediately, mother Ganga sprang forth like a fountain and quenched the thirst of her son, Bhishma. Thus, he breathed his last peacefully.

Among the Pandavas, Arjuna was considered to be great because of his pure-heartedness. He never harmed any innocent person. Never did he use his weapons against anyone without a valid reason. Before the commencement of the Mahabharata War, Arjuna requested Krishna to go to the Kauravas on a peace mission. Krishna asked him, "Whom should I approach?" Arjuna said, "Oh Krishna, You are all-knowing. I don't need to give You any instructions. Please make every effort to avert the war." Krishna said, "What is the use of talking to the blind king Dhritarashtra? His attachment to his sons has made him blind to the reality. He will listen to his sons but not to Me." However, Krishna went to the Kauravas as an emissary. But as He had predicted, His peace mission failed. War became imminent. He came back and told Arjuna, "All My efforts have proved futile. Be prepared for the war." Arjuna expressed his concern that many innocents would be killed in the war. Krishna said, "Arjuna, those who come to the battlefield will be totally prepared to face any eventuality. Nobody comes to the battlefield to merely watch the show. They are ready to give life or take life. So, there is no question of any innocents getting killed in the war. So, be prepared to fight."

Arjuna wanted to convey this news to brother Dharmaraja. Both of them went to him. Right from the beginning, Dharmaraja was against war. He had no choice but to accept. The same was conveyed to Nakula and Sahadeva. Though they were young, they were highly virtuous. They were endowed with greater virtues than even Arjuna and Dharmaraja. Their joy knew no bounds when they saw Krishna. Knowing fully well the wicked nature of the Kauravas, they were prepared for the war. They were not bothered about the outcome of Krishna's peace mission. They were all the time praying for His safe return. Such was their love for Krishna. Ultimately, Arjuna said, *"Krishna, is it possible to get nectar out of poison? What is the use of giving good counsel to the wicked Kauravas? It is like throwing Jasmine flowers into fire. Oh Gopala! Let us now put an end to this talk of peace and get prepared for the war."*  
(Telugu Poem)

When they actually reached the battlefield, Arjuna became despondent after looking at those with whom he was going to fight. He was concerned that so many people would get killed in the war. He was afraid that he would be the cause of grief to many families. He said, "Krishna, I cannot bear the sight of my own kith and kin getting killed in the battlefield. My head is reeling at the thought of killing my near and dear

ones. Let's go back at once without wasting any time." Krishna pretended to be angry. He said, "Arjuna, it was you who brought Me to the battlefield. How can you behave in such a cowardly manner now? Shame on you!" At this juncture, He imparted the teaching of Bhagavadgita to Arjuna. It gave Arjuna the necessary strength to fight the battle. However, when he confronted Bhishma, he could not withstand his might. In order to instill courage in Arjuna, Krishna at once jumped from the chariot and said, "Arjuna, I will kill this Bhishma and protect you." Arjuna said, "Krishna, You have taken a vow that You will not fight the war. I don't want You to go back on Your word for my sake." As Krishna was approaching him, Bhishma folded his hands and prayed, "The One who is coming to kill me is the only One to rescue me." Such was the devotion of Bhishma.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Our history is replete with such sacred examples. But modern youth do not pay any attention to our history. They waste their time in reading novels and meaningless stories. These Kathas (stories) will give them only Vyathas (sorrow). Divine story alone teaches you the ideal path. His story is history. You should read such a sacred history, understand it and put it into practice. Sacred epics like the Ramayana, the Bhagavata and the Mahabharata are the repositories of great teachings. Likewise, the story of Vinayaka also has a great message for mankind. Vinayaka is the embodiment of wisdom. That is why all gods worship him. On this day of Vinayaka Chaturthi, students place their textbooks in front of the Vinayaka idol and offer their prayers. The inner meaning of this is that they should pray for the divine wisdom to be bestowed on them. It is most essential for the students to worship Vinayaka on this auspicious day. He fulfils the desires of his devotees. He confers only Anugraha (grace). He has no Agraaha (anger). Hence, not only the Bharatiyas but the people of other countries also worship Vinayaka.

#### **A Unique Presentation**

At 2 o'clock in the afternoon, a programme is being presented by our former students who are working for Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust. They are doing a lot of good work. There are a few elders who have been looking after the Trust affairs for the last 30 years. All these years, I have been personally supervising the day-to-day affairs of the Central Trust. Ever since My students have joined the Trust, they have taken up the responsibility and are doing a good job. Be it Central Trust, Book Trust, Accommodation Office or any other department of the Ashram, our students are rendering ideal service. They speak gently and sweetly. They do not use harsh words. They follow the dictum: *Help ever, Hurt never*. These Sathya Sai Central Trust boys will present a programme in the afternoon in which they will talk about various activities of the Trust. Each one of you must necessarily listen to what they have got to say. Whatever they are going to say is purely based on their own experience. My boys always speak the truth. They will not utter a lie even for fun. They will be conveying the message of truth in the afternoon programme.

They are young in age but they are very efficient in their work. They are taking keen interest in the activities undertaken by the Trust. They are propagating Swami's

message all over the world. I am extremely happy that these boys have come up well in life. (*loud applause*) They are highly intelligent. If they are asked a question, they give a suitable and a prompt reply. Five boys are looking after our Central Trust accounts. Likewise, some boys are working for our Books and Publications Trust. You do not find mismanagement of even a naya paisa. They are very honest. Every paisa is accounted for. They are endowed with noble qualities, good habits and ideal character. See it for yourself in the afternoon. They are actively involved in broadcasting all the programmes that are conducted at Prasanthi Nilayam over Radio Sai Global Harmony Channel 24 hours a day. Though they are young, they speak in a highly polished language. You are going to listen to them in the afternoon. It is essential that you learn their language. After all, they are your brothers. All are brothers and sisters. I want every one of you to get such an opportunity and come up well in life.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, “*Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin...*”

- **From Bhagavan’s Ganesh Chaturthi Sandesh in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 10th September 2002.**



## KRISHNA JANMASHTAMI DISCOURSE

### **MYSTERIOUS MANIFESTATIONS OF THE GLORY OF AVATARS**

*Sweeter than sugar, tastier than curd, sweeter indeed than honey is the Name of Krishna. Constant repetition of this sweet Name gives one the taste of divine nectar itself. Therefore, one should contemplate on the Name of Krishna incessantly.*  
(Telugu Poem)

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Since ancient times, the sweet Name of Krishna has been fascinating young and old alike. Right from His advent, Krishna made people forget themselves in ecstasy and bliss by His divine pranks.

#### **A Glimpse of Krishna's Divinity**

Krishna and Balarama, along with other cowherds, used to take the cows to the bank of the river Yamuna for grazing. One day, the cowherds were lost in bliss, watching the divine pranks of Krishna. Consequently, they became oblivious of their surroundings and even lost track of their cows. All of a sudden, they felt hot winds blowing from all directions. They realised that they were being surrounded by a wild fire. They were even unable to open their eyes and see due to the raging conflagration. The cows started running helter-skelter, unable to bear the severe heat. Nobody was able to control them. The intensity of heat became more and more every moment. The cowherds could not think of any way to rescue themselves. They came running to Krishna and prayed to Him, "Oh Krishna! You alone can extinguish this fire and save us." Seeing them terrified, Krishna laughed and said, "Oh cowherds! You have been moving with Me, playing with Me and enjoying the bliss. It is rather strange that you are fear-stricken even after experiencing My Divinity. Many times in the past, you were a witness to My slaying the demons sent by Kamsa. Then, why are you afraid when I am with you?"

*"When you have the Kalpavriksha (wish-fulfilling tree) right in front of you, why do you desire for trivial things?*

*When you have the Kamadhenu (wish-fulfilling cow) with you, where is the need to buy a cow?*

*When you have the glittering Meru mountain with you, why do you crave for paltry silver and gold?*

*Likewise, when you have the omnipotent Lord Krishna in you, with you and around you, why do you get panicky over such a trivial matter?"*

(Telugu Poem)

Krishna told them to close their eyes and contemplate on Him for a while. The cowherds implicitly obeyed His command. The next moment, Krishna commanded them to open their eyes. Lo and behold! The wild fire had totally disappeared and all their cows were grazing as if nothing had happened. Overjoyed to see their cows safe and sound by the grace of Krishna, they ran to their homes and narrated to their

parents the wonderful miracle that Krishna had performed. The cowherds experienced many such miracles which proved the Divinity of Krishna.

### **Wolf Messing Recognises Swami's Divinity**

Such mysterious manifestations of Divinity occur everywhere. These are not confined only to India. Even in a communist country like Russia, many mysterious happenings were noticed. A person by name Wolf Messing was born on September 10, 1899 in Poland. Right from his birth, he radiated resplendent effulgence. He started behaving in a mysterious manner when he was still a child. He made certain movements with his hands and smiled to himself. His parents were bewildered as they could not understand his strange behaviour. One year passed in this manner. Next year, his behaviour became all the more strange. He started talking to himself. He would scratch his head as if he was engrossed in deep thought. He would run here and there, laugh to himself and converse with some unseen beings. All this baffled his parents.

One day, a gigantic personage wearing a white robe came to their house and said, "Messing, come here." He called Messing near him and told him, "Your parents are thinking that you have become mad. So, they are planning to put you in a mental hospital or a school for the mentally deranged. You do not need to go anywhere. How can those who are afflicted with worldly madness understand your spiritual madness? If only everyone got this spiritual madness, the whole country would prosper. Do not seek admission in ordinary schools where only worldly education is given. Secular and worldly knowledge will not interest you. Acquire spiritual knowledge. I have come here only to tell you this." Messing asked him, "Grandfather, where do you come from?" He replied, "I will tell you later. I am going back to where I came from. Never forget my words. Do not have anything to do with worldly knowledge. Acquire only spiritual knowledge. At present you are very young. Till you attain a certain level of maturity, do not have any association with anybody. Now I am going back." Saying this, he vanished right in front of Messing's eyes. Messing wondered, "Where did he come from? Where has he gone? Will I also go back to the place from where I came?" Thinking thus, he ran in different directions to find the whereabouts of that noble soul but could not find him. As he grew up, his parents took care not to send him out anywhere and mostly kept him at home.

It was 9th February 1909. On that day, his desire to go in search of spiritual knowledge arose forcefully. He remembered the words of the noble soul who had instructed him to acquire only spiritual knowledge. He went inside the house and found some coins in an almirah. Keeping them in his pocket, he embarked on a spiritual journey in the wide world. He wandered and wandered not knowing where he was going. He toured many countries. None questioned him about tickets or the money required to buy them. In this way, he roamed about for many years. Then he entered India. He boarded a train that was going from Cuddapah to Anantapur. In between, the train stopped for a while at Kamalapuram where I was studying at that time. In the classroom, Ramesh and Suresh were the two boys who sat on My either side on a desk. Ramesh's father was a Sirasthadar (Revenue Official) and their family was very rich. Everyday in the evening, we used to go towards the railway station for

a walk discussing some spiritual matters. In those days, not many trains went to Kamalapuram; only one or two trains passed through it. As we were happily talking to each other, Wolf Messing saw us through the window of the train. As soon as he saw Me, he at once opened the door and jumped out. In the process, he lost his balance and fell flat on the platform. Ramesh and Suresh became worried that he might have fractured his leg. I told them not to worry saying, "He is coming only to see Me. So, nothing will happen to him." He took Me in his arms and kissed Me, while shedding tears of joy. He was dancing in ecstasy, saying, "I am so happy, I am so happy, I love You, I love You." Ramesh and Suresh watched this scene. In those days, boys were afraid of white people as they thought they might take them away and put them in the military service. Ramesh and Suresh therefore wanted to take Me away from that place. Ramesh ran to his house and requested his father to bring a jeep immediately and take Me away from the sight of the white person. Ramesh's father at once brought a jeep, lifted Me up and put Me in. When he took Me to his house, Messing also followed and waited in front of Ramesh's house for a long time. In the meanwhile, whenever he would spot Me through the window, he would smile at Me, call Me and try to convey something to Me. But nobody was willing to permit him to meet Me. At that time, Seshama Raju (Swami's elder brother) was working as a teacher. A message was sent to him through a peon informing him that a white man wanted to take away Raju whom they had kept safe in their house. Afterwards, Messing left the place and went somewhere by train. Before leaving Kamalapuram, he wrote on the door of the house with a pencil thus: "The people who live in this house are very fortunate. They are keeping the Divine child in their house and are serving Him. I am not that fortunate. Anyway, thanks."

He finally went to Russia. After a long gap of many years, he again visited India. He came straight to Kamalapuram and started enquiring about Me. But, by that time, I was no longer a high school student, Raju. By then I had become Sathya Sai Baba. (loud applause) People told him that Sathya Sai Baba would be residing either in Puttaparthi or in Bangalore. Therefore, he left Kamalapuram for Bangalore.

When he arrived at Bangalore, he found a huge crowd. On enquiry, he came to know that they were waiting for Sathya Sai Baba's Darshan. He too waited for My Darshan. When I was moving amidst the congregation, he saw Me and thought to himself, "Yes, this is the same person whom I saw as a boy many years ago. He has the same white divine effulgence surrounding Him." He approached the Principal of the College. At that time, Narender was the Principal. He was a great scholar in Sanskrit and a very good teacher. His father Damodara Row was a judge and his father-in-law Sunder Rao was a reputed doctor. Both of them were present there. He requested them to take him for Swami's Darshan. He told them, "You are not able to see His reality. He is God Himself. You are seeing only His physical form and getting deluded. You will know the truth when you observe His aura."

In those days, I used to give Darshan to the devotees at the end of Nagar Sankirtan. As I stood in the balcony giving Darshan, he could see that the entire place was permeated with light. He could see great effulgence around My face. My entire body

was engulfed in white light which symbolises purity. There was nothing else except light. He expressed his desire to have an audience with Me. In the evening, a meeting was arranged. When he met Me, he kept saying, “My dear, my dear. You are my everything. I am Your instrument.” So far I have not revealed this to anyone. I taught him all that had to be taught. I told him that when God descends on earth, He acts like a human being. *Daivam Manusha Rupena* (God takes the form of man). God comes only in human form and not in His Divine form. He said that the same had been said even in their scriptures.

After a few days, Messing left without informing anybody. Nobody knew where Messing had gone. One day, Narender received a letter from Russia. Messing wrote in the letter, “You are a teacher working for God. How fortunate you are!” He requested Narender to keep him informed about the happenings related to Swami. One day, Narender was expressing some doubts and I was clarifying them. Only two of us were in the room. All of a sudden, Messing appeared there. How he came there was a mystery to Narender. He came, had My Darshan and disappeared. It was not possible for all to see this. It was not easy to understand either. Divinity is highly mysterious. Divinity of Lord Krishna was also witnessed in many mysterious ways.

### **Deep Mysteries of Divinity**

One day, Krishna and Balarama were playing on the bank of the river Yamuna along with other cowherds. They were jumping from one branch to another on trees. Some of them were tired. At that time, Sage Bharadwaja came there along with another sage. They asked the cowherds to show them a suitable and safe location where the water was shallow so that they could have a bath. Krishna and Balarama jumped down from the branches of the trees. Bharadwaja at once recognised that Krishna was Paramatma. He folded his hands in reverence and requested Krishna to show them a suitable location for having a bath. Krishna jumped into the water and showed them a safe place for bathing. He told them to have their bath there. In the meantime, He said, He would keep food ready for them. The cowherds were wondering as to how Krishna would provide food for the sages as He had not brought any food with Him. After the sages had finished their bath, Krishna opened a bag which appeared from nowhere. As He opened the bag, the entire place was filled with sweet aroma of rice boiled in milk. He served the food and requested the sages to eat. The cowherds were as mischievous as monkeys. They would not keep quiet. They repeatedly asked Krishna, “Where did You get the food from?” Krishna silenced them saying, it was not proper to indulge in excessive talk in the presence of sages. After saying their prayer, the sages started partaking of food. They asked, “Krishna, who prepared this food?” Krishna replied, “My mother Yashoda.” They said, they had not eaten anything more delicious before and expressed their gratitude to Him. After eating their food, the sages drank water from the Yamuna and started moving away from there.

Brahma, who was observing these mysterious happenings, was wonderstruck at Krishna’s mighty powers. He wanted to play a trick on Krishna. One day as the cowherds were blissfully playing with Krishna and Balarama, Brahma made the cows

and calves disappear from the scene. He even made the cowherds disappear. Krishna knew that it was Brahma's trick. He at once created all the cowherds, cows and calves by His Will. These cowherds returned to their respective homes with their cows and calves. They were identical in all respects to the cowherds whom Brahma had hidden somewhere. Even their parents could not find any difference. Life went on as usual, with the cowherds taking their cows and calves for grazing everyday in the company of Balarama and Krishna. This continued for one full year. Brahma felt ashamed and accepted defeat. He sought Krishna's pardon and returned all the cowherds, cows and calves. As he returned them, the existing ones which Krishna had created earlier disappeared at once. In this manner, Krishna performed many stupendous feats right from His childhood. On this basis, the Bhagavata says: *"The stories of the Lord are most wonderful and sacred in all the three worlds. They are like sickles that cut the creepers of worldly bondage."* (Telugu Poem)

### **Early Leelas of Swami**

At this juncture, I would like to narrate an incident which happened with this Avatar. After this Prasanthi Mandir was constructed, I used to have My food in the room upstairs. Whenever I took food, Griham Ammayi (mother of this physical body) would be by My side coaxing Me to eat more. She would often express her concern that I was losing weight. I would tell her, "Why should I eat more? Do I need to wrestle with somebody? I don't like to become fat."

One day, I was invited to a house in the village for food. Actually, their intention was to poison Me. They were feeling jealous of My growing popularity and prosperity. In those days, I used to relish Vadas made of Alasanda grains. Hence, they mixed poison in Vadas and offered them to Me. Before going there, I had told Easwamma and Subbamma not to be afraid if anything untoward happened. When I returned from there, My entire body turned blue and My mouth started frothing. I told Subbamma to bring a tumbler of water. As I held the tumbler in My hand, the water turned blue. Then I asked Easwamma to wave her hand in a circle. She did accordingly, and to her utter amazement, there appeared Vibhuti in her hand. She mixed it in water and gave it to Me. Instantly, I became normal. She wondered, "Swami can create Vibhuti with the wave of His hand. But how is it that Vibhuti appeared in my hand?" In fact, I had given her that power for that moment.

When I was staying in the Old Mandir, I used to take children to the river Chitravathi everyday. In those days, there were no students; only the boys of the village would gather around Me. I would tell them to make a small mound of sand, out of which they could get whatever they wanted, such as pencil, pen, laddu, etc. Since they were small children, they asked for trivial things.

After one such evening session in Chitravathi, we were returning to the Old Mandir. Kuppam Vijayamma, the author of the book "Anyatha Saranam Nasthi" and her sister, who were young at that time, started running towards the Old Mandir to offer Arati to Swami when He reached there. Then I signalled to Subbamma to stop them and herself go there to make arrangements for the Arati. Subbamma implicitly obeyed

My command. The two sisters had a feeling that Subbamma being a widow was not eligible to offer Arati to Swami. When Subbamma went to the Old Mandir, she found a big snake there. It was for this reason that I had sent her. She was always careful. When she saw the snake, she called out, “Sai Nageswara, Sai Nageswara, Sai Nageswara”. In the meanwhile, all of us reached there. She did not want to kill it as she remembered the words of Swami that there was God in all beings. She wanted to catch it and leave it somewhere. As she caught the snake, it coiled around her hand. I had a little fun and said jokingly, “Subbamma, are you playing with snakes?” She said, “Swami, I know that You sent me earlier in order to save the lives of those two sisters.” In this manner, Subbamma witnessed many Leelas of Swami. She was very fortunate and highly virtuous. She served Me right from the beginning. Not only Me, she served the devotees also who came for My Darshan by offering them food. All her relatives turned against her but she did not care. She wanted only Swami and none else. She always obeyed Swami’s command implicitly. She had unwavering faith.

One day, I asked her whether she would like to see her deceased husband. I used to crack jokes with her now and then. She replied that she had no such desire and that she had nothing to do with her deceased husband. She further said that her husband passed away because he was not fortunate enough to serve Swami. She felt that it was her good fortune that she was able to serve Me. But I insisted that if she had any desire to see him, I would fulfil her desire. I told her to go out and see. There was a drumstick tree. When she went there, she found her husband Narayana Rao sitting under the tree smoking a cigarette. She saw the scene very clearly. She was happy to see her dead husband again, but she also scolded him saying, “Even after death, you have not given up your bad habits. You are still smoking!” She came back at once as she did not want to see him any longer. Narayana Rao had two wives, Subbamma and Kamalamma. Kamalamma is living in the Ashram at present. I told Kamalamma to go and see her deceased husband. She said, she did not want to see him and had no such desire after coming to the Lotus Feet of Swami. However, on My insistence, she went and saw. She found her late husband sipping hot coffee at that time. Both Subbamma and Kamalamma saw their deceased husband exhibiting the same habits he had when he was alive. Even during the Krishna Avatar, Krishna showed to His devotees incidents that had happened long ago.

### **Bhakti Tattwa and the Gopikas**

When Krishna lifted the Govardhan mountain, there was a great celebration. At that time, the Gopikas performed Varalakshmi Vrata and did Puja near the Govardhan mountain. Even now ladies perform Varalakshmi Vrata. Radha was a great devotee. But those who did not believe in the Divinity of Krishna subjected her to a lot of hardship. Even in those days, there were atheists. Atheists, theists, theistic-atheists and atheistic-theists are present in every age. The atheists put Radha in a house and locked it from outside. (Taking this theme, I wrote a drama and got it enacted by children.) They felt Radha’s family reputation was being tarnished because she was following Krishna. They wanted to stop her from doing so. Hence, she was locked up in the room. She started crying and praying. Krishna heard her prayers, opened the door and released her. He chided those people saying, “Is this the way you treat a

devotee? It is all right if you have no devotion towards Me. But it is a great sin to harass a devotee.” Krishna took Radha with Him. Gopikas also followed Krishna. Radha then prayed to Krishna to play a song on His divine flute.

*“Oh Krishna! Sing a sweet song, and fill our hearts with nectarine words and bliss. Distil the essence of the Vedas, transform it into divine music of Nada Brahma, play it on Your enchanting flute, and captivate us with Your melody. Sing, Oh Krishna! Sing for us!!”*

(Telugu Song)

Listening to the divine melody, Radha breathed her last. From that day, Krishna never touched His flute again. Krishna performed several Leelas. He was God in human form. None can comprehend or describe His Divine nature. It is infinite and unfathomable. Krishna was the embodiment of Divine Love which He manifested through His Leelas.

In Dwapar Yuga, women experienced Krishna’s Divinity more. In fact, they were the ones who revealed the Divinity of Krishna through their devotion. Once some Brahmins were performing Gayatri Yajna in a forest. Krishna told the cowherds to go to the priests and request them for some food from the Yajnasala as He and His brother Balarama were very hungry. When the cowherds requested the priests for food, they turned them away saying, “Do you think it is a choultry to feed you as and when you ask? No. Wait till the Yajna is over. After offering the food to God, we will eat. If there is anything left after that, then we will give you.” When this was conveyed to Krishna, he advised them to approach the women who were preparing the food at the back side of Yajnasala. As per His advice, the cowherds went and saw the women preparing Bobbatlu (a delicious sweet item). They asked those women, “Mothers, our Krishna and Balarama are hungry. Can you give them some food?” The women were extremely happy for having got an opportunity to serve Krishna. Immediately, they packed whatever food items they had prepared and took them to Krishna. Some women raised an objection as to how they could serve food to Krishna (who belonged to the cowherd clan) before it was offered to God and the Brahmins. But their objection was brushed aside and Krishna and Balarama were fed the items that were prepared. They considered Krishna as God. On coming to know of this, their husbands chided them, saying that it was a sacrilegious act. Later on, when they sat in meditation, realisation dawned on them. They recognised their mistake and told their wives that what they had done was correct. They took a bath again and requested their wives to serve the food blessed by Krishna as Prasadam.

I wish to emphasise in this context that during the lifetime of any Avatar, it is only the women who recognise His divinity first. They are the ones who lead their husbands to the path of divinity. It is only because of the devotion of women that men cultivate devotion to some extent at least. But for women, few men would have had devotion. Since time immemorial, women have been identified with Bhakti (devotion) and men with Jnana (wisdom). Women can enter even the Antahpur (inner chambers), whereas men can go only up to the durbar hall of God. It means that Jnana can lead you near

God while Bhakti will take you to the heart of God. That is why such a great value has been attached to Bhakti. In fact, it was the devotion of the Gopikas which prompted the spread of Bhakti Tatthwa (principle of devotion) in the world.

*Harer Nama Harer Nama*

*Harer Namaiva Kevalam,*

*Kalau Nastyeva Nastyeva*

*Nastyeva Gathiranyatha.*

(Chanting of the Divine Name is the only path to liberation in this Age of Kali).

Chanting of the Divine Name with devotion is the ideal set by the Gopikas.

### **Mother Easwaramma's Intense Love for Swami**

In early days, nobody thought of God except Karanam Subbamma in this village of Puttaparthi. Griham Ammayi (Mother Easwaramma) used to observe big officers coming for My Darshan. She was scared to see anyone in police uniform. She would request Subbamma to keep police away from Swami. Subbamma would alleviate her fears saying, "Why should they not come? They too are devotees of Swami.

Everybody has to come to Swami. Do not have any such differences. Nobody can harm Swami. You don't worry about it." But Subbamma's assuring words did not satisfy Easwaramma. She pleaded with Subbamma thus, "Since Swami is residing in your house, you are allowing all types of people to come. Please do not allow police to come there."

Once IGP Ranganayakulu came from Chennai. He wanted to take Me with him to Chennai. Griham Ammayi was in a sorrowful state and was crying. It was My first visit to Chennai. She considered Chennai to be a far-off place like a foreign country. Therefore, she did not want Me to go there. She kept saying, "Swami, don't go, don't go." Her intense love for Swami was the cause for this. She was concerned that Swami might be taken away from Puttaparthi. In fact, she was mainly responsible for the construction of this Mandir here.

Once Sakamma came to Puttaparthi and said, "Swami, due to the lack of proper roads and transport, we are finding it difficult to come to this remote village. Cars cannot reach this interior village. Even it is difficult for bullock carts to reach here. Every time we have to leave our car at a distance to come here. Hence, please come to Bangalore and settle there. We will get a big palatial building built for You." I told her that I did not need huge mansions. All that I needed was only a small room. But she would not listen to Me. Easwaramma said, "If a sapling has to grow into a gigantic tree, it has to be manured and watered well without disturbing it. If it is shifted from place to place, it cannot grow. Hence, please remain in Your birthplace, Puttaparthi. It will certainly progress." Then I made a promise to her that I would settle in Puttaparthi.

When it comes to devotion and surrender, women are superior to men. They are the repositories of all forms of Vijnana, Sujnana and Prajnana. Sometimes, they too have some weaknesses. But never consider them inferior to men and never look down upon them. Do not talk derisively about others. Pray for the well-being of all. *Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu* (May all the people of the world be happy!). The main



teaching of the Bhagavadgita is that one should work for the welfare of all. *Ekoham Bahusyam* (the One willed to become many). The same divinity is present in all. All forms are His. This has been the teaching of Lord Krishna.

Before I conclude, I would like to narrate a small Leela performed by Krishna in Dwapar Yuga. So long as Kamsa was alive, he kept sending fierce demons to kill Krishna. Kamsa had two wives whose father was a mighty king. When Kamsa was killed, his father-in-law attacked Krishna several times. The Gopikas and the people of Repalle were worried. "How long are we to suffer these ordeals?", they asked Krishna. He told them not to be panicky and pacified them saying, "Try to understand My powers and potentialities. Tonight, you sleep in Repalle and tomorrow morning, see for yourself where you will be." When they woke up the next morning, they found themselves in Dwaraka. Where was Repalle and where was Dwaraka? A distance of 1000 miles separated them. In this manner, Krishna could transport people from one village to another. God can do anything. He can go anywhere. He can change anything. Do not give room for doubts. One who doubts Divinity will certainly be doomed. Develop unwavering faith and follow the Divine command. True Dharma lies in following the Divine command. When you follow God, you will be blessed with all goodness and auspiciousness.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajans, *Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin ...*, "*Govinda Krishna Jai Gopala Krishna Jai ...*" and "*Subramanyam, Subramanyam...*"

- **From Bhagavan's Krishna Janmashtami Sandesh in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 31st August 2002.**

## **Ganesh Chaturthi Celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam**

The holy festival of Ganesh Chaturthi was celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam on 10th September 2002 in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Bhagavan graciously inaugurated the function by lighting the sacred lamp at 6.55 a.m. in the beautifully decorated Sai Kulwant Hall, the venue of the celebrations. Thereafter, Dr. G. Venkataraman, former Vice Chancellor of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, addressed the gathering. “The mind of man has two complementary powers – Medha Shakti (intelligence) and Buddhi (wisdom)”, observed Dr. Venkataraman and cautioned that development of Medha Shakti without acquiring wisdom could lead man to disaster. The significance of this festival was that man should pray to Vinayaka for Buddhi which could lead to peace and prosperity in the world, said Dr. Venkataraman. After this, Bhagavan Baba gave His Divine Message on this auspicious occasion. Full text of Bhagavan’s Discourse has been given in this issue separately. The morning programme came to a close at 8.25 a.m. with Aratito Bhagavan. Prasadam was distributed to all on this occasion.

Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam came to a happy conclusion with Nimajjan ceremony of the consecrated idols of Vinayaka on 12th September 2002. Beautiful idols of Lord Ganesh enclosed in aesthetically designed models on decorated carriages were brought to Sai Kulwant Hall by groups of students and staff amidst chanting of Vedic hymns and singing of Bhajans on the afternoon of 12th September 2002. It was a grand spectacle to witness when the idols were lined up in front of the semi-circular portico of Sai Kulwant Hall. Some of the most attractive designs were those of a conch, a butterfly and a chariot. Bhagavan’s Divine Presence enlivened the entire milieu and surcharged it with devotional fervour. While the groups of students and staff chanted the Vedic hymns and sang Bhajans, Bhagavan went to each group, posed for photographs and broke coconuts as a mark of auspiciousness. The festivities came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 4.10 p.m. With Bhagavan’s permission, the idols were then taken out of the Hall and led in procession for immersion.

## **A Unique Presentation by Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust**

It was a proud moment for all those who worked in Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust and other offices of the Prasanthi Nilayam Ashram when Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the founder Trustee of Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, blessed them to hold a function to celebrate 30 years of the foundation of Central Trust in Sai Kulwant Hall on the afternoon of 10th September 2002, the auspicious day of Ganesh Chaturthi. Bhagavan came to Sai Kulwant Hall at 1.50 p.m., ceremoniously cut the cake and lighted the sacred lamp to mark the commencement of the function. The programme began with an introductory speech by Sri K. Ramakrishna of the Central Trust after the chanting of Vedic Mantras. In his speech, Sri Ramakrishna welcomed all to this programme entitled “A Journey of Love” and stated that Sri Sathya Sai Organisation had performed glorious service to mankind during the last five decades though the Central Trust was formed

30 years ago. The service projects undertaken during these years by the Central Trust had received worldwide recognition solely due to the fact that the entire planning and execution was inspired by the Avatar, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba Himself, said Sri Ramakrishna. He then introduced the speakers of the programme.

The first speaker was Sri P. Ramamohana Rao who has been serving Bhagavan for the last 40 years and who has worked in the Central Trust since its formation in 1972. In his emotion-filled speech, Sri Ramamohana Rao described how Bhagavan Baba saved him and his family from many crises in his life. Referring to Bhagavan as Paripoornavata, Sri Rao narrated his experiences of Bhagavan's Divinity and His love for mankind, which concretised in the form of free hospitals, free schools and colleges and drinking water for the drought-hit villages, and many other schemes.

The second speaker was the Secretary of Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, Sri K. Chakravarthi, who came to serve Bhagavan Baba in 1981 and worked as the first Registrar of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning for 13 years and was later associated with Sri Sathya Sai Drinking Water Project. Sri Chakravarthi narrated how Bhagavan Baba's guiding spirit and Divine touch had made Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning a beacon of light in the field of education for the whole world. He also stated how Bhagavan performed the nearly impossible task of providing drinking water to lakhs of villagers in the shortest possible time. This work of the Trust, he said, was not only extraordinary in magnitude but also unique in the spirit of selfless service with which it was done due to the inspiration and guidance of Bhagavan Baba.

The third speaker was Sri Chiranjeeva Rao, who has been serving Bhagavan in the administration of the Ashram and construction projects for over 30 years. Referring to the worldwide recognition received by the service projects undertaken by the Central Trust, Sri Chiranjeeva Rao observed that it was, in fact, the recognition of the Divinity of Bhagavan who had been the guiding spirit behind all these projects for the service of mankind. Giving the essence of his long experience of working with Bhagavan Baba for the benefit of his younger colleagues, Sri Chiranjeeva Rao said, "I have always taken Baba as God incarnate. Whenever I stand before Him, whenever I talk with Him, whatever He may talk to me, I always feel I am with God, I am in the Presence of God. This has always been helping me to do whatever Baba orders me to do. I realise that I am with God and God is with me in all activities. That is the main secret of my service here." Emphasising the value of selfless service, the octogenarian elder advised his younger colleagues that selfless service to mankind under the Divine guidance of Bhagavan could lead them to success in whatever endeavour they might undertake. But service, he said, should be done with love. Only by selfless service could we be one with God, he concluded.

After these enlightening talks by three elders, Bhagavan's former students now working in Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust and other departments of the Ashram made a scintillating presentation vividly depicting how the Divine Mission of Bhagavan Baba

had unfolded during the last 50 years and formed into a steady and perennial stream of love to enrich and enlighten the lives of mankind in every corner of the world. The Central Trust and other offices at Prasanthi Nilayam played the role of effective instruments in Divine Hands to bring this Divine Mission to fruition.

The presentation consisting of short speeches, dialogues and beautiful songs brought out clearly how the Central Trust and other departments at Prasanthi Nilayam had become unique instruments in Divine Hands to bring about a transformation in the lives of the millions of people through social service activities like provision of drinking water to thirsty throats, free educational institutions and hospitals and how Bhagavan's Divine love had permeated the whole world to help, elevate and transform the people all over the globe. Those who took part in this unique presentation were: Sri K. Arun, Sri C.G.Sathish, Sri R. Srinivasan, Sri Neeraj Acharya, Sri Ravi Mariwalla, Dr. M. Sainath, Sri S.Prashanth and Sri V. Srinivasulu. In conclusion, Sri Nitin Acharya gave a summary of the presentation and offered gratitude to Bhagavan on behalf of all the participants for His guidance and inspiration. The programme came to a conclusion with a group song by all the 94 boys in praise of Bhagavan, who had descended on earth to transform and elevate man. The beautiful songs in the presentation were sung by Sri Prashanth and Sri Srinivasulu. At the end of the programme, Bhagavan graciously blessed all the participants and distributed mementoes to them. He also materialised a gold chain with pendant for Sri Prashanth and a gold ring for Sri Srinivasulu. The programme came to a happy conclusion with Arati to Bhagavan at 5.25 p.m.

#### **News from**

##### **Inland Sai Centres**

**Andhra Pradesh:** Grama Seva (rural service) is of prime importance in the programme of activities of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Andhra Pradesh. Grama Seva includes a number of activities like Bhajans, Sankirtans, cleaning / renovation of places of worship, tree plantation, sanitation, laying approach roads, providing drinking water, medical and veterinary camps, door-to-door health education, Sathsang, exhibitions, Pallaki processions, cultural programmes, etc. Grama Seva was taken up in the following villages: Vilasavalli (East Godavari district), Alluru (Karimnagar district), Kondakal (Ranga Reddi district), Rojola (Medak district), Sikandrapuram and Brahmanapalli (Hyderabad district) and Sarabhanapalem (Visakhapatnam district) in August 2002.

Apart from the medical / veterinary services rendered during Grama Seva, special medical camps were conducted separately in five districts as need-based activities: diabetic diagnostic camp (Kurnool), eye camp in village Irugolam (Chittoor district), eye and dental camp at Hasmatpet (Hyderabad district), medical camp for auto drivers (Adilabad district), Veterinary camps in Kottur and Tadepally (Krishna district).

**Bihar:** Many districts in Bihar, particularly Darbhanga, Madhubani, Muzaffarpur and Khagaria had severe flood. The villagers were forced to vacate their houses because

of flood water entered their houses. They had to take shelter on elevated places where sky was the only roof for them. Thousands of people were made homeless. Our Seva Dal and youth provided food packets to thousands of people, distributed plastic sheets for constructing temporary huts and held medical camps to check the spread of diseases.

**Tamil Nadu:** Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Tamil Nadu was awarded the Rolling Shield for the third year in succession for maximum enrolment of voluntary blood donors by non-governmental welfare organisation. The award was presented by His Excellency, the Governor of Tamil Nadu on 5th of August 2002 at Raj Bhavan.

Kumbakonam Samithi of Thanjavur district undertook Grama Seva in three villages viz., Arasavangadu, Edakudi and Naduvakkarai on 25th August 2002. A medical camp was organised and the total number of beneficiaries was 1172 villagers. A veterinary camp was also organised in which 598 cattle were examined and treated.

### SUMMER COURSE DISCOURSES - 3

#### **DIVINE MYSTERIES OF THE RAMAYANA**

*God controls the entire creation while Truth holds sway over God. But Truth itself is under the control of the noble ones; such noble ones are the embodiments of Divinity.*  
(Sanskrit Verse)

*Embodiments of Love!*

Modern society is in dire need of the Ramayana. Today the children do not respect their parents and the parents lack affection for their children. Modern disciples do not respect their teachers; likewise teachers have no love for their disciples. The parents no longer act as role models for their children. So, the children do not make any effort to maintain the prestige and honour of the family. Brothers living in the same house do not have love for each other. Similarly, husband and wife do not shine as ideals to others by virtue of their love for each other. The Ramayana has a great value for the modern trouble-torn society as it presents an ideal in various fields of human activity and human relations.

#### **Parents should Inculcate Virtues in Children**

Parents today do not bother about inculcating virtues in their children. They do not know how to bring up their children as ideal ones. They think that their responsibility is over after admitting them in a primary or a village school at the age of five years. Home, in fact, is the first school for the child. It is here that the child learns to respect his parents, to speak the truth and follow righteousness. The parents should teach him as to how he should conduct himself in school, how he should behave with fellow students and respect his teachers. He must also know how to abide by the rules and regulations of the school and how to observe discipline. It is by learning these things that he becomes an ideal student.

*Get up early in the morning at the crowing of the cock,*

*Have a bath after your morning ablutions,*

*Wear a proper dress.*

*Eat properly and moderately.*

*Go to school and study diligently.*

*Earn a good name.*

*Don't move out when it is raining,*

*And never go near the ditches.*

*Take part in games,*

*Run and play.*

*If you abide by all these rules,*

*You will have both health and wealth.*

(Telugu Poem)

But nobody is imparting such teachings to the children these days. The children are also not aware how to respect and serve their parents. Our ancients, on the other hand, took every care to impart these teachings to their children.

### **Sage Viswamitra Takes Rama and Lakshmana to his Ashram**

*Students!*

King Dasaratha begot four sons after many years of prayer and waiting. He brought them up in a most ideal manner. Once Sage Viswamitra came to King Dasaratha. The king received him with due courtesy, offered him a seat of honour and prayed to know the reason for the sage's arrival. He offered to render any service the sage needed. The sage told the king, "Oh Dasaratha! I have decided to conduct a Yajna for the welfare of the world. But the demons pose many obstacles in the conduct of the Yajna. I have the power and the strength to overpower them, for I have powerful weapons at my command. But the austerities of the Yajna forbid me to use the weapons and indulge in violence when I myself am performing it. I therefore want your eldest son Rama to accompany me to my Ashram to protect the Yajna." These words came as a shock to Dasaratha. He was afraid of sending to the forest his tender son who had never seen a demon and had no experience of protecting a Yajna. He told the sage, "Master, pardon me. I will myself assume the responsibility for the protection of the Yajna. Rama is quite young, hardly fourteen years old. He has no experience in the use of weapons. How can He protect the Yajna?" Viswamitra was angry when he heard the words of the king. He said angrily, "The descendants of Ikshvaku never go back on their words. You have made a promise to me that you will fulfil my wish. Is it proper on your part to go back on your words now? If you think it is fair, then I am going back." One has to be extremely careful in dealing with a sage. Dasaratha's reply made Viswamitra angry. Apprehending the curse of Viswamitra, Dasaratha was fear-stricken. He called his family Guru Vasishtha for advice.

Vasishtha came and started talking to Sage Viswamitra. At this, Dasaratha felt relieved to some extent. Sage Vasishtha looked at Dasaratha and said to him, "Your sons are not ordinary children. Your anxiety stems from your attachment to your children. They are very powerful and strong. You may think that they are small children but they are like thunderbolts to demons. You are not able to realise their true potential." Then Vasishtha called Rama. When Rama came, Lakshmana also came with Him, as it was his practice to be with Rama always. They offered their salutations to their father Dasaratha, Guru Vasishtha and Sage Viswamitra. They stood waiting there. Viswamitra was transfixed looking at the splendour of their faces. He desired to offer obeisance to both of them. But it did not look appropriate to do so to the young boys openly. So, he saluted them in his heart. Lakshmana followed Rama like a shadow. Similarly, Satrugna always followed Bharata. They moved together like inseparable pairs. There was a reason for this.

### **Sacred Bond of Love between the Sons of Dasaratha**

When we investigate the reason, we can understand the mystery behind it. When Dasaratha performed the Putrakameshti Yajna, the Yajna Purusha appeared and handed over the vessel of sacred pudding to Vasishtha. Vasishtha gave the sacred pudding to Dasaratha who in turn distributed it equally between his three wives. Kausalya and Kaikeyi took their share of the pudding to their respective Puja rooms.

But Sumitra carried her bowl of pudding to the terrace and placed it on the parapet wall while drying her hair in the sun. Suddenly, an eagle swooped down and carried away the bowl of sacred pudding. Sumitra got scared to think that this had happened due to her negligence. She feared that she would incur the displeasure of Dasaratha. She immediately ran down and informed Kausalya and Kaikeyi about what had happened. Kausalya and Kaikeyi came to the rescue of Sumitra and shared their sacred pudding with her.

Kaikeyi gave half of her share to Sumitra. Kausalya did the same. All the queens were highly virtuous and noble. They shone as examples of harmony, understanding and mutual love. Their conduct is worthy of emulation. The three queens offered their salutations to Vasishtha and partook of the sacred pudding after prayer and worship. In due course, Kausalya gave birth to Rama, Kaikeyi to Bharata, and Sumitra to Lakshmana and Satrughna. The sons of Kausalya and Kaikeyi were happily playing in their cradles whereas Sumitra's sons were crying all the time, day and night, without even taking food. Sumitra went to sage Vasishtha and told him about her predicament. Sage Vasishtha closed his eyes. His Yogic vision enabled him to know the truth. He said to Sumitra, "As you partook of the sacred pudding given by Kausalya, you gave birth to Lakshmana who is an Amsa (part) of Rama. Similarly, Satrughna is born out of the share of pudding given to you by Kaikeyi. So, he is a part of Bharata. Put Lakshmana by the side of Rama and Satrughna by the side of Bharata. Then they will rest peacefully." Sumitra did as instructed by Vasishtha. The children became peaceful and stopped crying. Sumitra felt very happy at this and said to Kausalya and Kaikeyi, "Lakshmana and Satrughna are your gifts. My children will serve your children. Lakshmana will serve Rama and Satrughna will serve Bharata. It is my good fortune that my sons will serve their brothers."

This was the basis of the intimate relationship between Rama and Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrughna. Wherever Rama went, Lakshmana followed Him. Rama would not eat food unless Lakshmana ate with Him. Similarly, Bharata also would not eat anything unless Satrughna was in his company. When Bharata went to meet his uncle, the ruler of Kekaya, Satrughna too followed him even though no one told him to do so. When Rama was leaving for the forest, Lakshmana also got ready to follow Him though Rama had not told Lakshmana to accompany Him. Rama even told Lakshmana, "Brother! You should remain in Ayodhya to serve our parents who will be put to suffering due to our separation from them in their old age. It is your duty to attend to them and give happiness to them." To this, Lakshmana replied, "Brother! My mother has sent me to serve You. You are going to the forest as per the command of our father, whereas I am following You in obedience to the command of my mother." Lakshmana followed Rama wherever He went. Similar was the case with Satrughna who followed Bharata like a shadow. Satrughna was a repository of many virtues, although these have not been described in the Ramayana. He was brave and valorous who vanquished all enemies.

When Viswamitra obtained the permission of Dasaratha to take Rama with him for the protection of the Yajna, Lakshmana instantly followed Rama. As they reached the bank of the river Sarayu, Viswamitra taught them two Mantras, "Bala" and



“Atibala”, so that they may not suffer from sleeplessness and hunger during the course of their stay in Siddhashrama for the protection of Yajna of Viswamitra. “Bala” conquers sleep; “Atibala” conquers hunger. Though Viswamitra was aware of Rama’s Divinity and omnipotence, yet he taught Him the sacred Mantras. Sometimes, sages also come under the spell of Maya and forget to recognise the divinity of the divine beings.

### **Peace and Harmony in the Family of Dasaratha**

Dasaratha was beyond himself with joy to see his four sons with their consorts as they returned to Ayodhya from Mithila. He told his sons, “These four consorts of yours are highly noble and virtuous. I will look after them as though they are my daughters. It is by Divine grace that I have such daughters-in-law. Where is Mithila and where is Ayodhya? It is by Divine Will that they are united like this.” These four consorts of the four sons of Dasaratha always obeyed their husbands. They were exemplary in their conduct. Sita and Urmila were the daughters of Janaka, and were married to Rama and Lakshmana, respectively. Mandavi and Srutakeerthi were the daughters of Kushadhwaja, Janaka’s brother. They were married to Bharata and Satrugna, respectively. All the four daughters-in-law of Dasaratha were highly noble and virtuous. Their presence brought peace and joy in the house of Dasaratha.

The home of Dasaratha was a model of peace and harmony where all the four brothers and their consorts lived happily with the three queens of Dasaratha. There was perfect unity and understanding in the family. One finds it difficult to live happily with one wife. Two wives become absolutely unmanageable. But Dasaratha had three wives and yet complete harmony and understanding prevailed in his house. One may entertain the doubt why Kaikeyi behaved in a selfish manner demanding Rama’s exile for 14 years. She was working under divine dictates, for Rama was committed to go to the forest to kill the demons. People entertain the notion that Manthara poisoned the mind of Kaikeyi by her evil counsel. Kaikeyi was not a lady who would listen to the words of a servant. She was a lady of character, endowed with great virtues. She followed the divine command to send Rama somehow to the forest so that the demons are killed and Ravana is vanquished. Otherwise, she loved Rama more than her son Bharata.

Gods and sages approached Vishnu with a supplication to save them from the atrocities of Ravana who had become almost invincible due to the boon he received from Brahma. He asked Brahma to grant him the boon that nobody should be able to kill him who belonged to the Devas, Asuras, Rakshasas, Yakshas, Kinnaras, Kimpurushas, etc. But he did not mention Manava (human) because he considered human beings weak and powerless. Hence, Ravana was to meet his end at the hands of Rama who incarnated in human form. Everything was happening according to the Divine Will. When Hanuman reached Lanka, he was confronted by the demoness Lankini who was guarding the city of Lanka at the portals of the fortress. When Hanuman hit her, she said, “Bad times are ahead for Lanka.” It was prophesied that when a monkey hit her, the downfall of Lanka would begin.

The eagle which took away Sumitra's pudding bowl, dropped it in the lap of Anjana Devi while she was meditating. Hanuman was intimately connected to Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrugna as he was born to Anjana Devi after she ate the sacred pudding that the queens of Dasaratha had eaten. Because of this reason, Hanuman was close to Lord Rama and played an important role in His mission.

### **Universal Teachings of the Ramayana**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

The Ramayana stands out as a great ideal to the entire mankind. It sets examples in every field of life. It shows the highest ideals for brothers, sisters and parents. The Ramayana is an inspiration not only for ancient times but also for the modern age. Every man is born in this world to shine as an ideal, not to lead an egocentric life. Every man should therefore stand out as a model to the best of his capacity. The Ramayana demonstrates to all how an ideal family should be and what should be ideal manners like. The teachings of the Ramayana are meant for the entire mankind. The whole world is one home. The entire humanity forms one family. Where is the scope for differences when the entire mankind belongs to one family? Just as the various limbs of the body work in unity and harmony, all human beings should work for the welfare of the family of mankind in a united and harmonious way.

When Sita, Urmila, Mandavi and Srutakeerthi were leaving for Ayodhya along with their husbands, their parents did not shed tears of sorrow as parents usually do. Their parents thought that their daughters were duty bound to go to the home of Dasaratha. They did not think that they were going to another home. The daughters too did not shed any tears of sorrow. It was with tears of joy that the parents sent their daughters to the home of their husbands. Such were the ideals observed by the people those days. Everyone performed his/ her duty with sincerity and love.

When Lakshmana decided to accompany Rama to the forest, mother Sumitra told him, "My son, it is God's Will that I am your mother and you are my son. We should play our roles according to the divine plan. Do not consider that you are going to the forest. Ayodhya without Rama is a forest for us and the forest in Rama's company is Ayodhya." These were the ideals upheld by the great women of those days.

There are many wonderful lessons that the Ramayana holds out for the entire world. One day, Dasaratha was surprised to notice that the child Rama was massaging His own feet; He did not ask the services of the servants to massage His feet. Noticing this, Dasaratha sent for servants immediately to massage Rama's feet. But Rama refused the help of the servants. He felt that He should not requisition the services of the servants for this work and He should not be dependent on the servants for His personal work. *All are one, be alike to everyone.* This was the ideal Rama demonstrated. The principle of equality was taught by Rama by putting it into practice in His own life.

### **Lavanya – the Mark of an Avatar**

The attributes of the Avatars are beyond human comprehension. Rama was full of Lavanya. Lavanya lies in the control of senses. His sterling character was the cause for His Lavanya. Dasaratha had control over his ten senses. Only such a person could have a son like Rama. In fact, Rama and Krishna were ever youthful. Have you ever seen a picture of Rama or Krishna with grey hair? Have you ever seen a picture of Krishna with signs of old age? Have you ever seen Him as a grandfather? All Avatars are ever youthful. This body of Mine is approaching its 77th year. I do not know any weakness and I can walk quickly. I avoid doing so because it may look funny and people may laugh if I walk fast at this age. People will definitely laugh if a toddler walks with a walking stick in his hand. It will look funny if an old man plays with toys. Similarly, if I walk fast, the devotees may laugh. We should conduct ourselves according to the time, place and circumstances. I conduct Myself according to these. I don't know any weakness. Usually, old people have wrinkles on their faces and they suffer from deafness and cataract. I do not have any signs of old age. (*loud applause*) There is not a single wrinkle on My face. My eyes shine like stars and My voice is like a loudspeaker. People go for cataract operation in their old age. My eyes are in perfect condition. I can see anything at a distance.

Nobody knows My power and strength. But I use them according to the need and the situation. I use My power discreetly. Speed breakers are meant to control speed. They are necessary and they ensure safety. Likewise, sometimes I control My power. These are all signs of My Divinity. You will know My Divine Glory slowly and steadily in course of time. Though I have a human body, I am free from human attachment. Though the body is human, I am entirely Divine.

As Rama and Krishna were born with human bodies, people entertained the wrong notion that they died in an ordinary way. Rama and Krishna did not shed their bodies like ordinary mortals. Rama stepped into the Sarayu river and reached His celestial abode. Similarly, Krishna was seen lying under a tree in a forest and then He ascended to heaven. The bodies of divine incarnations do not fall in the hands of mortals. You must have the capacity to understand Divinity.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Since I eat like you, talk like you and sing like you, you are deluded into thinking that I am also a human being like you. It is sheer ignorance to think about Me in that way. Some devotees think that there is something wrong with My legs when I walk slowly. I do not have any trouble with My legs. I am hale and hearty, and there is nothing wrong with My health. I walk slowly with measured steps because of the robe I wear. My robe is stitched to the very hem preventing Me from taking long steps. My walk is slow, gentle and soft, without any roughness. I am all sweetness and softness.

You can realise Divinity if you study the Ramayana. There are many divine secrets in the Ramayana. I will reveal these to you, and will also clarify your doubts.

Bhagavan brought His Divine Discourse to a close with the Bhajan, “*Rama Kodanda Rama ...*”

**- From Bhagavan's Summer Course Discourse in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall,  
Brindavan on 17th May 2002.**

## **EDITORIAL**

### **THE ILLUMINED PATH**

Some events in the history of mankind are the source of great inspiration for future generations. Birthdays and other important days connected with the lives of great men, prophets and Avatars are celebrated for this very purpose. Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's Birthday is celebrated with great piety and gaiety on 23rd November every year. Devotees from all parts of the world come to the holiest of the holy land of Puttaparthi to pay their homage to their Beloved Swami. Prasanthi Nilayam then really looks like a mini world.

Another great landmark in the life of Bhagavan Baba is 20th October 1940 when He revealed His identity to the world. The Anniversary of this great event was celebrated this year on 20th October 2002 at Prasanthi Nilayam. It is indeed a red-letter day in the history of mankind when young Sathya made the profound declaration of His Avatarhood. He not only snapped worldly ties with His family on this day but also laid the foundation of the global Sai family which has grown to stupendous proportions in the last 60 years since He made this Grand Declaration. He declared the purpose of His incarnation on this earth and simultaneously embarked on His Divine Mission of uniting mankind with His unique weapon of Divine Love. In the Divine vision of Bhagavan, the world is a mansion which houses the entire family of mankind, the different countries being the rooms of this mansion. Man has a limited vision and sees differences where there are none. This Avatar of Love has therefore been exhorting man to expand his love and vision. Expansion of love is life and contraction of love is death, declares Bhagavan. The basic mistake of man is that he is limiting his love and vision and verily embracing death by creating hatred, violence and terror based on differences between countries, communities and religions. This is threatening the very existence of man today.

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Baba has carved out a divine and glorious path for humanity based on His concept of *Love All, Serve All*. During the last six decades, He has illumined the lives of millions of people all over the world with His selfless Divine Love. On the eve of Bhagavan's 77th Birthday, let us pray that all the people of the world unite and recognise the Brotherhood of Man and Fatherhood of God by following the illumined path shown by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. May all deserve His Grace!

- Editor

## **DASARA DISCOURSE – 1**

### **CONQUER THE WORLD WITH THE WEAPON OF LOVE**

*The entire universe is under the control of God. God is governed by truth. Noble souls are the guardians of truth. Such noble souls are verily the embodiments of Divinity.*  
(Sanskrit Verse)

The universe has emerged from Divinity, and is controlled by truth. It is through truth that man can experience Divinity. He is a noble one who follows the path of truth. People undertake various spiritual practices, seek the company of noble souls and the blessings of elders to get rid of their evil tendencies and to develop virtues. Many a person have benefited by attaining the proximity of noble souls and by listening to their teachings. The life of Ratnakara, the highway robber, bears ample testimony to this. His life was transformed as he came into contact with the Saptarishis (seven sages). He gave up his evil ways and unwaveringly followed their teachings and ultimately became Sage Valmiki. He set an ideal to mankind and composed the great epic Ramayana.

#### **God Dwells in every Heart**

Prahlada, the son of demon king Hiranyakasipu, constantly contemplated on Lord Narayana and chanted His Name. As a result, he had the same divine effulgence as Lord Narayana Himself. Likewise, Charles Darwin resembled his master Henslow in all respects as he continuously thought of him and followed his teachings. Similarly, our ancient sages and seers always contemplated on God constantly and adhered to His dictates. As a consequence, their faces radiated divine brilliance. Lord Krishna has said the same in the Bhagavadgita, *Mamaivamso Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana* (the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being). He said, “Arjuna, it is My Divine effulgence that shines forth in all.” God is all-pervasive. He is present in all elements and in all beings in the form of radiance.

When God is present within, why does man suffer? Why should he be bothered by worry, anxiety and sorrow? God, the indweller, has absolutely no sorrow and worry. He is the embodiment of supreme bliss. Is it not a sign of foolishness to think that you are afflicted by misery when God is installed in the altar of your heart? Lord Krishna has declared in the Gita that God is present in every being and man is nothing but a spark of His Divinity. Such being the case, how can one be affected by worry and sorrow? When you enquire on these lines, you will realise that the demonic and bestial tendencies in you are responsible for all your problems. You will not be able to experience the truth *Mamaivamsho* ... unless and until you give up your evil qualities. Though God is present within, man behaves as if he is under the influence of some demon. First of all, he should realise that God resides in his heart. Then no evil spirits can have any hold on him. Heart has a single seat. There is room only for God in it. Then where is the scope for demonic tendencies in such a noble heart?

Today man is not able to comprehend his divinity. He is unaware of the fact that God is within him. Due to this delusion he thinks that there is none to care for him. Everyone is endowed with a heart which is full of nobility, divinity and compassion. But today man has become hard-hearted as he has lost this natural compassion. Such a hard-hearted person cannot be called a spark of divinity; he is verily a demon. The declaration: *Mamaivamsho* ... does not apply in such a case. Man is endowed with a heart which enshrines divinity in it. It is because of Bhrama (delusion) that man is unable to realise his divine nature. In the first instance, man should make efforts to overcome this delusion and realise that God is always with him, in him, around him, above him and below him. It is delusion that breeds evil feelings in your heart and mind. They are sheer imagination and have nothing to do with divinity.

God is present in the heart of one and all. He does not have a particular form and is not confined to a particular place. He is present in your heart and is all-pervasive. *Sarvata Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvata Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Tishthati* (With hands, feet, eyes, heads, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe). Such effulgent divine principle of the Self is termed as the Atma. Krishna has asserted that the Atma is a part of His own Being. There cannot be any defects or imperfections in such a divine principle. Whatever defects you see are purely the result of your imagination. God is the embodiment of virtues. Hence, man too should lead a life of virtues. Evil propensities are impediments in the spiritual path. First of all, man should distance himself from all evil actions and undertake good deeds. Only then will he have the right to call himself a human being.

Human life is highly sacred. The Upanishads consider human life to be verily divine. Man considers himself inferior and low because he has forgotten the principle of the Self which is beyond all attributes. His evil qualities, wicked deeds and bad company distance him from divinity. As is the company, so are the thoughts. Hence, it is said, "Tell me your company, I shall tell you what you are." Your friendship influences your nature. Ratnakara became Sage Valmiki because of his association with the Saptarishis. Prahlada was the son of a demon, yet he was always in the company of noble souls.

*SatsangatweNissangatwam, Nissangatwe Nirmohatwam,  
NirmohatweNischalatattwam, Nischalatattwe Jivanamukti.*

(Sanskrit Sloka)

(Good company leads to detachment, detachment makes one free from delusion, freedom from delusion leads to steadiness of mind and steadiness of mind confers liberation.)

### **Inner Significance of Devi Navaratri**

What is the inner significance of Devi Navaratri? People worship Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati during these nine days. Who is Durga? She is the embodiment of all power. Saraswati is the presiding deity of speech and wisdom. This is described in the Vedas as *Prajnanam Brahma*. Prajnana does not mean worldly knowledge. It is Constant Integrated Awareness which is changeless and eternal. Devi (divine mother)

is also worshipped as Gayatri and Savitri. *Gayantham Trayathe Iti Gayatri* (Gayatri protects those who sing her glory). Gayatri, being the presiding deity of our senses, helps us to master the senses. The Gayatri Mantra begins with “*Om Bhur Bhuvah Suvah.*” Bhur means materialisation. It represents matter which is subject to change. Bhuvah represents life principle, i.e., vibration and Suvah, radiation. Savitri being the presiding deity of the life principle protects our life. You must have heard the story of Savitri, who restored her dead husband back to life with the power of her devotion and surrender. Gayatri, Savitri and Saraswati are present in every man but he is not able to understand and experience their presence. The reason is that man has become addicted to wicked habits. Consequently, he is indulging in evil deeds and thereby ruining his life. His bad habits are responsible for his downfall. First of all, man has to develop good habits and transform himself. How could Savitri bring her dead husband back to life? The divine vibrations acquired by her by contemplating on God incessantly led to the resurrection of her husband. When you develop divine feelings, nothing is impossible for you. Any mighty task can be accomplished through the feelings of pure and selfless love.

Love develops divine power in you. There is nothing that love cannot conquer in this world. Sages perform penance in dense forests infested with wild animals. They do not possess any weapons for self-protection. The weapon that protects them is their intense love and yearning for God. They tame the wild beasts with their power of love. By their association, even wild beasts become docile. Our habits and thoughts depend upon the company we associate ourselves with. Noble company inculcates noble feelings and bad company gives rise to evil traits.

Your speech and conduct are based on your feelings. You deserve to be called a human being only when you develop good feelings. Form alone does not constitute a human being. A true human being is one who embodies good habits, helps ever and hurts never. You should not merely be an Akara Manava (human in form); you should become an Achara Manava (human in conduct). You should speak good, see good, do good and be good. Divinity will manifest in you only when your conduct is good. God is not somewhere in a distant land; He is very much in you, with you and around you, guiding you and guarding you. Develop divine feelings and listen to the divine voice from within. Human body is like the musical instrument, Veena. You can enjoy the divine melody only when you play divine tunes on it. The divine melody will bestow bliss on you and make you forget yourself in ecstasy. On the other hand, evil feelings will give rise to discordant notes. Hence, let your thoughts, words and deeds be suffused with sacred feelings.

Do not hurt others. *Paropakara Punyaya, Papaya Parapeedanam* (one attains merit by serving others and commits sin by hurting them). Hence, the Vedas teach: *Help ever, hurt never*. The Vedas emphasise on the need to cultivate sacred feelings. In fact, sacred feelings are within but man has forgotten them. Human being is the repository of divine energy. Durga (goddess of power), Lakshmi (goddess of wealth) and Saraswati (goddess of wisdom) are present in man. He is not poor, weak and lonely in any sense. He has all the capacity to experience divine bliss. In spite of



being endowed with all powers, man considers himself weak. This is the effect of his evil company. By associating himself with bad company, man is developing bad thoughts and bad feelings. You should not take it amiss but the fact is that the modern system of education is ruining the lives of many. Modern education is leading to agitation instead of elevation. It is giving rise to evil qualities like pride, anger, greed and desire. In fact, illiterate people possess more of the virtues of humility, obedience, love and peace. Humility is the hallmark of education. One may acquire high qualification but all one's knowledge becomes useless if one lacks humility.

*“In spite of his education and intelligence, a foolish man will not know his true Self and a mean-minded person will not give up his wicked qualities. Modern education leads only to argumentation, not to total wisdom. What is the use of acquiring worldly education if it cannot lead you to immortality? Acquire the knowledge that will confer on you immortality.”* (Telugu Poem)

True education is that which fosters in you the values of truth, righteousness, justice and sacrifice. Where are the values today? How can you call yourself human without human values? Education should develop human values in you. You should get rid of all your bad qualities and bad habits, and adopt the path of goodness and righteousness. Respect elders and serve your parents. People talk of friendship but we do not find true friends anywhere. Today friendship is tainted with wickedness and self-interest. All our bad habits are the result of associating with bad company.

*Tyaja Durjana Samsargam,  
Bhaja Sadhu Samagamam;  
Kuru Punyam Ahorathram,  
Smara Nityam Anityatham.*

(Shun bad company, seek good company and perform righteous deeds day and night; discriminate between permanent and ephemeral).

This is what you are supposed to do. Some people appear to be good and talk sweetly but their minds are filled with wicked feelings. Beware of such people and keep them at a distance. It is because of such people that the present-day society is in turmoil.

### **Develop Firm Faith in God like Prahlada**

Prahlada was the son of a demon king, yet his thoughts were always centred on Lord Narayana. He repeated His Name always. His father and his teachers tried their best to divert him from spiritual path and infuse demonic traits in him. Once Hiranyakasipu asked Prahlada what he had learnt from his preceptors. Prahlada replied, “The teachers have taught me many things. I have learnt the principles of Dharma and Artha (righteousness and wealth) and studied sacred scriptures. In fact, I have learnt the very essence of all knowledge.” Hiranyakasipu was overjoyed to hear all this. He said, “Oh son! Let me have the pleasure of listening to that great knowledge.” Prahlada said, “Oh father, the Name of Hari will destroy all our sins. Of

what use is one's education if one does not contemplate on Lord Hari and attain liberation?"

Hiranyakasipu became furious on hearing this. He pushed him away from his lap. But Prahlada was least perturbed. He continued to chant the name of Lord Narayana. Hiranyakasipu subjected him to various ordeals. He tried to trample him under the feet of elephants and set poisonous snakes on him. Prahlada's unflinching faith in Lord Narayana protected him from all these dangers. Prahlada felt the mighty elephant to be as light as a feather and the poison turned into nectar by the power of his devotion. Such things can be understood only by experience and not by mere description. Though he was young, Prahlada was firm in his resolve. Hiranyakasipu was overcome with fury. He roared, "Oh madcap, you talk very high of your God, where is He?" Prahlada very calmly replied, "*Father, never doubt that God is here and not there. In fact, He is present wherever you look for Him.*" (Telugu Poem) "If God is all-pervasive, can you show Him in this pillar?", he challenged Prahlada. "Yes, I can", pat came the answer. Such was Prahlada's confidence and devotion. One can attain divinity only with confidence.

*Where there is confidence, there is love;  
Where there is love, there is truth;  
Where there is truth, there is peace;  
Where there is peace, there is bliss;  
Where there is bliss, there is God.*

Out of anger, Hiranyakasipu hit the pillar hard with a mace. Lo and behold! Lord Narasimha emerged from it. What is the inner meaning of this? The body is like a pillar. One can have the vision of the Atma only when one breaks the chains of body attachment. You can develop Atmabhimana (love for the Atma) once you give up Dehabhimana (body attachment). It is only Atmabhimana that will protect you always. Learn the language of the heart. It can be taught only by those teachers who are suffused with divine feelings. It is due to such noble teachers that we have students who are full of virtues and values.

*Students!*

What you need today is God who can give you everything you yearn for. Develop unwavering faith in God. Faith alone can protect you in every way. So, never lose faith in God. Under all circumstances, at all times, consider God as the basis of your life. Give up evil qualities like anger, greed, jealousy, etc. Anger is like Ravana. Kill this Ravana within you. Similarly, desire has to be eradicated completely. Even a little desire is dangerous. Desire is the cause of man's downfall. Hence, eradicate desire and anger. You should develop love and be embodiments of love. Fill your heart with love. *Love is God, live in love.* If you have love, you can achieve anything.

*Start the day with love,  
Fill the day with love,  
Spend the day with love,*

*End the day with love,  
This is the way to God.*

Hence, cultivate the spirit of love. Love is the most potent weapon that can win over anyone. What was the weapon that protected our ancients who lived in forests? It was not hydrogen bomb or atom bomb. It was love and love alone. So, there is no need to acquire atom bomb or hydrogen bomb. Acquire the bomb of love which can fill the world with sweetness. You can conquer the entire world with the weapon of love.

### **Nothing is Sweeter than the Divine Name**

People worship Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati during these nine days of Navaratri. What is the meaning of worshipping Durga who destroyed the wicked demons? It means that we have to destroy the demons of wickedness within us. On the Ayudha Puja day, you worship the weapons as you do not require them any more. When you pray to Durga wholeheartedly, she will protect you in all your endeavours.

Today the students are not trying to understand the principle of divinity. Nobody in this world can help you the way God helps you. Hence, surrender yourself to God and pray for His help. He will protect you in every way. Since ancient times, the culture of Bharat has been protected by God. We are afflicted with misery and grief as we have forgotten God.

*Students!*

Control your emotions. Develop love. Do not entertain evil thoughts. None can give you the experience of bliss other than God. Love all and all will love you. Even dogs, monkeys and cats will reciprocate your love if you bestow love on them. Man lacks the sense of gratitude that the dog has. We see many foreigners having dogs and cats as their pets. When you love them, they too will love you in turn. *Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavathi* (as are your feelings, so does it happen). You are bound to experience the reflection, reaction and resound of your feelings, be they good or bad. If you see bad in others, it is only a reflection of your bad feelings. It is a mistake to blame others ignoring your own faults. Purify your feelings in the first instance. Love even those whom you consider as wicked. In fact, nobody is wicked in this world. It is because of Bhrama (delusion) that you consider some as good and others wicked. Develop Sathya Sankalpas (noble feelings). Then you will be able to tread the path of truth. Do not waste your time in vain gossip. Instead, sanctify your time by chanting the Divine Name. There is nothing sweeter than the Divine Name.

(Bhagavan sang the Bhajan, “*Hare Rama, Hare Rama...*” and added.)

The Bhajan that you have sung just now will be heard in many countries of the world. The Divine Name that you chant purifies the hearts of the humanity at large. Hence, do not entertain bad feelings. Do not use bad words. Use only sacred words. Talk sweetly and sing the glory of God. By doing so, you can render great help to the whole world. Do not hurt others. Help everybody. When you help others, you will certainly have positive results. Never waste your time. Along with your studies, you

should do Namasmarana (chanting God's Name) and Sankirtan (singing the glories of God). This will make your heart sacred.

**- From Bhagavan's Dasara Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 9th October 2002.**

### **NEWS FROM PRASANTHI NILAYAM**

#### **STATUE OF SHIRDI SAI BABA INSTALLED**

in a solemn function held in Hill View Stadium on the auspicious morning of Vijaya Dasami, i.e., 15th October 2002, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba unveiled the statue of Shirdi Sai Baba in Hill View Stadium, Prasanthi Nilayam. This beautiful statue is made of fibreglass reinforced plastic and is 18 feet in height. The statue was made by a reputed sculptor Madhubhai Patel, a recipient of Padma Shri Award by the Government of India. Bhagavan came to the Stadium at 7.15 a.m. A hearty welcome was offered to Bhagavan when He came to the specially constructed ramp on the Hanuman Hill beside the statue of Lord Krishna. A rare exhibit on display here was the tonga which was used by Sri Shirdi Sai Baba. Amidst the chanting of Vedic Mantras by the students, Bhagavan pressed a remote controlled switch to unveil the beautiful statue. A song composed specially for this occasion was sung after the unveiling ceremony. This was followed by the traditional Arati of Shirdi Sai Baba in Marathi. The function came to a close with offer of Mangalarati to Bhagavan. In the end, Prasadam was distributed to all the devotees assembled there for this function.

#### **SRI SATHYA SAI GRAMA SEVA 2002**

Like the previous two years, the students and staff of the three campuses of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning located at Anantapur, Brindavan and Prasanthi Nilayam performed Grama Seva this year also under the Divine guidance of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Valuable assistance was provided by Anantapur College students in preparing food packets while all background support was given by the students of Higher Secondary School.

The Grama Seva was carried out from 9th to 14th October 2002 and the Prasadam sanctified by Bhagavan Baba was given at the doorstep of each resident in more than 25 villages. On the final day, the Ashram residents too received the blessed Prasadam.

The first day, the 9th of October, marked the beginning of both the Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yajna and the Grama Seva. After blessing the commencement of the Yajna by His Divine Presence in the Poornachandra Auditorium, Bhagavan came to Sai Kulwant Hall to sanctify the Prasadam and to bless the students and staff going to villages for Grama Seva. A sample of Prasadam was brought in buckets and placed before Bhagavan. Swami blessed the Prasadam. This practice continued everyday. After this, the students and staff would circumambulate the Mandir chanting Vedic Mantras, singing Bhajans and proceed to their specified locations for the distribution of Prasadam. Logistics had already been clearly worked out, and each team in every

vehicle knew precisely where they were to go and which village they were supposed to cater to.

Many touching scenes were witnessed when villagers showed reverence and love for Bhagavan Baba while receiving the sanctified Prasadam sent to them by Bhagavan with His Divine Love. They were beside themselves with joy to know that Bhagavan Baba had remembered them. It was indeed a rewarding experience for all those who received it and those who distributed it.

The Grama Seva concluded on the 14th October, and on the 15th, all joined together for beautiful Vijaya Dasami celebrations in Poornachandra Auditorium.

### **NEWS FROM INLAND SAI CENTRES**

**Andhra Pradesh:** District blood donation camps were arranged on 16th and 17th September 2002 at Visakhapatnam. A “Disaster Management” Training course was also conducted on 28th and 29th September 2002 in which 164 Seva Dal members from five coastal districts participated.

Free medical and veterinary camps were organised by the Sai Samithis of the districts of West Godavari, Guntur, Chittoor, Kurnool, Ranga Reddy and Medak in a number of villages.

**Punjab:** As a part of 77th Birthday celebrations of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, a 77-hour Akhanda Bhajan was organised by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Punjab at Abohar from 26th October 2002. Approximately 10,000 devotees attended the Akhanda Bhajan.

The monsoon festival at Chintapurni, the abode of Maa Durga (Maa Chinamastika) is held every year. This year, the festival was held from 13th August to 16th August 2002. Lakhs of devotees visit daily to pay obeisance to Mata Chintapurni. A day and night medical camp for 77 hours was organised at Chohal. More than 2000 patients attended the camp. They were given free medicines after proper check-up.

**Sikkim:** Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Sikkim celebrated Sri Krishna Janmashtami in a grand manner all over Sikkim. On this occasion, special programmes were organised by Sri Sathya Sai Organisation, Gangtok district from 30th August to 1st September, 2002 at Sri Sathya Sai Sarva Dharma Kendra, Gangtok.

### **NEWS FROM OVERSEAS SAI CENTRES**

The Sathya Sai Seva Organisation in Sri Lanka has recently set up an institution Hospice in Hanwell, called Sathya Sai Suva Sevana designed to provide symptom control and palliative care to patients afflicted with terminal cancer.

The Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Hon. Ranil Wickremasinghe in his message on the occasion of the inauguration of the Hospice complex said, "To achieve the objectives of improving the quality of life of individuals and their loved ones touched by cancer, it is necessary that there must be a greater awareness of the disease, its consequences and also the need for training in pain management, symptom control, and palliative care at the individual, family and community levels." The building complex was inaugurated on the 6th July 2002 by Hon. Karu Jayasurya, Minister of Power and Energy.

The Hospice is now well equipped and staffed and is ready to take in patients and offer skilled care and support. The service provided to patients will be free of charge, and regardless of ones language, religion or caste. The institution has facilities for 50 inmates.

## **DIVINE DISCOURSE: 20TH OCTOBER 2002**

### **THUS BEGAN THE MISSION DIVINE**

*On 20th October 1940, while going to school after returning from Hampi, Baba's collar pin was lost and could not be found. That day was the day of change. The link with worldly ties had gone in the form of the pin; the pilgrimage to Hampi also served its purpose. Baba left home saying that Maya could not bind Him any longer.*  
(Telugu Poem)

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

When I was at Uravakonda, the Municipal Chairman of Bellary had a dream in which he was directed to go to a particular house in Uravakonda and bring Sathya to Bellary. At the same time, his wife also had a dream in which she was directed to accompany her husband and bring Sathya with them. They thought Sathya would be a great and famous personality. Now My height is a little above five feet. I was much shorter those days and used to wear shorts and shirt. As I came out of the house, the Municipal Chairman and his wife at once recognised Me to be the same person whom they had seen in their dream. They felt extremely happy and prostrated before Me on the road itself. They did not mind that they were prostrating before a small boy. I was on My way to school with a few books in My hand at that time.

#### **A Visit to Hampi**

The Municipal Chairman and his wife came to Seshama Raju, the elder brother of this body, and requested him to bring Sathya to Bellary. One cannot say no to a person of the status of the Municipal Chairman. Hence, Seshama Raju approached the headmaster of the school for his permission to go to Bellary. The headmaster was very fond of Me. He said, "You may take Sathya to Bellary or wherever you want. You do not need to seek my permission in this regard."

The Municipal Chairman and his wife played host to us for three days. They also took us to the Virupaksha temple in Hampi. After reaching the temple, I insisted that I would not come inside. Then Seshama Raju and his wife told Me to keep a watch over their belongings as they went inside to have Darshan of the deity. I readily agreed and remained outside. Both of them went inside the temple. To their utter astonishment, they found Me standing inside the sanctum sanctorum. Seshama Raju had many doubts. Thinking that I had come inside the temple in spite of his instructions to remain outside, Seshama Raju said to himself: "Why has He come here when I told Him specifically to remain outside and take care of our belongings?" He at once came out of the temple only to find Me standing there! He again went inside and found Me there also! Still he was having doubts. He told his wife, "You go outside and keep a watch over Sathya. Do not allow Him to go anywhere. Meanwhile, I will go inside and see whether He is still there." She did accordingly. He again saw a smiling Sathya standing in the sanctum sanctorum. The Municipal Chairman was also a witness to all this. He recognised My Divinity. When they came out of the

temple, he caught hold of Seshama Raju's hand and said, "Do not be under the impression that Sathya is your brother. He is not an ordinary mortal. You are deluded due to your relationship with Him. There is divine power in Him."

We came back to the house of Municipal Chairman, had our food there and started our return journey to Uravakonda. The Municipal Chairman wanted to give Me a gift. He said that he would get four pairs of shorts and shirts stitched for Me. I firmly told him that I would not accept even one. He did not want to force Me either. Then his wife suggested that a gold collar pin would be an appropriate gift for Me. In those days, it was a matter of prestige for children to wear a collar pin. Immediately, he bought a gold collar pin and put it on the collar of My shirt. I protested because I never accepted anything from others under any circumstances. But Seshama Raju insisted that I accept the gift. He said that my refusal to accept the gift would amount to showing disrespect to the Municipal Chairman. So, I obeyed him.

### **Cutting the Ties of Worldly Attachment**

The day after our return from Hampi, I was going to school wearing the collar pin. The pin dropped on the way and could not be traced. A major change occurred in Me. I dropped worldly attachment like the collar pin. I decided to embark on My Mission to alleviate the sufferings of My devotees. I threw away the books and entered the garden of Excise Inspector Anjaneyulu. He was an ardent devotee of Mine. When he saw Me coming, he told his wife to bring delicious food items for Me. But I had nothing to do with any of those preparations that day. Seshama Raju also came there and tried to persuade Me to return home. I said, I would not go. Never before had I talked to him that way. It was not My nature to talk so curtly to elders. So, Seshama Raju was surprised. "How could Sathya get such courage?", he wondered. He could see brilliant effulgence around My smiling face. Immediately, he wanted to send a telegram to Puttaparthi. In those days, it would take a minimum of one week for a telegram to reach Puttaparthi from Uravakonda. Hence, he sent a school boy with a message to the parents of this body, Easwaramma and Pedda Venkama Raju, to come to Uravakonda at once. When they arrived, Seshama Raju brought them to Me. Easwaramma pleaded with Me, with tears in her eyes, "Sathya, come, let us go back to Your brother's house." But I did not agree. I told her, "If you want Me to come, I will go with you to Puttaparthi and make the villagers of Puttaparthi happy. But I will not accept any interference."

In the Uravakonda school, I used to lead the school prayer at the loving insistence of the headmaster. He would say, "Raju, you may be young, but your prayer melts our hearts." The day after I left the school, another boy, who used to sit close to Me in the class, was asked to lead the prayer. When he went on to the dais, he broke down as he remembered Me. All the students and teachers were in tears, and the prayer meeting was cancelled. They wanted to accompany Me to Puttaparthi. But how was it possible to accommodate so many of them in this village? Then I told the headmaster to somehow persuade the boys not to follow Me.

### **The Story of Ramesh and Suresh**



In the classroom, three of us used to share a desk – Myself in the middle, flanked by Ramesh and Suresh on either side. Ramesh and Suresh were not good in studies. Whenever teachers asked them questions, they would give the answers prompted by Me. It was the time of our E.S.L.C. public examination. The numbers of our seats in the examination hall were such that we had to sit separately, quite at a distance from each other. It was not possible for them to get any help from Me. They were much worried. I infused courage in them saying, “You need not write anything. You just attend the examination and pretend to write in the examination hall. I will take care of the rest.”

The duration of the examination was two hours. I completed My answer paper in just 10 minutes. I took some more answer sheets from the invigilator and wrote the answers in Ramesh’s handwriting. After completing it, I took another set of answer sheets and wrote the answers in Suresh’s handwriting. I also wrote their names on the answer sheets. When the final bell rang, all the students got up, and I silently placed all the three answer sheets on the table of the examiner. Nobody raised any objection. When the results were announced, only we three got first class. The teachers were surprised as to how Ramesh and Suresh also got first class. There was no scope for any doubt. They could not have copied from Me, since we were seated far from each other. Their answer sheets were in their own handwriting.

The local people were overjoyed. They took out a grand procession and carried us on their shoulders. Those two boys were very much attached to Me. When I left Uravakonda, Ramesh and Suresh could not bear the separation from Me. Ramesh, utterly dejected, fell into a well and died. The second boy went on repeating “Raju, Raju, Raju ...” and ultimately turned mad. He was taken to various mental hospitals but there was no improvement. Finally, his parents came to Me and prayed, “Raju, he will be cured of his madness if he sees You at least once. Please come and see him.” I went to the mental hospital to see him. He was continuously repeating “Raju, Raju, Raju ...” Seeing Me, he shed tears, fell at My feet and breathed his last. They had surrendered themselves to Me. They prayed that they should never be separated from Me.

When I came to Puttaparthi, Karanam Subbamma gave one acre of land near Sathyabhama temple where a small house was built. I used to live there. The same Ramesh and Suresh were born again as two puppies, and came to Me. They were named Jack and Jill. They were always with Me.

One day, the Maharani of Mysore came to have My Darshan. She was a great devotee and a very orthodox woman. She would perform Puja with flowers everyday. She would personally pluck the flowers after sanctifying the plants by sprinkling water and milk on them. As there were no proper roads to Puttaparthi, she alighted from the car at Karnatakanagepalli and walked the rest of the distance to Old Mandir. There used to be a small shed where Pedda Venkama Raju Kalyana Mandapam stands now. The Maharani decided to rest for the night in the Mandir. The driver had his dinner and was returning to Karnatakanagepalli where the car was parked. I told Jack to

accompany the driver and show him the way. Jack walked in front and the driver followed. At night, Jack slept under the car. Next morning, the driver started the car not knowing that Jack was sleeping under it. The wheel of the car ran over the back of Jack and its backbone broke. Jack dragged itself across the river, wailing all the while. A washerman named Subbanna used to take care of the Old Mandir day and night. He was very loyal and considered Swami as his very life. He came running to Me and said, "Swami, Jack might have met with an accident. It is coming wailing in pain." I came out at once. Jack came close to Me, wailing loudly, fell at My feet and breathed its last. It was buried behind the Old Mandir and a Brindavanam was erected there. I instructed that it should be built on a side, not at the centre, leaving space for another Samadhi. As Jack had passed away, Jill stopped eating food and died after a few days. It was also buried by the side of Jack. In this manner, Ramesh and Suresh did penance to be with Me. Even after their death, they took birth as dogs to be with Me.

After I came here, many people from Bangalore and Mysore started visiting this place in their cars. Maharani of Mysore, coffee estate owner Sakamma, Desraj Urs, the maternal uncle of the Maharaja of Mysore were among those who used to come here. One day they prayed, "It is difficult for us to come here often. Hence, please come and settle in Mysore. We shall build a big mansion for You." I told them, "I don't want palatial buildings. I want to stay here." That night, mother Easwaramma came to Me with tears in her eyes and said, "Swami, people want to take You away for their selfish ends. If you leave Puttaparthi, I will give up my life. Please promise me that You will remain in Puttaparthi forever." I gave her My word that I would never leave Puttaparthi. (*loud applause*) It is for this reason that I have constructed many buildings in the Ashram for the comfort and convenience of devotees.

### **Construction of Prasanthi Nilayam**

When I made it clear that I would not leave Puttaparthi, Sakamma and the maternal uncle of the Maharaja of Mysore decided to build a Mandir, a little away from the village. They acquired ten acres of land here and started the construction work. An ardent devotee by name Vittal Rao (father of Prof. Jayalakshmi Gopinath) volunteered to oversee the construction work. He was a forest officer during the British regime. Neeladri Rao from Chennai, the son-in-law of the Maharaja of Pithapuram, the son-in-law of the Maharaja of Baroda, all of them took active interest in the construction work. As all of them joined hands, the Mandir was constructed in a very short period. Due to the effect of the war, it was very difficult to procure iron for the construction work. They overcame all such hurdles with sincerity and devotion. They prayed that I should not go there till the construction was over, lest I should be put to inconvenience. Such was their love for Me. I always fulfil My promise made to the devotees. Whatever I do is for the happiness of the devotees. I don't need anything for Myself. I don't have any desires. They worked day and night, made payments to the labourers and saw to it that the construction was completed successfully.

Jayamma was very young at that time. Every Sunday, Vittal Rao used to come here in his car to pay wages to the labourers. Jayamma would insist that she be allowed to

accompany him. Vittal Rao was very fond of his daughter. He used to get food prepared in Bangalore itself and bring his daughter along with him. She has been serving Swami for the last 60 years. She came to Me when this body was 17 years old. Now this body is approaching its 77th year. She visited Prasanthi Nilayam very frequently and learnt Swami's Bhajans and sang His glory. In this manner, she developed sacred feelings and intense devotion for Swami. One should have Prapti (deservedness) to experience divine proximity. One cannot get it for the mere asking for it. It cannot be denied either. One gets it out of the merits accrued over past lives. Their family has been the recipient of bounteous grace. I was moved by her repeated reference to Venkamma (Swami's elder sister) in her speech.

### **Devotion of Venkamma and Parvatamma**

Venkamma used to cook food for Swami. Jayamma used to be with her always to learn cooking. They had such intimate friendship. Later, Parvatamma (Swami's second elder sister) also came here. They used to bring food for Swami by turn, one in the morning and the other in the evening. They were concerned that it was not safe to allow others to prepare food for Swami. They extracted a promise from Me that I would eat the food prepared by them only. They served Me till their very last breath. Venkamma was taken from here to Bangalore in an unconscious state. She did not open her eyes. I went to her and called, 'Venkamma'. She instantly opened her eyes and saw Swami. She offered her Namaskar to Me by taking My hands close to her eyes. She shed tears and left her mortal coil.

The same happened in the case of Parvatamma also. She was also unconscious when she was taken to Bangalore. I went to her and called out her name. She immediately opened her eyes, shed tears and breathed her last. So long as they were alive, they served Swami by bringing food everyday, morning and evening. Such intimate relationship with the Lord is the result of merits of past lives. It cannot be acquired by human effort. They never cared for their ill-health and continued to serve Swami with love. Their lives were sanctified.

Even to this day, food is received from their houses. Seshama Raju's son lives here. Janakiramaiah (younger brother of Swami's physical body) also stays here. You all know him. His wife prepares and brings food for Me. Likewise, Parvatamma's daughter also brings food for Me. In this manner, they are serving Swami everyday. I don't take food at night. Every morning, they bring food for Me. Such is the intimate relationship that Swami has with this family. The advent of some divine incarnations was in answer to the prayers of their devotees who became their parents. But in Swami's case, it is different. I decided that so and so should be My father and so and so, My mother. This body has not taken birth in an ordinary way like other mortals.

### **Swami Fulfils His Promise to Subbamma**

Though Karanam Subbamma was not related to this body, emotionally, she was closely attached to Swami. She used to think of Swami always. She requested Me to stay in her house. She was prepared to vacate her house for My sake. Many relatives argued with her, "Being a Brahmin, how are you allowing a Kshatriya to stay in your

house?" She said, "I don't go to anybody's house. None of you need come to my house. It is enough if I have Swami with me." Such was her devotion and determination. She had only one desire. She prayed, "I should see Your beautiful form when I leave my body." I said I would certainly fulfil her desire.

Once I went to Chennai acceding to a devotee's prayer. Subbamma was in Bukkapatnam at that time. She was staying with her mother. By the time I returned from Chennai, Subbamma had breathed her last. When I came here, people came running to Me and said, "Swami, Your Subbamma has passed away." Immediately, I turned the car and went to Bukkapatnam straightaway. Her body was kept in the verandah, covered with a cloth. The entire household was grief-stricken. Once Swami makes a promise, He will certainly fulfil it under any circumstances. I removed the cloth covering the body. Ants were crawling all over her body. I called out, "Subbamma". She opened her eyes. (*Prolonged loud applause*) This news spread like wildfire within no time. The people of Bukkapatnam started crowding the place telling each other that Subbamma was brought back to life. Subbamma's mother was hundred years old at that time. I told her to bring a glass of water with a Tulasi (basil) leaf in it. I made Subbamma drink this water. I said, "Subbamma, I have kept My promise. Now, you may go peacefully." She said, "Swami, what more do I need? I am leaving blissfully." Shedding tears of joy, she held My hands and breathed her last. This is how I keep My promise under all circumstances. I never go back on My promise. Words are inadequate to describe Subbamma's service. During the Krishna Avatar, mother Yashoda loved and served Krishna more than mother Devaki. In those days, Easwamma and Subbamma used to converse with each other through the window in the wall separating their houses. They could not visit each other's house because their husbands were not on talking terms. But Easwamma had a cordial relationship with Subbamma.

### **Swami Chose His Parents**

The parents of this body were chosen by Me. Pedda Venkama Raju used to help the devotees who came to Swami. He ran a small shop. He used to run to Bukkapatnam even for a coconut or provisions required by the devotees. One day, he came to the Mandir and expressed his desire to talk to Me. I had already called a group for interview. I asked him the purpose of his coming. He took out some money and placed it in My hands, saying, "Swami, It is my hard earned money. I should not leave behind any debt. I had a small shop. I might have forgotten to return a paisa or two to someone. Hence, I request you to distribute food to the poor with this money on the 12th day after my death." He also mentioned that he had kept a few bags of rice and jaggery required for that purpose. After this, he went home and died peacefully.

Easwamma also had such a sacred end. She used to follow Me wherever I went. She came to Brindavan during the Summer Course. She felt very happy seeing so many students. She even served water to them during their lunch. She used to say, "It is because of Swami that we are able to witness such a grand event." One day, breakfast was served to the students as usual. Easwamma too had her breakfast and

coffee. Venkamma, who used to look after her needs, was by her side at that time. Easwaramma was pounding betel nut in a mortar. I could hear the sound from upstairs. All of a sudden, she cried out, “Swami, Swami, Swami.” I said, “I am coming, I am coming.” I came down immediately and she breathed her last. She had absolutely no suffering at all, not even a mild headache. Their lives were sanctified as they were chosen by Swami.

### **The Relationship of Divine Love**

Ramesh and Suresh considered Swami as their very life-breath. Though they were very young, they had intense love for Swami. Knowing that I did not have money with Me, once Ramesh got two pairs of dress stitched for Me and kept them in My desk with a note, “If you do not accept them, I will give up my life.” I refused to accept this, saying, “Our friendship and love should not be built on the basis of giving and taking. Ours is heart to heart relationship with pure love. We should share only love. There should be no material transaction.” Right from then till this day, I never accepted anything from anybody. I always conduct Myself in accordance with the principle, *Help ever, Hurt never*. This has been My motto. I have never harmed anyone. I derive great joy in helping others. That is why I tell the devotees to always pray: *Loka Samasta Sukhino Bhavantu* (May all the people of the world be happy!) All should be happy, healthy and blissful. With this sacred motive, I have been spreading the message of love in the entire world.

My students are My biggest property. The students of the Primary School, Higher Secondary School and the Institute are always with Me. They do not leave Swami and Swami will never leave them. My life is for the sake of humanity at large. The happiness of people is the happiness of Swami. I have no interest in celebrating My Birthdays. But the devotees want Birthday celebrations. I consider your birthday as My Birthday. The day you are happy is truly My Birthday. Though bodies are different, the same Atma is present in all. You should not observe any differences. *All are one, be alike to everyone*. The relationship of Swami with His devotees is not of a worldly nature. It is a relationship based on divine love.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, “*Prema Mudita Manase Kaho ...*”

- **From Bhagavan’s Divine Discourse on 20th October 2002 in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam.**

## **DASARA CELEBRATIONS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM**

dasara celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam got off to an auspicious start on the morning of 9th October 2002 with Mangalavadyam of Nadaswaram music heralding the week-long celebrations which included Bhagavan's Divine Discourses, illuminating talks by students and learned speakers in the meetings of Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha and Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yajna. The entire Mandir complex was aesthetically decorated on this occasion.

### **Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yajna**

On the morning of 9th October 2002, Bhagavan came to Sai Kulwant Hall at 6.50 a.m. and blessed the devotees with His Divine Darshan. He showered His love on His beloved elephant Sai Geeta also which stood waiting for Him in the Hall. Swami lovingly caressed it and fed it with fruits. After this, Bhagavan came to the Mandir Bhajan Hall and blessed the Ritwiks (priests) who were to start the Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yajna, and distributed new silk Dhotis and Angavastras for wearing on this sacred occasion. Chanting of the Vedic Mantras by the Ritwiks and students started soon after this. At 7.50 a.m., the procession of the Ritwiks started from the Mandir for the Yajnasala in Poornachandra Auditorium carrying the sacred Kalasha sanctified by chanting of Mantras in the Mandir from the 7th of October 2002, the first day of Navaratri. The procession was led by richly caparisoned Sai Geeta and the musicians and was followed by Veda chanting students.

The Ritwiks lit Yajna fire in a traditional way by churning one piece of wood over the other in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. The Yajna commenced at 8.00 a.m. amidst Vedic chants by the priests and students. While four priests started putting oblations of ghee with chanting of Mantra into the sacred fire, some priests started the recitation of sacred scriptures like the Ramayana, the Bhagavata, the Devi Bhagavata, Durga Saptashati, etc., as one priest performed Surya Namaskar. With the chanting of sacred Mantras and recitation of scriptures in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba, the entire environment was surcharged with divine vibrations. The Yajna continued for seven days from 9th October 2002 to 15th October 2002. Veda Purusha Bhagavan Baba blessed it with His Divine Presence on all the seven days.

Poornahuti (final oblations) was offered in the Yajna on the morning of 15th October 2002. Sai Geeta led the procession of Ritwiks from the Mandir to Poornachandra Auditorium on this day also. The Ritwiks had made all preparations for Poornahuti when Veda Purusha and Yajna Purusha Bhagavan Baba came to the Yajnasala at 8.25 a.m. and occupied a seat near Yajna Kunda beside the Ritwiks. While the Ritwiks and students chanted Vedic Mantras, Bhagavan stood up from His seat and materialised precious gems and Akshatas for putting as final oblations in the Yajna. He also blessed the priests by sprinkling Akshatas (sanctified rice) on them amidst the chanting of Vedic Mantras, blowing of conch and sweet notes of Mangalavadyam music. Finally, the priests circumambulated the Yajna Purusha Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba as also the Yajna Kunda and offered their salutations at Bhagavan's Lotus Feet and received His blessings. Thereafter, Mangalarati was offered to Bhagavan at 8.35 a.m. The Ritwiks then carried the Kalasha sanctified by the Mantras and daily Puja in a procession and later brought it back filled with sacred water. Yajna being over, Bhagavan then sprinkled the Teertham (sacred water) from the Kalasha on the multitudes of devotees both inside and outside Poornachandra Auditorium filling all with divine bliss and sacredness. At 9.30 a.m., Bhagavan completed this process and came back on the stage where Arati was offered to Him. With this, the Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yajna came to a successful and happy conclusion. Prasadam was distributed to all in the end.

### **Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha**

The proceedings of the Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha commenced on the afternoon of 9th October 2002 in Sai Kulwant in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba. The programme began with Veda chanting at 3.30

p.m. Before the Divine Discourse of Bhagavan Baba, two learned speakers shared their views and experiences with the huge gathering of devotees assembled in Sai Kulwant Hall. Dr. M. Sainath, Physics Lecturer of the Institute, extended welcome to all and introduced the speakers. He performed this task on all the six days of the meetings of the Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha. The first speaker was Sri G.V. Subba Rao, former Head of the Energy Division of the United Nations Organisation and an ardent devotee of Bhagavan for the last 30 years. Sri Subba Rao explained at length the significance of Devi Navaratri and the mother principle of God in its three aspects, namely, Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati. Mother, he said, is recognised as the embodiment of love, but the love of Bhagavan Baba is immeasurable as He is the Universal Divine Mother who showers His divine love on the entire mankind.

The second speaker, Dr. G.Venkataraman, former Vice Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, also dwelt on the mother principle of God and observed that in Indian cultural tradition emphasis had been laid not only on the worship of one's physical mother, but on four other aspects of mother principle, viz., Gomatha (the cow), Bhumatha (the earth), Deshmatha (the motherland) and Vedamatha (the Vedas). After these two speeches, Bhagavan Baba delivered His first Dasara Discourse, full text of which has been given elsewhere in this issue. With offer of Arati to Bhagavan, the programme came to a close at 5.05 p.m.

The second day's proceedings of Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha began at 3.30 p.m. on 10th October 2002 after Veda chanting. The first speaker who shared his views and experiences with the audience was Sri R. Srikrishna, a student of 2nd year M.Sc. (Mathematics) from Prasanthi Nilayam Campus. Starting his speech with a beautiful story underlining the selflessness of a mother's love, Sri Srikrishna observed that Bhagavan Baba is the Divine Mother whose love for all is divine in nature, yet it is personal for each and every being. The second speaker was Sri M.K. Rasagotra, former Foreign Secretary of India and an ardent devotee of Bhagavan for the last 30 years. Sri Rasagotra observed that Bhagavan Baba combined in Him the simplicity, selflessness and compassion of Buddha and love and sacrifice of Jesus. The earlier Avatars, he said, acted on a limited stage in their lifetime but Bhagavan Baba's field extends to all parts of the world and His Divine Message of love is changing the entire humanity and reviving Sanathana Dharma. After these two speeches, Bhagavan Baba gave His Divine Discourse in which He exhorted the devotees to yearn for love, peace and truth and realise the bliss that is within them. After Bhagavan's Divine Discourse, an excellent instrumental music programme was presented by Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music. The programme included a Veena recital by Smt. Padma Krishnamurthi and Tabla performance by the students of the college. At the end of the programme, Bhagavan distributed clothes to the participants and posed for photographs with them. The programme came to a close at 6.00 p.m. with offer of Arati to Bhagavan.

The proceedings of the third day of Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha commenced at 3.15 p.m. on 11th October 2002 with Veda chanting by school students after Bhagavan's Darshan. The first speaker was a research scholar, Sri Deepak Anand, who narrated his experiences of studying under the divine guidance of Bhagavan and observed that the system of education in Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning was a unique blend of secular knowledge, science of values and spirituality with the result that the learning in this Institute was truly higher in all respects. The second speaker of the afternoon was Dr. Michael Goldstein, Overseas Chairman, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation Zone 1 comprising the USA, Canada and West Indies. Dr. Goldstein observed that one of the most astounding miracles of Bhagavan Baba was the establishment of Sai Organisations in more than 170 countries of the world which were spreading Bhagavan's message of love and selfless service with the result that the international Sai family was rapidly growing in all parts of the world. He also invited Bhagavan Baba to visit these countries for the good of mankind. After these two speeches, Bhagavan Baba gave His third Dasara Discourse in which He emphasised the importance of Yajnas which cater to the welfare of humanity. He declared that even if one did not understand the Vedic Mantras, mere listening to these fostered divine thoughts in one.

After Bhagavan's Discourse, the 1st year students of Sathya Sai Mirpuri College of Music gave a delightful vocal recital of Rama Katha. At the end of this Bhagavan distributed clothes to the participants of this programme and posed for photographs with them. The day's celebrations came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 5.45 p.m.

On 12<sup>th</sup> October 2002, the proceedings of Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha commenced at 3.25 p.m. The first speaker of this session was Sri Indulal Shah, International Chairman, Sathya Sai Overseas Seva Organisation. Sri Shah spoke about Sathya Sai Educare, the system of education started by Bhagavan Baba, and told that many countries had started following this system of education, and Sathya Sai Schools were being established in many parts of the world. The second speaker, Sri S.V. Giri, Vice Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, explained that the worship of Devi in the nine days of Navaratri involved observance of certain austerities for the control of the mind and senses, and to achieve a higher level of consciousness. He observed that for this Abhyasa (incessant practice) was essential as explained in the Bhagavadgita. The last speaker of the afternoon was Sri N.B. Vineeth, a student of 2nd year M.Tech., Prasanthi Nilayam Campus. Sri Vineeth observed that education was the greatest gift of Bhagavan to His students since education given by Bhagavan was for life and not merely for a living. After these short speeches, Bhagavan Baba gave His Divine Discourse in which He revealed that Divinity is present in each and every person in the form of Sohumi. He further explained that Atmic Principle is led by Sohumi Principle and elaborated on the significance of chanting of Omkar and Sohumi. The day's programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan.

Three speakers shared their views and experiences with the devotees on the fifth day's meeting of Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha on the afternoon of 13<sup>th</sup> October 2002. The programme commenced with Vedic chants by Primary School students. The first speaker, Sri G.V. Subba Rao, narrated several incidents of the manifestations of Bhagavan's Divinity and told that Bhagavan Baba had the full powers of creation, sustenance and dissolution of Brahman. The second speaker, Dr. T. Ravi Kumar, a faculty member of Brindavan Campus, narrated some of his personal experiences and told how Bhagavan cured his father of cancer, paralytic stroke and a mental disorder which were considered impossible by the medical science. The third speaker, Prof. Jayalakshmi Gopinath, Principal and Warden, Anantapur Campus, narrated some of the early Leelas (divine play) of Bhagavan which she was fortunate enough to witness as she came to the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan in the early 1940's. After this, Bhagavan gave His Divine Discourse. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 6.05 p.m.

The proceedings of the 6<sup>th</sup> and final day of the meeting of Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha began at 3.00 p.m. with Vedic chants by the tiny-tots of Primary School. Two speakers blessed by Bhagavan to speak before His Discourse were: Sri Ashok Ahuja, a Research Scholar and Sri Sanjay Sahni, Lecturer in Commerce in Brindavan Campus of the Institute. Narrating his personal experience, Sri Ahuja explained how Bhagavan transformed His students and made them beautiful from inside so that each of His students shone with inner beauty. The second speaker, Sri Sanjay Sahni, narrated the story of Sage Vasishtha who earned immense merit by being in Brahmaloaka for a few minutes only, and said, "How lucky we are that we are in the Presence of Bhagavan Baba in His Parabrahma Loka of Prasanthi Nilayam!" After this, Bhagavan gave His sixth Dasara Discourse underlying the importance of Sathya, which is the source of the Vedas and the personification of Brahman. With this the proceedings of the Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha came to a happy conclusion. The day's function came a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 4.55 p.m.



## **ANNIVERSARY OF THE GRAND DECLARATION OF AVATARHOOD**

On 20th October 1940, young Sathya made the astounding declaration of His Avatarhood and revealed His Divinity at the age of 14 years. The Anniversary of this Grand Declaration of Avatarhood was celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam on 20th October 2002 in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba Himself. The function commenced at 2.30 p.m. in Sai Kulwant Hall after chanting of Vedic hymns by the students. Four learned speakers addressed the devotees before the Divine Discourse of Bhagavan Baba. They were: Sri S.V. Giri, Vice Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Dr. G. Venkataraman, former Vice Chancellor of the Institute, Prof. Jayalakshmi Gopinath, Principal and Warden of Anantapur College and Sri Anil Kumar, a faculty member of the Prasanthi Nilayam Campus of the Institute.

Referring to the unique institutions set up by Bhagavan to provide free quality education and state-of-the-art, medical aid to the needy people as also the stupendous Water Project for 700 villages of Anantapur District of Andhra Pradesh as the milestones in the Task undertaken by Bhagavan when He declared His Divine Mission in 1940, Sri Giri observed that Divine Love of Bhagavan was the most powerful medium of the success of these projects. This Avatar of Love, Sri Giri observed, gave love to people and what he expected from them in return was love and love alone. The learned speaker stated that Sathya Sai Educare, a unique system of education, provided integrated knowledge combining values and spirituality with secular learning. The second speaker, Dr. G. Venkataraman, also referred to the Grand Declaration of Avatarhood of 20th October 1940 when young Sathya revealed His true identity as Sai Baba. Quoting from a Discourse of Bhagavan, Dr. Venkataraman observed that Bhagavan had said that the name Sai Baba meant Divine Mother and Father. This is the role Bhagavan Baba has been performing from His childhood days by giving Divine Love to all His children in the world, he said.

The next speaker, Prof. Jayalakshmi Gopinath, related some Leelas of Bhagavan's childhood days which revealed the great values the Avatar had come to give to man by practising which he could attain salvation. She referred to her conversations with Swami's sisters Smt. Venkamma and Smt. Parvatamma, to reveal the sterling virtues like truth, tolerance, compassion and kindness which they observed in young Sathya. The last speaker of the programme was Sri Anil Kumar who explained the greatness of the Avatar in Telugu verses and observed that in this Age of Kali Bhagavan had incarnated to protect the good and to correct the evil and to give solace and happiness to the distraught. Millions of devotees from all parts of the world had experienced His Divine Love and grace, he said. The talk of Sri Anil Kumar was followed by a short musical interlude by the Anantapur College students. After this, Bhagavan Baba delivered His Divine Discourse bringing alive His school days at Urvakonda which had the proud privilege to be the witness of the revelation of Bhagavan's Divinity. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 5.30 p.m.

**DECEMBER 2002**

**BIRTHDAY MESSAGE**

**NEVER LEAVE THE PATH OF TRUTH**

*“The sun rises in the morning and sets in the evening with utmost regularity everyday. The stars glitter beautifully in the sky at night and hide themselves during the day. The wind blows incessantly and sustains the living beings without taking rest even for a moment. The rivers make pleasant sounds as they flow perennially. Who is the Master under whose sovereignty all these marvels are taking place? Come, listen to His command and obey it.”*

(Telugu Poem)

### *Embodiments of Love!*

Every man and every living being aspires to attain peace and happiness. Everyone tries to know the objective of life but few succeed in their endeavour. One in a million will persist with strong determination and will not give up till he realises the goal.

### *Taittiriya Upanishad Shows the Path of Wisdom*

Ordinary mortals do not make any efforts in this direction as they think it is something beyond their reach. They spend their lives in the pursuit of physical and ephemeral pleasures. They remain under the delusion that food, raiment and shelter are the three main objectives of human life. Their life centres round their wives and children. They fail to realise that there is a higher purpose in life than this.

Man should make efforts to attain wisdom and experience bliss. The Taittiriya Upanishad gives the analogy of a bird in this context. The head of this bird is Sraddha (steadfast faith). Its right and left wings represent Ritham (righteousness) and Sathyam (truth) respectively. The trunk represents Yoga and the tail, Mahattattwam (Self). What is Ritham? *Trikalabadhyam Ritham* (Ritham remains unchanged in the three periods of time - past, present and future). Sraddha is very important for every being. *Sraddhavan Labhate Jnanam* (one with steadfast faith attains wisdom). In the Bhagavadgita, Krishna said, “One with Sraddha can attain Me.” He further declared, “I am the very embodiment of Sraddha.” One without Sraddha cannot accomplish even a small task. Especially, in the field of spirituality, Sraddha is very essential. Strong and unwavering faith is Sraddha. The Upanishads have expounded the principle of Sraddha in varied ways. Wisdom attained through Sraddha is Tharakam (liberating). Knowledge acquired without Sraddha is Marakam (binding). The eternal principle of Tharaka must be understood, practised and propagated. This is the fundamental teaching of Taittiriya Upanishad.

### *Embodiments of Love!*

The Taittiriya Upanishad emphasises the need to develop Sraddha in all walks of life. In spirituality, Sraddha is the Tharaka Mantra which is eternal, immortal and changeless in all the three periods of time. Man can attain Jnana (wisdom) only by understanding and practising Sraddha, Ritham, Sathyam, Yoga and Mahattattwam. Jnana is not textual knowledge. *Advaita Darshanam Jnanam* (experience of non-dualism is wisdom). There is an underlying principle of non-dualism in the apparent dualism. This is the fundamental truth that Taittiriya Upanishad propounds. Adi Sankara toured all parts of India to propagate the philosophy of non-dualism.

### **Upanishadic Teachings Expounded by Ubhayabharati**

When Adi Sankara was proceeding on his victory march in the northern part of India, he met a great scholar by name Mandana Misra. Sankara entered into a scholarly debate with him. Ubhayabharati, the wife of Mandana Misra, was also a great scholar. She was well-versed in the

principles of Ritham, Sathyam, Mahattattwam, etc. It was decided that Mandana Misra would take to Sannyasa if he was defeated in the debate. Ubhayabharati was chosen to be the adjudicator of the contest. As the debate was in progress, she listened to the arguments and counter arguments with utmost concentration. She was impartial in her judgement and declared Sankara to be the winner. Being one of wisdom, she did not feel dejected that her husband was defeated in the debate. Mandana Misra took to Sannyasa in accordance with the terms and conditions of the debate. Ubhayabharati, being his Ardhangi (better half), followed suit. Both husband and wife renounced the world and propagated the path of wisdom. Human life has no value if one does not acquire wisdom. Wisdom can be attained only by understanding the unity principle of Ritham. *ManasyekamVachasyekam Karmanyekam Mahatmanam*. (those whose thoughts, words and deeds are in complete harmony are noble ones.) The oneness of thought, word and deed is Ritham. They represent the Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara. Hence, everyone must strive for the purity of these three. Take, for instance, a glass chimney placed over a lamp. After some time, a thin layer of soot gets accumulated over the glass. Consequently, light becomes dim. It is only when you clean the glass can you see the light clearly. This is what you are supposed to do. The soot that you find over the glass can be compared to ego that envelops your mind. It is because of ego that you are not able to visualise Divya Jnana Jyoti (divine flame of wisdom). How does ego enter your mind? It enters your mind when you give up the path of truth. You become egoistic when you do not know your true Self and develop worldly thoughts and feelings. In order to drive away ego, you should keep your worldly thoughts and feelings under control. It is impossible to acquire wisdom without getting rid of ego. To have the vision of the effulgent light of Atma, you have to remove the soot of ego covering your mind. This was the teaching of Ubhayabharati.

Ubhayabharati lived in a hermitage near the bank of the river Ganga, imparting spiritual teachings to women. Many women became her disciples. Everyday in the morning, they used to go to the bank of the Ganga to have a bath. On the way, there lived a Sannyasi whom people called Brahma Jnani. He had renounced the world to attain true wisdom. However, he was very much attached to a dried bottle-gourd in which he used to preserve water. One day, he was lying down using it as a pillow, lest somebody should steal it. Ubhayabharati who was on her way to the Ganga with her disciples observed this and remarked, "Though he is one of wisdom, there is a small defect in him. He has renounced the world but is attached to his bottle-gourd which he is using as his pillow." The Sannyasi overheard their conversation and became angry. When Ubhayabharati and her disciples were coming back from the Ganga, he threw away the bottle-gourd on the road, just to show that he was not attached to it. Seeing this, Ubhayabharati remarked, "I thought there was only one defect in him – Abhimana (attachment). Now I realise that he has another defect also – Ahamkara (ego). How can one with Ahamkara and Abhimana be a Jnani (one of wisdom)?" Her comment was an eye-opener for the Sannyasi.

Ubhayabharati toured the length and breadth of the country preaching and propagating the path of wisdom. Women are by nature the embodiments of Vijnana, Sujnana and Prajnana. They are the repositories of all virtues. But due to the impact of Kali Age, women are being looked down upon. It is a grave error. They must be treated with due respect. Today women compete with men to take up jobs. However, they must take care of their household needs before doing so.

Women are the personifications of courage and determination. They put up with all hardships with fortitude and safeguard the honour of their family. They live up to the reputation of a Grihini (housewife). Ubhayabharati propagated this idealism.

### **Renunciation Leads to Wisdom**

Man has to follow the path of truth to acquire wisdom. It is said, *Sathyam Bruyath, Priyam Bruyath, Na Bruyath Sathyamapriyam* (speak truth, speak pleasantly and do not speak unpalatable truth). These three correspond to moral, Dharmic and spiritual values respectively. Everything is contained in truth. You don't need to visit temples in search of God. Truth is verily God. It is all-pervasive. It confers plenty and prosperity on all. Hence, follow the path of truth. Practise righteousness. Acquire wisdom. For all this Sadhana, partaking of proper food is the first step. Purify the food by offering it to God. *Annam Brahma*. Consider food as verily the form of Brahma. *Raso Vishnu*. The essence of food that spreads to all parts of your body is Vishnu Swarupa. *Bhokta Devo Maheswara*. The partaker of food is the very embodiment of Siva principle. When man develops such sacred feelings, he becomes Siva himself.

Siva symbolises sacrifice and renunciation. In this world, everyone has Dehabhimana (body attachment) However, Siva has absolutely no body attachment. He has only Atmabhimana (love for the Self).

*“He has abundant hair with the moon adorning His head, the cool water of the Ganga flowing between the matted locks, with His radiant eye of wisdom in the middle of the forehead and the purple neck gleaming like the sheen of a blackberry. He wears serpent bracelets and a snake belt, His entire body is smeared with Vibhuti, His forehead is adorned with a kumkum dot, His ruddy lips glow with the juice of the betel, diamond-studded gold earrings dangle from His ears and His whole swarthy body glows with divine effulgence.”*

(Telugu

Poem)

Once Parvati approached Lord Siva and expressed her desire to have a house built for themselves. She said, “Oh Lord, You go from house to house begging for alms and are not concerned to provide a dwelling for us. Without a proper shelter, how can we live together?” Siva pacified her, saying, “Parvati! What is the use of building a house? Rats will make it their home before we even enter it. In order to control the rats, we need to have a cat. Then we will have to buy a cow to provide milk for the cat. In this manner, our requirements will get multiplied and we will lose our peace of mind. Hence, do not entertain such desires.” Siva has no body attachment. He is the personification of renunciation. Total renunciation leads one to wisdom. This is the teaching of Lord Siva to mankind.

What is wisdom? Purity of thought, word and deed is true wisdom. Your body, mind and actions must be pure. On this basis it is said, *the proper study of mankind is man*. It means that the unity of thought, word and deed is true humanness. It is very simple and easy to practise. But no one is making any effort in this direction. Though the Ganga is flowing nearby, people do not bathe in it. Then what is the use? How can you attain purity without making any effort? Though you have all the conveniences, you do not make use of them. This is utter laziness and a sign of Thamo Guna. You have to get rid of this animal quality, develop humanness and rise to the level of the Divine.

### **Unsacred Food Creates Unsacred Thoughts**

### *Embodiments of Love!*

What you have to learn today is to purify your heart. Let this be your foremost endeavour. With purity of heart, you can achieve anything. In order to attain purity of heart, you have to partake of sacred food with sacred feelings. One who cooks food should also have sacred feelings. In olden days, orthodox Brahmins used to insist on partaking of food prepared by their wives only since the housewives cook with the feeling of the well-being of the entire family. On the other hand, if you employ cooks, God knows with what feelings they prepare the food! The unsacred thoughts of the cook enter the food and pollute it. *Annam Brahma* (food is God). Hence, it should be prepared with sacred feelings. Mere physical cleanliness will not suffice; the mind also should be pure. You should see to it that the materials used for preparing food are procured in a righteous manner. For example, husband brings vegetables from the market. He might have misused his position of authority and brought them without making payment or the vendors themselves might have procured the vegetables by unfair means. Such acts pollute the food. The food polluted in this way becomes unfit for eating. You do not realise that the food you eat is responsible for the actions you perform. Unsacred food makes you do unsacred deeds.

### *Embodiments of Love!*

Have your food only after praying and offering it to God. Only then will the food become sanctified and illumine your intellect. Once there lived a Sannyasi along with his disciples in an Ashram (hermitage) near Sivananda Ashram in Rishikesh. He was a pious soul. One day, an aged rich man donated some money to offer food to the Ashramites on the eleventh day of the death of his young wife. The rich man had married the young daughter of a poor man by offering money to him. She spent her time languishing over her fate in the rich man's house. Disgusted of leading such a life, one day she jumped into the Ganga and ended her life. The rich man was performing obituary rites on the eleventh day of her death. There was a convention in the Ashram that cooked food was not accepted. So, the rich man gave the required amount for preparing the food. The pure-hearted Sannyasi partook of the food along with other inmates of the Ashram. He could not get proper sleep that night. He saw a young girl in his dream. He thought to himself, "I have never thought of any woman nor do I have a craving for sensual pleasures. Then, why do I get such bad dreams?" He got the same vision even in his meditation. So, he went to his Guru by name Satchidananda and explained his predicament: "Swami, why am I getting such unsacred visions?" The Guru told him not to worry. He sent word for the rich man, spoke to him and found out that the young girl had committed suicide. He understood that she was appearing in the dream of the Sannyasi as he had partaken of the food prepared as part of her obituary rites. From that day, the Sannyasi stopped eating food and lived merely on fruits and milk. *Bhikshannam Deharakshartham* (food is essential to sustain the body). A car needs petrol to run. In the same way, the body requires food to sustain it. So, one has to eat something or the other to sustain the body. Sometimes, you get bad dreams and bad visions during meditation. This is the result of unsacred food. You have to enquire before cooking whether the provisions have been obtained through sacred means. Only then the food becomes fit for consumption.

Before partaking of food, you should pray:

*Brahmarpanam Brahma Havir*

*Brahmagnou Brahmanahutam  
Brahmaiva Thena Ganthavyam  
Brahma Karma Samadhina.*

If you pray with sacred feelings, the food gets sanctified. Defects of the food are thereby removed. This was the teaching of Ubhayabharati to all the people of the world. She was endowed with true knowledge because she had a pure heart.

*Embodiments of Love!*

From this day, chant the sacred Mantra before partaking of food. Then no unsacredness would enter your heart. *Annam Brahma; Raso Vishnu; Bhokta Devo Maheswara* (food is Brahma, essence is Vishnu; one who partakes of it is Maheswara). These three correspond to the body, mind and action respectively. Purity of thought, word and deed is true wisdom. You don't need to undertake any other spiritual practice. People undertake various Sadhanas. But they give only temporary satisfaction. On the other hand, when you have purity of thought, word and deed, you will experience eternal bliss.

### **Practise Ritham and Sathyam**

*Embodiments of Love!*

Ritham is that which is changeless in the three periods of time – past, present and future. That is true wisdom. That which undergoes change is Marakam and that which is changeless is Tharakam.

*“Understand the principle of Tharakam with the grace of Sadguru and find the difference between eternal and ephemeral. Know the secret of Tharakam (Soham) which the Jivatma (individual soul) repeats without a break in all the three states of Jagrat (waking), Swapna (dream) and Sushupti (deep sleep).”*

(Telugu Song)

You may belong to any religion or community; you have to understand this Tharaka Mantra. Today people call themselves devotees but their actions do not match their claim. Their thoughts, words and deeds are filled with untruth and unrighteousness. Their love is tainted with selfishness and self-interest. They pose themselves to be devotees, go round the world and indulge in all sorts of evil deeds. Externally, they look to be pious but inwardly they are filled with evil propensities. Such people are the worst sinners. They ruin their lives for the sake of money. Beware of such people and keep them at a distance. It is a sin even to look at their faces. Some devotees said, “Swami, we want to attend Your Birthday celebration but we are unable to get leave. So, we have decided to apply for sick leave and come.” Then I told them, “It is not the right thing to do. It does not matter if you are unable to come, but do not tell untruth.” Observe Sathya Vratam (vow of truth). Only then can you have the vision of Sarveswara (Lord of the universe). You can manifest your divinity only by observing Sathya. Always speak truth. This is what you have to learn today. Truth is the basis of your life. Truth is verily God. Hence, never stray away from the path of truth. Purify yourself through prayer to God. True wisdom will then dawn on you.

Nine paths of devotion have been prescribed for spiritual aspirants. They are: Sravanam (listening), Kirtanam (singing), Vishnusmaranam (contemplating on Vishnu), Padasevanam (serving His Lotus Feet), Vandanam (salutation), Archanam (worship), Dasyam (servitude), Sneham (friendship), Atmanivedanam (self-surrender). You should develop friendship with God. If God is your friend, the whole world will be under your control. It is unfortunate that we are

losing friendship with God today. Friendship comes before self-surrender. It is not easy to make friendship with God. You have to make sincere efforts in this direction. Once you develop friendship with God, you should strive to bring it to fulfilment through Sadhana. Do not waste time in idle talk.

*Students!*

Having pursued your education here and having listened to Swami's teachings, you should transform yourself into ideal human beings. People from far-off lands wait for a chance to come here. Having been blessed with the sacred opportunity of constantly living in the Divine Presence, make full use of it. Never use harsh words. Never speak untruth. Sometimes, telling truth may lead to danger. If you are afraid that your speaking truth can harm others, better do not speak anything. But do not commit the sin of uttering untruth. In such a situation, observe silence. By observing silence, you can achieve everything. As you are all in the prime of your youth, this is the best time to embark on the path of truth. *Start early, drive slowly, reach safely.* If you start early, your whole life will become comfortable. You can attain the goal of life by adhering to the sacred path of truth.

I am not at all interested in celebrating My Birthdays. Devotees wanted to arrange various programmes on this occasion. But I did not permit them. As many of you have gathered here, this meeting is taking place. Otherwise, I have no interest even in this meeting. To Me, everyday is a festival day. I am always blissful. I am the embodiment of eternal bliss. (*loud applause*) What type of bliss? It is not something which others give. I don't wait for others to give Me bliss. My bliss originates from within.

*Nityanandam, Parama Sukhadam, Kevalam Jnanamurtim, Dwandwateetam, Gagana Sadrisham, Tattwamasyadi Lakshyam, Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee Sakshibhutam, Bhavateetam, Trigunarahitam* (God is the embodiment of eternal bliss, He is wisdom absolute, the One without a second, beyond the pair of opposites, expansive and pervasive like the sky, the goal indicated by the Mahavakya Tattwamasi, eternal, pure, unchanging, the witness of all functions of the intellect, beyond all mental conditions and the three Gunas of Sattwa, Rajas and Thamas).

I am beyond all attributes. Believe it or not, I am bliss personified. If you think otherwise, the defect lies in you. Whatever I do is for your good, for your welfare and for your happiness. Lead a blissful and unblemished life. That is what I desire from you. I have no worries or suffering at any point of time. Why should I worry when I have everything? I have no desires. Whatever I tell, whatever I do is good for you, not for Me. I have come for your sake. Hence, take full advantage of My advent. I am always ready, provided you develop sacred thoughts. Lead a divine life. Sometimes, I do not talk to you. You think, "We might have committed some mistake. That is why Swami is not talking to us." But truly speaking, it is not My nature to look for defects in others. My vision is highly sacred. I always see good in you. The bad you see is your own imagination. Because there is something bad in you, you are seeing the same in others. But to Me, even bad appears as good. Hence, do not entertain any doubts regarding Swami. *Samsayatma Vinasyati* (one with doubts will perish). Have firm faith.

*Embodiments of Love!*

Welcome your guests and give them due respect. Give your love to all. Feed the hungry. Only then can you have peace of mind. Practise Ritham. Have Trikarana Suddhi (purity of thoughts, words and deeds). There is no greater wisdom than this. This is the Tharakam path. If you waver every moment, you are the most unfortunate one. Fickleness is the attribute of a monkey mind. You belong to mankind. Having been born as a human being, you should develop steadiness of mind. Mankind is Tharakam, monkey mind is Marakam.

*Embodiments of Love!*

On this Birthday, you have to learn something very important, i.e., do not waste your time in idle talk. Time once lost cannot be regained. Every man on this earth can see God, which is nothing but truth. Consider truth as God. *Sathyannasti Paro Dharma* (there is no Dharma greater than adherence to truth). Follow Sathya and Dharma.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the song, “*Sathya Dharmamu Santhi Premalato ...*”

- **From Bhagavan’s Birthday Message in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 23rd November 2002.**



## 21st Convocation of SSSIHL

### DR. ABDUL KALAM COMMENDS VALUE BASED EDUCATION

*Appreciating the valuable role played by Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning in imparting value based education to its students under the divine direction of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam observed that this system of education would give to the country great leaders to make it a developed nation. He said, "As the vision for Independence Movement created so many leaders, I am sure Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, with its value based education in this divine environment, will generate great leaders who will excel in various fields and actively participate in the mission to transform India into a developed nation."*

*Dr. Kalam was delivering the Convocation Address at the 21st Convocation of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning held in beautifully decorated Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 22nd November 2002. Raising the question asked by educationists whether value based education could be put into practice, the President expressed great satisfaction that SSSIHL had shown the path in real terms. He asked this question at the outset of his Convocation Address: "Is value based education possible?", and went on to reply, "Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning has given the answer in the affirmative."*

*Referring to the stupendous task of providing education with values to the youth of the entire nation, Dr. Kalam felt that the nation needed a time bound programme to achieve this. He said, "I am in a place where university learning takes place in a divine environment. Here students get education with a value system. I would like to congratulate Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning for this noble education. Similarly, we have a few more institutions imparting quality education with a value system. But we have to go miles and miles as we have to educate nearly 300 million young minds. A time bound programme to accomplish this value based education throughout the country has to be in place, since education is not merely imparting of information and skills."*

*The President referred to the Divine Mission of Bhagavan Baba in elevating mankind and said, "The Prasanthi Nilayam Campus has a divine mission of providing education with values, healthcare and rural development in an integrated way."*

The Ceremonial Procession which started from Poornachandra at 3.00 p.m. was led into Sai Kulwant Hall by the band of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. The Registrar of the Institute carried the Ceremonial Mace accompanied by two students carrying the Institute Insignia. At the head of the procession was the Chancellor Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba with the Vice Chancellor Sri S.V. Giri and the Chief Guest Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the President of India. As soon as the Ceremonial Procession entered Sai Kulwant Hall, it was greeted with a thunderous applause by the mammoth gathering in the Hall. After the procession reached the dais, the Vice Chancellor garlanded the Chief Guest which was followed by invocatory chants by students. Bhagavan Baba declared the Convocation open by pressing the switch which lighted up the Convocation banner right in front of the dais. The hall reverberated with applause.

## **Vice Chancellor's Introductory Remarks**

The Vice Chancellor in his introductory remarks welcomed the gathering and brought out the unique features of the Institute referring to the message and mission of Bhagavan Baba. Highlighting the significant events of the year, the Vice Chancellor referred to the Summer Course, Annual Sports and Cultural Meet, and the Grama Seva and observed that combined with the regular curricular and extracurricular activities of the Institute, they shaped the students into caring, sharing and responsible citizens with Seva as an expression of love deeply etched in their psyche. On the academic front, he highlighted the new and sophisticated areas of research undertaken in the Institute in the fields of Nuclear Physics, Strategic and Financial Management, Molecular Biology, etc. He said that the UGC Committee for the Tenth Plan which visited the Institute during the last month was highly appreciative of the system of Integral Education imparted at the Institute and the excellent standards observed in every aspect of its functioning. They expressed the hope that this Institute would serve as the beacon light for the entire university system in the country.

Bhagavan Baba then handed over a cheque for Rs. 60 lakhs to Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa to be deposited in the names of 60 children adopted under Sri Sathya Sai Deenajanoddharana Pathakam (Sri Sathya Sai Project for the Uplift of Destitute Children). This amount will be handed over with accumulated interest to the children when they complete their education, so that they can have a confident and decent start in life.

## **Graduates Presented to the Chancellor**

The graduands of the year were then presented to the Revered Chancellor. They stood up and took the pledge administered by the Vice Chancellor to conduct themselves in a manner that is befitting a member of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning in their daily life and in thought, word and deed, and ultimately to dedicate their life to uphold and advance the social and all-round welfare of their fellowmen.

It was a great delight to witness the gold medallists, among whom were several lady students, receive their medals and certificates from the Revered Chancellor's Divine Hands. They were heartily cheered and applauded by the entire gathering. All through, there was commendable orderliness and show of cheer.

## **Convocation Address by the President, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam**

Dr. Abdul Kalam began his Convocation Address by congratulating the graduands of the Convocation for their achievement and for the blessed opportunity of passing through the portals of the Institute. He expressed his anguish at the current state of affairs in the country and his desire to make it problem-free. At this juncture, he said that Sri Sathya Sai Institute had given him a ray of hope with its high calibre graduates and the constant presence of Divine blessings of Bhagavan Baba all around. He shared the perception of the intense concern of Bhagavan Baba to alleviate the people's pain, difficulties and problems of the day. He quoted Bhagavan's saying which goes thus:

*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.  
When there is order in the nation,  
There is peace in the world.*

He said that such a statement could come only from a divine personality and praised the students for being really blessed with such a divine environment.

Praising the education being imparted in Sri Sathya Sai educational institutions, the President observed that it was connecting the heart, character, nation and the world. He said that the integration of technology and spiritualism would result in enlightened citizens. He stated that agriculture and food processing, reliable and quality power supply to all parts of the country, education and healthcare, information and communication technology and the growth of strategic sectors for integrated action were the important areas of focus in order to transform India into a developed nation in a time bound manner. He said that this would lead to a prosperous, secure and peaceful India. In this context Dr. Kalam observed, “I see devotees here doing social work ceaselessly with the blessings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. If this divine spirit spreads to every citizen and makes each one to think that the nation is bigger than the individual and guide them to work for national development, then I am sure India will become a developed nation.”

Dr. Kalam concluded his Address, saying, “When the child is empowered by the parents at various phases of growth, the child gets transformed into a responsible citizen. When the teacher is empowered with knowledge and experience, good young human beings with value system take shape. When the individual or a team is empowered with technology, transformation to higher potential for achievement is assured. When the leader of any institution empowers his or her people, leaders are born who can change the nation in multiple areas. When women are empowered, society with stability gets assured. When the political leaders of the nation empower people through visionary policies, prosperity of the nation is certain. When religion transforms into a spiritual force, people become enlightened citizens with a value system.”

### **Benedictory Address by the Chancellor, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba**

Bhagavan in His Benedictory Address observed that a real student was one who contemplated on the meaning, purpose, standard, nature and the benefits of education and understood them thoroughly. He stated that education was not merely an exercise meant to make a living but for the purpose of achieving the goal of life. He exhorted the students not to ask for their rights, rather shoulder their responsibilities and said that when one performed one's duty, the result of that action came as a right. (The full text of the Benedictory Address of Bhagavan is given elsewhere.)

The Convocation proceedings came to a conclusion with the singing of National Anthem at 5.15 p.m.

### **Convocation Drama by the Students**

The students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning presented a drama entitled “Saa Vidya Yaa Vimuktaye” on the 21st Convocation of the Institute on 22nd November 2002 in Poornachandra Auditorium. Besides the mammoth gathering of devotees, the Chancellor Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the President of India, Dr. Abdul Kalam and other dignitaries witnessed the drama.

The story revolves round the life of a young doctor Deepak who cannot afford his medical college fee. Driven to desperation, Deepak finds inspiration in the words of wisdom of his devout father who advises him to surrender to God. To his utter surprise, God answers his prayer and sends help to him in a mysterious way. Deepak completes his M.D. in 8 years along with his friends Amar, Sayeed and Bernard and meets his benefactor who tells him that his free education was a gift from God and he should now serve his fellowmen to serve God. Deepak then takes to a life of service and tells his friends that the life of a doctor was like a candle which burned itself to give light of life to others. When Deepak fully devotes his life to the service of mankind and when his yearning to see God becomes intense, he gets a glimpse of Divinity in the form of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Some time later, two students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning come to invite him to join a free medical camp under the benign guidance of Bhagavan Baba. He then sees the picture of Bhagavan Baba on the invitation card and finds to his surprise that Baba was the same person whom he saw in a vision. Later, all the friends join together and reach Prasanthi Nilayam and are overwhelmed by Bhagavan’s omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence. Following the teachings of Bhagavan Baba, they devote their lives in the service of mankind as they are totally transformed. This is the type of education that liberates man: “Saa Vidya Yaa Vimuktaye.”

A real life story presented in a very realistic manner left a lasting effect on the audience. Powerful acting of the cast moved many a heart. By far this was one of the most outstanding presentations of the Institute students in all respects. At the end of the play, Bhagavan Baba went up on to the stage, blessed the cast, posed for photographs with them and distributed mementoes to them. Bhagavan also materialised a bracelet for the student who played the role of Deepak in the drama. The programme came to a close at 7.30 p.m. with offer of Arati to Bhagavan.

## CONVOCATION DISCOURSE **ACQUIRE THE WEALTH OF DIVINITY**

**There are many people in this land of Bharat who could teach the essence of Vedanta even to the ancient Rishis,**

*They can make the inert stones dance by their sculptural skills,*

*They can make the heads of the enemies roll like rubber balls with their sharp swords,*

*They are highly skilled in music and other fine arts,*

*They can rule the entire world with their sovereign authority,*

*But what is the use?*

*Not one of them is prepared to listen to the heart rending cries  
of the common people.*

*What more is there to be conveyed other than this to this assembly of noble people?*

**(Telugu Poem)**

*Students – Boys and Girls!*

What is meant by education? What kind of education should we pursue? What should be the educational standards? What type of education contributes to the human development? What benefits do we derive from the present system of education? A true student is one who analyses these five issues and understands their meaning thoroughly. Vijnana and Prajnana are not merely the products of education. Man can acquire these sacred powers only by culture and refinement gained through education.

### **Spiritual Education is True Education**

What is culture? Culture is the conscious effort put in by man to achieve transformation in his daily life from untruth to truth, from unrighteousness to righteousness and from mortality to immortality. It is a spiritual journey towards divinity. Where is such divinity? It is in every human being in the form of truth. What you have to protect today is not only your country. First of all, you have to protect Sathya (truth) and Dharma (righteousness); they, in turn, will protect the country. Peace and prosperity of the world will then be ensured. The entire universe is based upon Sathya and Dharma.

*The creation emerges from truth and merges into truth,*

*Is there a place where truth does not exist?*

*Visualise such pure and unsullied truth.*

(Telugu Poem)

The life of every human being is based upon Sathya. Sathya and Dharma alone protect the universe. But, unfortunately, man is unable to recognise this fact and is leading a miserable life.

*Embodiments of Love!*

Education is not an exercise. Neither is it for making a living. Education is for life. It is for the purpose of achieving the goal of life. Dear students! You are born and brought up in this sacred country. Bharat is your motherland. But you are unable to recognise the sacredness of Bharat. Bharat is Karma Bhumi (land of action) where you perform sacred actions. It is Punya Bhumi (land of merit) where you earn Punya (merit) by the diligent performance of your Kartavya (duty). You should recognise your latent divinity and rise from the level of humanness to that of Divinity. What is the relationship between this sacred land and Divinity? This is hand; this is leg; this is head; this is stomach; all these are parts of the body. The body is a combination of different organs. There is humanness in the body. That humanness is a part of society. Society is a part of Prakriti (Nature). Nature, in turn, is associated with Paramatma (Supreme Being). Thus, Prakriti (Nature) is an Anga (part) of Paramatma. When man recognises the relationship between these parts and sub-parts (Angangas), he will be able to understand Divinity.

*Embodiments of Love!*

If you seriously think, you will understand that it is Divinity that sustains humanity. Without Divinity, man cannot live even for a moment. Out of his ego, man may think that he can live by himself. But this is not true. There is no fulfilment in life if you pass your time somehow. Life becomes meaningful if you do your duty sincerely. When you enquire whether duty comes first or right, many people are likely to give priority to right. Where did right come from? When you perform your duty, its fruit in the shape of right accrues to you. How can there be right without

duty? How can a child exist without the mother? Therefore, right is not the first priority. In fact, man has no right at all. When he performs his duty, the result of that action comes as right. When you enquire into the fact whether the rain comes first or the flow of water, it becomes clear that flow of water follows the rain. Without rain, there cannot be a flow. Here, the flow can be compared to right and rain to duty.

*Students – Boys and Girls!*

You are putting a lot of effort in your studies to acquire high academic qualifications. In spite of all this effort, you are not having peace of mind. It is said, secular education is for happiness in the mundane world and spiritual education helps man to achieve the goal of his life. In order to acquire spiritual education, one must spend some time in self-enquiry. Spiritual knowledge cannot be acquired from secular education. It is said, *Adyatma Vidya Vidyam* (spiritual education is true education) and “*Saa Vidya Yaa Vimuktaye*” (true education is that which liberates). Students have many doubts regarding spirituality. They are not able to recognise their immanent divinity. Therefore, first and foremost the students must enquire, “Who am I?” They must also realise the fact that right carries responsibility with it. If the parents do not fulfil their responsibility, how can the children live? The children should never neglect their responsibility towards their parents. In Indian culture, first place has been given to the mother and father. The Vedas declare, *Matrudevo Bhava* (revere your mother as God) and *Pitrudevo Bhava* (revere your father as God).

### **Your Education Helps you to Serve your Motherland**

Today science is considered great. How did it acquire greatness? Science deals with the physical aspects of the universe and strives to explore the secrets of the universe. But there is a higher knowledge which deals with the basis of creation, sustenance and dissolution of the universe. That is spirituality. Without that spiritual basis, science has little value. Churchill once said, “Man has conquered all but he has not conquered himself.” Man today is making efforts to explore everything in the world but he is unable to realise his own nature. What is the use of such knowledge? Therefore, man must begin enquiry into himself as to who he is, what his nature is, what his latent powers are, etc. In the olden days when the convocations were held, the teachers used to teach the students such noble principles as *Matrudevo Bhava*, *Pitrudevo Bhava*, *Acharyadevo Bhava*, *Atithidevo Bhava* (revere your mother, father, preceptor and guest as God). First, it is the mother who gives you birth. Then, she shows you the father. The father takes you to the Guru and finally the Guru leads you to God. Unfortunately, today there are very few Gurus who lead you to God. That is a different matter. The mother who is responsible for your very birth in this world is being forgotten today. Similarly, the motherland where you are born is also being neglected.

*Dear Students!*

Today you are receiving your degrees and leaving this Institute. There are about two hundred universities in India. Thousands of colleges are functioning under these universities. Every year, these universities award degrees to lakhs of students and send them into the wide world. But, what are these students doing in the outside world? How do these highly educated people make their living? Students are given education in these universities to make a living. It is not

possible for all these degree holders to get jobs. Therefore, these educated people migrate to foreign countries. Having gone there, not all of them make a decent living. They, therefore, undertake some menial jobs to supplement their income. The question is, why do they not do the same service in their own country, Bharat? Today the educated people are not serving their motherland. They do not serve their own country, but are prepared to undertake any type of job in a foreign country. This is not proper. This is not the purpose for which you acquired education. You should serve your own country with all your energy. Your entire life must be devoted to serve the country in which you are born and brought up. With the help of your education, you must face the battle of life with courage and valour and ultimately emerge victorious.

Today's students are not prepared to do hard work with patience and perseverance. Work is important. To pursue education and obtain degrees is not important. It is more than fifty years since India attained Independence. Lakhs of students have acquired higher qualifications during these fifty years or so. But, what are they doing? They are not undertaking service to society. They do not live up to the glory of this country. First and foremost, one must realise the sacredness of this great country, Bharat. One who cannot protect his own home, how can he protect that of another?

*Dear Students!*

Give up the idea of going to foreign countries for earning money. Even if you are not able to get any employment in your country, remain here and serve the country. You should serve society. Bring honour and glory to your motherland, Bharat. Earn the reputation that you are a man of action. You all know about Abdul Kalam, the President of India, and the Chief Guest of today's function. I may tell you that he has not gone to a foreign country in search of a job or money. He is a great scientist. He has acquired all the scientific knowledge from the Indian universities only. What is there in other countries which is not here? It is said, *Yanna Bharate, Thanna Bharata*. That which is not here in Bharat is not there anywhere else. All the resources and capabilities are present in India. Forgetting the glory of such a great country, what can you achieve in a foreign country? Instead of making use of all your education and energy for the development of a foreign country, work for the development of your own country. Why don't you serve the people of your own country? You will attain glory only when you make use of your education for protecting and serving your motherland. You must, in the first instance, work hard. You must become heroes in action. It is not proper for you to spend your time in idle talk, without involving yourself in some solid work for the benefit of the nation. Bend your body and work hard to attain glory. A seed that is sown in the soil loses itself to ultimately become a gigantic tree and yields sweet fruits. On the same analogy, it is only when you destroy your ego and lose your identity, real fruit of your actions comes out. Therefore, get rid of your Dehabhimana (attachment to your body) and develop Deshabhimana (attachment to the country). Today you do not find Deshabhimana anywhere. Several students today are not aware of the importance of National Anthem; they do not know how to sing it. But, surprisingly, they know the cinema songs in great number. They should try to understand the glory and significance of the National Anthem.

*Students – Boys and Girls!*

You must protect the honour of this great country. You must develop self-respect. One who has lost self-respect cannot win the esteem of others. Today the students wish to acquire wealth, power and friends. What about character? What is the use of all these without character? Friendship today is limited to 'hello, hello' and inside, everything is hollow. Therefore, you must give first preference to character. When you respect others, others will respect you. You complain that others are not respecting you. But you should enquire whether you are respecting others. You serve others; others will then serve you. What you expect from others, you give it to others first. Today people remain unconcerned about the suffering of their neighbours and have become self-centred. It is not proper. Respect your neighbours and look after their welfare. You may have wealth; you may be great; you may be leading a comfortable life. But all these things will not be of any value if you do not have character.

*Dear Students!*

You must cultivate the human values of Sathya (truth), Dharma (righteousness), Santhi (peace), Prema (love) and Ahimsa (non-violence). How can you call yourself a human without cultivating human values? You are considered a human being only because of the human values. If you do not have the human quality of respecting others, then how can you expect others to respect you? The human values are divine qualities. Anything can be achieved with these qualities. But you are not making any effort to cultivate them.

### **Self-respect and Self-confidence Lead to Success in Life**

Love is a quality which permeates every living being. Truth is verily the embodiment of Divinity. It is in you, with you, around you, everywhere protecting you always. You need not search for God in some distant place. Truth is God. Never give up truth even in times of danger to your life. Hold on to truth steadfastly at all times.

*Embodiments of Love!*

One may be a big person and another a beggar. But the truth that is immanent in both is the same. If you realise that truth, all will become one. That type of unity must be achieved. When you realise the principle of unity in all human beings, you can realise divinity. You observe the principle of unity in diversity manifesting itself in the universe. For example, there are several types of bulbs here in this Sai Kulwant Hall. But the electric current flowing in all these bulbs is the same. Indian culture has proclaimed this truth: *Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma* (verily all this is Brahman). When you realise this truth, you will have all progress and prosperity. You need not have to struggle for them. When you have the wealth of divinity within you, why do you run after trivial worldly riches? Learn to speak good words. Never hurt anybody with harsh words. Speak softly and sweetly to make all people happy.

*Embodiments of Love!*

If your words are good, your actions will also be good. *You cannot always oblige but you can speak always obligingly.* When you speak obligingly, how much your status grows! Society will respect you. I have often cited the example of Abraham Lincoln, who became the President of America. In his childhood, Lincoln did not have enough money even for his studies. He was so poor that he had to study under streetlights. He used to borrow books from his classmates and read them during night time and return them the next morning. One day, his friends made fun of



him, saying how this beggar could pursue his education. He came home, crying and poured out his heart to his mother and told her how he was being insulted and humiliated. His mother consoled him saying, “My dear son, do not get perturbed by praise or blame. Understand the situation at home. Your father cannot afford spending money on your education. Develop self-respect. Self-respect is your property, it is your treasure and it is verily your God.” These words made a lasting impression on the tender heart of Lincoln. He acquired self-confidence and self-respect with the encouragement of his mother. He did not hesitate to supplement the family income by doing some odd jobs. Nevertheless, throughout his educational career, he maintained his self-respect. By doing so, he earned a good name in society. In the meanwhile, he could secure a small job. With the meagre income from that job, he used to support his father and mother. The good name he earned in society commanded the respect and love of his fellowmen for him. In due course, elections came. His well-wishers and supporters advised him to contest the elections. They assured him of their support and votes. He told them that he wanted only self-respect and not money. On their advice, he contested the elections and won. Ultimately, he rose to the position of the President of America.

How could a poor carpenter’s son with no money even to pursue primary education become the President of the United States of America? It is only because of the self-respect and self-confidence he assiduously cultivated right from his childhood. Therefore, dear students! Do not ever give up self-respect, wherever you are and whichever circumstances you are placed in. Always remind yourself, “I am man, I am not animal.” Man today is playing with the fire of sensual pleasures. But how long can you continue like this? There is absolutely no purpose in indulging in this game. All your wealth and pleasures will vanish in no time. Only your self-respect will continue to be your companion throughout your life. Therefore, cultivate self-respect which is a divine quality. Only then can you become the beacon light for the nation. As a candle burns itself to give light, you should dedicate yourself to the service of your fellowmen. This is the theme of the drama which our students are presenting this evening.

### **Dedicate your Life to the Service of Society**

It is really a presentation based on the life story of Abraham Lincoln. In this drama, a student wished to study medicine. He wanted to become a doctor. He worked hard, studied under streetlights even and got admission into a reputed medical college. He had to pay five lakh rupees as fee which he could not afford. As he was feeling depressed and dejected, his father consoled him saying, “My dear son! Do not worry. God is there to fulfil your wish. He protects all people at all times.” These words of wisdom made an indelible mark on his heart. Next day he sat in the college garden and started writing a letter to God explaining his desire and his inability to fulfil his desire. “Oh God! People say You are omnipresent; my father also told me the same thing. I have full faith in the words of my father. If You are really omnipresent, why don’t You manifest before me and fulfil my desire?” Thus, while he was writing this letter, the bell rang and he hurriedly got up to leave for his classroom. In the process, the letter slipped from his books. He did not notice it. A rich philanthropist who came to the garden after some time noticed the letter. He picked it up and read it. He was very much moved by the determination of the boy to pursue medical education and his inability to do so due to financial constraints. He, therefore, went straight to the Principal of the Medical College, showed him the

letter written by the boy addressed to God and paid the entire fee in one lump sum. He requested the Principal not to reveal his identity to the boy till he completed his studies. The Principal called the boy and told him, “My dear son! Don’t worry about paying fee. Somebody has already paid your fee. You have absolute faith in God. You are sure to complete the course and come out in flying colours with God’s grace.” When he completed his medical education and became a doctor, his friends congratulated him, saying, “You will become a great doctor and earn a lot of money.” Then the boy said, “I am not interested in earning money. The purpose of my pursuing medical education is to serve the people. My life is dedicated to the service of society. Just as I studied this course paying no fee, similarly I wish to serve the people without taking any fee from them.”

Do you find such boys nowadays? Such children are very rare. You cannot admit your child in any school without paying donation. Even advance reservation is made in a school for a newly born child. You book a seat by paying Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 30,000. But faith can work wonders. For a person who has self-confidence and absolute faith in God, anything is possible. Faith is the key. Without faith, how can one live in this world? *“People have become blind in this world as they have lost their eyes of faith.”* (Telugu Poem) Opening of your Charma Chakshu (physical eyes) is not that important. Open your Jnana Chakshu (inner eye of wisdom). Only then will you achieve the desired result.

### **Sri Sathya Sai Deenajanoddharana Pathakam**

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

You studied in Swami’s institution for a long time. Did you ever spend any money on your education here? Tell Me honestly. I feel worried if you have to spend money on any occasion during your stay in this Institution. I am revealing a small incident that happened some time ago. Normally, I will not reveal such things. Usually, during examination time, students study the whole night, keeping the lights on. Consequently, the electricity bill came to a huge amount. Meanwhile, exactly two months before the examinations, the Electricity Department disconnected power supply to the hostel due to non-payment of the bill. They cannot be blamed, for, it is their duty. There was no light in the hostel rooms. Students were feeling a lot of inconvenience. The warden came to Me and explained their plight. I asked him, “Why did you not bring it to My notice earlier?” The warden replied, “Swami! You are spending so much amount on the education of the students. You are taking so much responsibility. How can I add some more burden? With that intention, I did not bring it to Your notice.” I enquired from him the amount of the bill. He replied that it came to Rs. 70,000. Thereupon I advised him, “Go immediately and pay the entire amount. Ask the Department people to restore the power supply immediately. Do not reveal to the students anything of what transpired between you and Me.” In this way, I look after the students.

Today I have given a cheque for sixty lakh rupees to Paramahansa to be deposited in the names of the sixty children adopted under the Project “Sri Sathya Sai Deenajanoddharana Pathakam”. Some time ago, I happened to read a report about a mother who committed suicide after giving poison to her three children. She resorted to such a gruesome act as there was nobody to look after them after her husband’s death. I felt very sorry reading this news. Our country, Bharat is called Annapurna Kshetra. In such a sacred land, how can we remain a mute witness to people dying of hunger and poverty? Hence, I

decided to undertake a project under which poor children who lost their father, in some cases both parents, are adopted and provided the basic necessities of food, raiment and shelter. Their education is also taken care of. These children were selected from Bukkapatnam, Kothacheruvu and Puttaparthi Mandals. They belong to very poor families who were finding it hard to feed themselves. We told the children, “We will give you food, shelter and also education. We will make you self-reliant. You need not worry.” Within a short period of one month, I got houses constructed for them. One lakh rupees are deposited in the name of each child. By the time they complete their education, this money will get multiplied into three to four lakhs. They can lead a comfortable life with this money. When this was told in the beginning, people could not believe it. How can they believe? They are carried away by untruth. When truth is conveyed to them, they are not prepared to believe it.

The children are being looked after very well. Paramahansa is taking care of them with all love. The children are brought here in a bus for Swami’s Darshan. They are extremely happy. All of them are learning Vedic Mantras even. Whenever I ask them, “Are you happy?” they say, “Yes, Swami. When You are looking after us like a wish-fulfilling tree, how can we be otherwise?” (*loud applause*) They are so happy because they are being looked after with love. Money cannot give such happiness. In this manner, we are performing many sacred activities. I am not interested in publicising them. Some people may not believe this but I am not bothered. I will not give up My resolve. We should serve the poor and needy. We should strive for their uplift. After all, they are also human beings and we should treat them as our own.

### **Love your Country like Dr. Abdul Kalam**

*Students!*

Having completed your education, it is time for you to go back to your respective places, take up suitable jobs and serve your parents. Once in a while, you can come here to recharge your batteries. Otherwise, you may forget whatever you have learnt here. Your stay here becomes meaningful only when you practise what you have learnt here.

(Swami asked Sri Raghupathi Rao to get up and said.) He lost his father when he was very young. He came here with his mother. I gave her a job in the Anantapur Hostel. After some time, she also passed away. Then I brought this boy here and educated him. He has completed his MBA and is presently working as a lecturer in our Brindavan Campus. He pursued his education with Sraddha (sincerity). I have been looking after many such students. This is My duty because all are Mine. I belong to them and they belong to Me. As they are being looked after with such love, they are shaping into ideal citizens. Here is the best example of an ideal student. He is a very good boy. He always respects his elders and never asks anything from others. In the very beginning I told him, “If you need anything, do not ask others. Come to Me straight and I shall give you.”

The reason why I am telling you all this at the Convocation is that you should also undertake such sacred work. Service to society is very important. *The best way to love God is to love all and serve all.* Let others think whatever they like, you should hold on to this sacred path. Serve your parents. Never hurt their feelings. This is the essence of education.

*Education confers humility which in turn bestows deservedness. Deservedness confers all types of wealth through which man can attain happiness here and hereafter.*

(Telugu Poem)

Humility is the hallmark of education. Give up ego and serve society with self-confidence. Students who did not have even a naya paisa with them are now earning thousands of rupees every month. They are good boys. So, they will not have any problem. I will take care of their future. I told this boy that he could go out and take up a job if he wished so. But he did not want to go anywhere. So, I gave him a job here with a good salary. I do not want anybody to work here without salary. Outside people may not be aware of this. I do not accept even a naya paisa from them. I undertake good work and hence, whatever I require will come to Me on its own. Lakhs of devotees are coming here. Did I ask anybody for anything? Never. There are many devotees who are coming here for more than forty years. But I have not asked them for any favour. I shall never ask. I shall not give up My resolve and shall continue the good work with firm resolve. My Mission is bound to succeed. It will never fail.

Children should be looked after well. Young men and women should be moulded into ideal citizens. For Me, there is no greater happiness than this. I often tell, My students are My property. (*loud prolonged applause*) I am happy if they come up in life and earn a good name for themselves. I do not expect anything else.

*Students!*

Today you are receiving your degrees. The university gives you a degree in education whereas I give you a degree in educare. The degree I confer on you is related to Atmananda. That is educare. Discharge your duty sincerely and I shall take care of your requirements. Do not give room to laziness. *Laziness is rust and dust. Realisation is best and rest.* Proceed on the path of self-realisation.

I am very happy that our President Abdul Kalam has come here and has taken part in the Convocation as Chief Guest. He has immense love for the nation. He is a Muslim by birth. He does not have any differences whatsoever. He loves all and treats all equally. He had all his education in India itself. He is a scientist par excellence. There are many scientists in the country. But what is the use? As the poem goes, “Twinkle twinkle little star, how I wonder what you are?”, they are attracted by foreign lands. But Abdul Kalam is not such a person. He does not have even a trace of Ahamkara (ego). His pure heart is his most beautiful Alamkara (ornament). He is a paragon of virtues. That is why he could become the President of this country. I wish that he brings back the pristine glory of Bharat during his tenure. The students should imbibe the spirit of patriotism. Never forget your country and honour the National Anthem wherever you go.

(The function came to a close with the singing of National Anthem by all.)

- **From Bhagavan’s Benedictory Address in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 22nd November 2002.**

## **BHAGAVAN'S 77TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

### **Akhanda Bhajan at Prasanthi Nilayam**

Global Akhanda Bhajan (non-stop singing of the glories of the Lord) for 24 hours during the Birthday Celebrations of Bhagavan Baba in the month of November has become an annual feature of the Sai Organisation since 1975 when Bhagavan Baba declared that it should be organised by all the Sai Centres simultaneously in all parts of the world with the objective of creating spiritual vibrations in the environment of the world vitiated by the negative thoughts, words and deeds of modern man. This year, the Akhanda Bhajan was held from 6.00 p.m. on 9th November to 6.00 p.m. on 10th November 2002.

This spiritual event of global magnitude has a special significance at Prasanthi Nilayam where Bhagavan Baba imparts powerful divine vibrations to it by His Divine Presence in the Mandir Bhajan Hall. A mammoth gathering of devotees took part in it at Prasanthi Nilayam. Sai Kulwant Hall was brilliantly lit and beautifully decorated for this occasion. Bhagavan lighted the sacred lamp in the Mandir Bhajan Hall at 6.00 p.m. on Saturday 9th November 2002 to inaugurate the Akhanda Bhajan. Immediately after this, the students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning started the Bhajans with three Omkars and Ganesh Vandana. The Bhajans were alternately led by the boys and girls students from the three campuses of the Institute, viz. Prasanthi Nilayam, Brindavan and Anantapur and followed in chorus by the devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall with great devotional fervour. Some groups of devotees and children also led the Bhajans. Bhagavan Baba blessed the devotees by His Divine Presence in the Mandir Bhajan Hall and showered His Divine Grace on all. The Bhajan continued throughout the night of 9th November 2002 and all through the day, and concluded at 6.00 p.m. on 10th November 2002 with offer of Arati to Bhagavan. After the conclusion of the Bhajan, Bhagavan sanctified the Prasadam kept in the Mandir Bhajan Hall in buckets by breaking coconuts with His Divine Hands and sprinkling their water on it. Prasadam was then distributed to all the assembled devotees. Bhagavan Himself lovingly distributed Laddu Prasadam to a few devotees in the Mandir Bhajan Hall as well as outside it. With this, the Akhanda Bhajan at Prasanthi Nilayam came to a happy conclusion.

### ***Providing Means of Livelihood to the Needy***

Since His childhood days, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba has been showering His love and benediction on all, specially the destitute and needy. Bhagavan's Birthday is a special occasion when in His unbounded love and compassion Bhagavan helps the deprived sections of society by distributing the articles of their need with His own Divine Hands. In a simple function held as a part of 77th Birthday Celebrations of Bhagavan in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 15th November 2002, Bhagavan distributed sewing machines to 77 ladies after the morning Darshan. Four needy gents were also given these machines. Bhagavan's love for all of them was worth

witnessing when after distributing machines and clothes to them, He posed for photographs with them. Bhajans in Sai Kulwant Hall continued during this programme of nearly one hour. After this, Prasadam was distributed to all. The programme came to a conclusion at 8.05 a.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

### **Rathotsavam at Prasanthi Nilayam**

Birthday Celebrations of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba commenced at Prasanthi Nilayam with the sacred function of Rathotsavam on 18th November 2002. As soon as Bhagavan came to the Mandir Bhajan Hall after His morning Divine Darshan at 7.00 a.m., the Institute students started Veda chanting. Soon the idols of Rama, Lakshmana, Sita and Hanuman as also that of Venugopal Swamy were taken out of the Mandir Bhajan Hall. The idols were then carried out of Sai Kulwant Hall in a procession which was led by musicians and followed by Veda chanting and Bhajan singing students. Winding its way through the bazaars of Puttaparthi, this grand procession progressed slowly towards Sri Pedda Venkama Raju Kalyana Mandapam (Old Mandir). On the way, the villagers watched the procession from their houses. Some of them came out and offered Arati to the idols and broke coconuts. When the procession reached the Kalyana Mandapam, Arati was offered to the idols. With this, the Rathotsavam at Prasanthi Nilayam came to a conclusion.

### **Grand Birthday Function**

Giving His Birthday Message to a mammoth gathering of devotees from all parts of the world and a host of dignitaries including the President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam on the occasion of His 77th Birthday on 23rd November 2002, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba exhorted the people to attain the wisdom expounded in the Upanishads and adopt the path of spirituality in life.

The venue of the function, Sai Kulwant Hall, was beautifully decorated for this grand occasion. Special decorations were made on the dais. Bhagavan Baba's abode also bore a festive look with flower decorations and beautiful lights in the lawn opposite His abode. Sai Kulwant Hall was completely jam-packed with devotees much before the arrival of Bhagavan in the Hall. All adjoining places and even the balconies of the houses near the Hall were packed with eager devotees who waited for hours since early morning to have the Darshan of the Avatar of Kali Age on the auspicious day of His Birthday.

All eyes turned towards the western gate of the Hall when Bhagavan Baba in His ochre robe slowly walked towards the Hall in a grand procession comprising two groups of Veda chanting students and four bands playing sweet tunes to welcome Bhagavan. After coming to the verandah of the Hall, Bhagavan accepted greetings from the President, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and a few other dignitaries. Before coming to the dais, Bhagavan ceremoniously cut the Birthday cakes. After this, Bhagavan came to the dais and showered the bliss of His Divine Darshan on the devotees. At 7.00 a.m., Bhagavan commenced His Divine Discourse as the devotees were eagerly waiting to listen to His Divine Message on this sacred day. (The full text of Bhagavan's Discourse has been given elsewhere in this issue.) Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close at 8.05 a.m. with the song, "Sathya Dharmamu Santhi Premalato..." . After the conclusion of the Discourse, Mangalarati was offered to Bhagavan. Distribution of Prasadam to devotees also began at the same time. To add to the bliss of the devotees, Bhagavan distributed sweets with His Divine Hands to some of them.

## **A Unique Musical Medley**

A scintillating musical programme on the evening of 23rd November 2002 provided the grand finale to the celebrations of Bhagavan Baba's 77th Birthday at Prasanthi Nilayam. The programme consisted of a unique combination of two items, a Hindustani classical presentation by the renowned singer Ms. Parveen Sultana and a magnificent presentation of English devotional songs by the well-known singer Ms. Dana Gillespie. The programme which commenced at 4.45 p.m. continued up to 6.30 p.m. Bhagavan Baba graced the occasion by His Divine Presence throughout the two presentations. The programme came to a happy conclusion with Arati to Bhagavan.

Thus ended the magnificent and memorable celebrations of the 77th Birthday of the Avatar of the Age conferring blissful grace on the hundreds of thousands devotees who thronged Prasanthi Nilayam from all parts of the globe and all regions of Bharat.

## **NEWS FROM PRASANTHI NILAYAM**

### **Illuminating Deepavali at Prasanthi Nilayam**

Deepavali, the festival of lights, was celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Baba on 4th November 2002. The unique feature of this year's Deepavali Celebrations was the illuminating Discourse of Bhagavan Baba on the afternoon of this auspicious day. Referring to the story of the killing of Narakasura on the Deepavali day, Bhagavan Baba exhorted the devotees to kill the demons of their evil qualities, dispel the darkness of ignorance and illumine their hearts with the divine light of the Atmic principle.

The morning programme commenced in Sai Kulwant Hall after Bhagavan's Divine Darshan at 7.00 a.m. The programme included a scintillating vocal music presentation by the Institute students which included devotional group songs. This divine music created a sacred devotional milieu and sent the devotees into raptures. This programme was followed by Bhajans which were also led by the students of the Institute and followed reverentially in chorus by all the devotees. This supremely delightful programme came to a close at 8.20 a.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

In the afternoon, Bhagavan came to Sai Kulwant Hall at 2.50 p.m. After Bhagavan's Divine Darshan, the programme commenced at 3.00 p.m. Before the Discourse of Bhagavan Baba, two speakers addressed the devotees. The first speaker, Sri G.V. Subba Rao, former Head, U.N. Energy Division, described Deepavali as the festival commemorating the victory of the forces of goodness over demonic forces. The second speaker, Dr. G.Venkataraman, former Vice Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, emphasised the inner meaning of Deepavali and observed that Bhagavan Baba had incarnated as the primary source of light and goodness so as to dispel all darkness of evil and ignorance from the face of the earth. After these two speeches, Bhagavan Baba blessed the gathering with a very illuminating Discourse. The Deepavali Celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam came to a happy conclusion at 5.05 p.m. with offer of Arati to Bhagavan.

### **Ladies Day Celebrations**

Giving His Divine Message on the Ladies Day on the afternoon of 19th November 2002, Bhagavan exhorted the women to imbibe virtues and inculcate them in their children. Citing the example of ancient women of Bharat, Bhagavan said, "Women of those days not only discharged their household duties diligently but also brought up their children in the most ideal manner. They taught their children not merely by precept but by practice."

Like previous years, Ladies Day was celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam on 19th November 2002 with great piety and solemnity. On the morning of 19th November 2002, Bhagavan came to Sai Kulwant Hall, the venue of the function, at 7.00 a.m. Nadaswaram music group of students from Anantapur College welcomed Bhagavan with sweet notes of music. He was led into the Hall in a grand procession by two girls students bands and Vedic chants by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Primary School and Anantapur College students. On both sides of the passage of Bhagavan stood girls students with lighted lamps. They waved the lamps to welcome Bhagavan as He



came close to them. After coming to the dais, Bhagavan lighted the sacred lamps to inaugurate the function. Then followed a Band Display by the girls of Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School, Prasanthi Nilayam. Their performance on the bagpipes and drums was followed by an excellent dance entitled “Sai Mahima” and violin recital by the girls of the Primary School. A couple of solo songs and a Qawali by the Institute girls, and, lastly, a brief presentation on the Veena by Smt. Ranjana formed the other items of this excellent cultural programme.

Bhagavan Baba blessed all the groups and posed for photographs with them at the end of each item. At the conclusion of this programme, Bhajans were started by the girls students and were followed in chorus by the devotees. In the meanwhile, Bhagavan distributed Sarees to the ladies in Sai Kulwant Hall. Alongside sweets were also distributed to the ladies. The morning programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan. In the end, Prasadam was distributed to all the devotees.

On the afternoon of 19th November 2002, a group of overseas ladies made an excellent presentation of devotional music soon after Bhagavan’s arrival in Sai Kulwant Hall at 2.25 p.m. The second part of Ladies Day programme began with chanting of Vedic hymns by a group of school girls. The first to address the audience on this auspicious day was Smt. Sarala Indulal Shah, National Coordinator for Education, Sri Sathya Sai Organisation. First of all, Smt. Shah invoked the blessings of Mother Easwaramma who was the great exemplar of Indian womanhood. Mother, Smt. Shah said, was the embodiment of love and the love of a mother was most precious. After her brief speech, Smt. Shah introduced the two speakers who were blessed by Bhagavan to speak before His Divine Discourse.

The first speaker was Ms. Eleni Sotiriou from Greece who narrated some of her experiences which revealed Bhagavan’s Divinity. She concluded her speech with a moving Hindi song expressing the love of the devotees for Bhagavan Baba. The next speaker, Miss Rajeswari Patel, Reader in English, Anantapur College of the Institute, referred to the glorious tradition of ancient Indian women and observed that the ideals of purity, morality and sterling virtues set by those women should be adopted by the women of today in their life. This, she said, was the significance of celebrating Ladies Day.

After these two speeches, Bhagavan gave His Message and concluded it with the Bhajan, “Hari Bhajan Bina...”. The Ladies Day Celebrations came to a conclusion with Arati to Bhagavan at 4.25 p.m.

### **Dance Drama “Savitri”**

An excellent drama was presented by the Bal Vikas students of Kerala in Poornachandra Auditorium on 19th November on the life of Savitri who adorned the firmament of India’s hoary past as a shining star of ideal womanhood.

The drama began with a dance sequence in praise of goddess Durga. The story of Savitri’s life was then unfolded in the subsequent scenes showing her birth, childhood, youth, marriage and final encounter with Yama. The story presented through a judicious blend of concise dialogues, appropriate commentary and Sanskrit Slokas set to music highlighted the virtues, wit and wisdom of Savitri who was able to bring her dead husband back to life by the power of her chastity and purity. At the end of the drama, Bhagavan blessed the cast and also materialised a

gold chain for the girl who enacted  
close with Arati to Bhagavan at 6.40 p.m.

the role of Savitri. The programme came to a

### **Bhagavan Awards Diplomas to EHV Teachers**

In an impressive function held in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on the morning of 20th November 2002, Bhagavan Baba awarded diplomas to EHV Teachers who successfully completed their training in the Institutes of Sathya Sai Education.

The programme began with the students offering songs to their beloved Swami, followed by a Thai classical dance and musical rendition performed by students of the Sathya Sai School of Thailand. Thereafter, Dr. Art-ong Jumsai addressed the gathering. Dr. Jumsai observed that Bhagavan wanted to transform the world through educate, a system of education which could make manifest the divinity immanent in an individual. Dr. Jumsai also informed the gathering that at present there were 37 Sathya Sai Schools in 22 countries. Dr. Jumsai ended his speech by stating that the Institute of Sathya Sai Education planned to establish Sathya Sai Schools as model schools in every country of the world.

After this, Bhagavan Baba very graciously awarded the diplomas to the graduates. This year saw the largest number of students receive their diplomas from the Divine Hands from seven Institutes around the world: the African Institute of Sathya Sai Education, the Australian Institute of Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values, the Institute of Sri Sathya Sai Education of Brazil, the Institute of Sathya Sai Education, Mumbai (India), the Institute of Sathya Sai Education, San Pedro (Philippines), the South African Institute of Sathya Sai Education, the Institute of Sathya Sai Education, Thailand. All together, 130 students from 27 countries participated.

Bhagavan then delivered an illuminating Discourse which He concluded at 9.15 a.m. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan and distribution of Prasadam.

### **News from Inland Sai Centres**

**Andhra Pradesh:** The Car Festival of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba was carried out by Sri Sathya Sai Seva Samithi, Uravakonda on 20.10.2002. This Samithi conducted 'Anna Satram', giving mid-day meals to a selected group of 77 persons for 25 days ending on 20.10.2002 at Sri Bala Sathya Sai Sila Mandir where Bhagavan Baba gave His First Divine Message by singing the Bhajan "Manasa Bhajare Gurucharanam ..."

**Assam and North Eastern Region:** The Guwahati Samithi organised distribution of drinking water on the Vijaya Dasami day to thousands of people taking part in the immersion ceremony of the idols of goddess Durga. It was heartening to see the youth smilingly serving glasses of drinking water to about 22000 people. The Guwahati Samithi has been undertaking this programme regularly for the last 20 years.

**Himachal Pradesh:** As a part of 77th Birthday Celebrations of Bhagavan Baba, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Himachal Pradesh organised a 77 hours Akhanda Bhajan at Shimla from 1.00 p.m. on 29th September to 6 p.m. on 2nd October, 2002. Devotees from all parts of Himachal Pradesh participated in it.

**Kerala:** With Bhagavan's infinite grace, the organisation conducted Sri Sai Sneha Sandesha Yatra from one end of Kerala to the other from 12th October to 2nd November. A beautiful chariot with Bhagavan's messages and organisational activities was made for this. The Yatra covered nearly 4000 kms. Each Samithi conducted house contact programme before the arrival of the chariot in that place for one week. A leaflet on Sai activities was distributed throughout Kerala.

**West Bengal:** During the Durga Puja Festival, youth of Kolkata and North 24 Parganas distributed new clothes to the homeless, destitute children staying at Dum Dum Railway Station and Dum Dum Metro Railway Station. New clothes were also distributed to 280 street children on 10.10.2002 from 7.00 a.m. to 11.00 a.m. covering a vast area in Southern and Central part of Kolkata city. Woollen clothes were distributed among the villagers of Goswami Mali Para, Hooghly on 20.10.2002. 500 villagers benefited from this Seva.

#### **Live Broadcast on Radio Sai Global Harmony**

A major milestone was reached in digital radio broadcast from Prasanthi Nilayam when Radio Sai Global Harmony aired live the proceedings of the functions including the Divine Discourses of Bhagavan Baba on its channel all over Asia on 22nd November 2002 (Convocation Day) and 23rd November 2002 (Bhagavan's Birthday). A condensed version of Bhagavan's Birthday proceedings was broadcast to Europe and Africa on 23rd November 2002.

**You can visit Prasanthi Nilayam  
the Abode of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba at  
[www.srisathyasai.org.in](http://www.srisathyasai.org.in)**

#### **DIVYA DARSHAN DIARY 2003**

**This is to inform that we are not in a position to  
accept further orders for the supply of Divya**

*Darshan Diary 2003 as the present stock has*  
**exhausted due to unexpected demand.**

Convener

S.S.S. Books and Publications Trust

## **BUDDHA PURNIMA SANDESH**

### **SENSE CONTROL IS THE HIGHEST SADHANA**

*All the names and forms are but the manifestations of the Supreme Being who is the embodiment of peace and auspiciousness. He is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute and non-dual. He is Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram (Truth, Goodness, Beauty). (Sanskrit Verse)*

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Man makes frantic efforts to attain happiness. He reads scriptures, visits noble souls, undertakes spiritual pursuits and searches everywhere in the outer world to find happiness. But he fails to find happiness anywhere. Buddha too made similar efforts to find the source of happiness. He searched everywhere and at last found that happiness was within him and not in the outer world. He realised that he himself was the embodiment of Ananda (bliss). The ephemeral happiness derived through the senses is not true happiness at all.

#### **Bliss Results from Sense Control**

God permeates the entire universe in the form of Sat-Chit-Ananda (Existence-Knowledge-Bliss). The five elements, earth, water, fire, air and ether are the embodiments of God, who manifests in the entire creation as Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram. Every human being is therefore a manifestation of Sat-Chit-Ananda. God manifests as sound, touch, form, taste and smell in the elements- ether, air, fire, water and earth respectively. Since He permeates all the five elements and the entire creation, the Upanishads declare, *Isavasyam Idam Jagat* (the entire world is permeated by God). God is omnipresent. There is no place in the world where He does not exist. *Sarvata Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvata Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Thishthati* (with hands, feet, eyes, heads, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe).

If God is present everywhere, people ask why we are not able to see Him. The ocean water reflects the sun above. When the water is disturbed, the reflection of the sun is also disturbed. Similarly, God is in every man. But he is not able to see Him because of his disturbed mind. A disturbed and vacillating mind can never reflect God. A disturbed mind causes confusion and depression. As Arjuna says in the Bhagavadgita, *Chanchalam Hi Manah Krishna Pramathi Balavadrudham* (this mind is very unsteady, turbulent and powerful), the mind is highly fickle and vacillating. All the Sadhana that man performs aims at making his mind steady. There is no use doing Japa, Dhyana and Yoga if the mind is not steady. Once you have the five senses under control, you can experience God. He is not far away from you. He is in you, below you, above you and all around you. God, in fact, is the indweller of man. Yet man is not able to see Him. What is the reason? Man's limitless and wayward desires prevent him from seeing God. Desires are the root

cause of man's disturbance. Sense control and ceiling on desires will help him to see God all around and experience bliss. So, we have to keep our desires under check. We should not be worried by the evil talk in which others indulge in. We should not be affected by calumny and criticism.

### **Attain the Supreme State of Desirelessness like Buddha**

Buddha wanted to control the five senses. He decided, first and foremost, to acquire Samyak Drishti (right vision). Man today is not able to control his vision because of the fickleness of his mind. Cinema, video, T.V., etc., have polluted the mind of man. He does not see good and hear good. Man is the cause of his own restlessness. Besides Samyak Drishti, Buddha emphasised the need for Samyak Sravanam (right hearing), Samyak Vak (right speech), Samyak Bhavam (right feeling) and Samyak Chintanam (right thinking). Due to lack of these, humanness is fast giving way to devilishness and beastliness. Animal qualities are fast increasing in man. Animals have a season and a reason but man has none. Man today has become worse than animals. Human qualities like compassion, kindness, love and forbearance are absent in him. He should be free from evil thoughts which are the root cause of his worries. This requires Abhyasa (constant and sustained practice). Man can control the mind and attain peace by Abhyasa. It is only in a peaceful mind that noble thoughts arise. The mind should be under the control of man. *Master the mind and be a mastermind.* Unfortunately, instead of controlling the mind, man has become the slave of his senses. That is the main cause of his unsteadiness. Moreover, he has body attachment (Dehabhimana). This is the reason that he gets easily disturbed if people find fault with him. Why should he worry about the body when the body is like a water bubble? You should get rid of body attachment.

Man today has unlimited and un-necessary desires. Take, for example, a person who wants to become the President of a Village Panchayat. If he is elected, he desires to become a minister, then the Chief Minister of the State and later the Prime Minister of the country. What are these positions after all? What does a man get from these posts of high status if he has only evil desires? The outcome of evil desires is evil. So, man should not give room to evil desires and thoughts. Their reaction, reflection and resound is also evil. Evil desires cause evil and sinful thoughts in man. First of all, Buddha developed pure, steady, sacred and selfless vision. He made a great sacrifice by renouncing all worldly comforts, his family and even his tender son. He then gradually reduced body attachment and finally cut it off completely. That is how he attained the state of desirelessness.

### **Body Attachment is the Cause of Man's Delusion**

It is a mistake on our part to identify ourselves with the body. When we say, "This is my body, my mind, my Buddhi, my Chitta, my Antahkarana", it means that we are separate from the mind, body, Buddhi, etc. It is a Bhrama (delusion) to think that we are the body. As we go on cultivating Bhrama, we distance ourselves from Brahma (God). The more we leave this Bhrama, the closer we go to Brahma. Buddha approached many Gurus and listened to their teachings. He studied sacred texts. He realised that this was only a wasteful exercise.

Modern students go abroad for higher studies, spending a lot of money. This craze for foreign countries is utter foolishness. The parents too encourage their children to go abroad by fanning their desires. They feel proud that their children have gone to a foreign country. They actually spoil their children. It is better to work hard in your own country than to go like a beggar to a foreign land just for the sake of earning money. What do people earn there? When they return to India, they bring with them only the Papa (sin) they earn there. Stay in your country and earn Punya (merit) instead. Unlimited ambitions of man are the cause of this craze for going to foreign countries to earn money.

For the last several decades, people of many countries have been inviting Me to their countries. But I don't like to go anywhere. They say, "Swami, come to my country." But which is your country? You do not belong to any particular country. Nothing is permanent. Your body itself is not permanent. The body has however to be maintained. But there should be no body attachment, which leads man to endless cycle of birth and death. That is why Adi Sankara said:

*"PunarapiJananamPunarapi Maranam*

*Punarapi Janani Jathare Sayanam*

*Iha Samsare Bahu Dustare*

*Kripayapare Pahi Murare."*

(I am caught up in this cycle of birth and death; time and again, I am undergoing the agony of staying in the mother's womb. It is very difficult to cross this ocean of worldly life. Oh Lord! take me across this ocean and grant me liberation.)

Worldly life is full of sorrow and suffering. Lord Krishna said, "*Anityam Asukham Lokam Imam Prapya Bhajasva Maam*" (as the world is temporary and full of misery, contemplate on Me constantly). Having taken human birth, you must find fulfilment in life. You must pursue a noble path. Do not be inflated by praise. You should be above praise and blame. Foster peace. Where is peace? It is not available in the market for you to buy. Peace is inside. Outside you find only pieces. In fact, everything is there in you.

*You are the embodiment of peace,*

*You are the embodiment of truth,*

*You are the embodiment of love,*

*You are the embodiment of God.*

What a pity that man goes here and there in search of happiness ignoring the divinity within! It is the result of sins committed over many lives. Why do you want to earn sin in the outside worldly life? Better direct your vision inward. You will find Ananda (bliss) there. Bliss is your property. You cannot live without bliss even for a moment. Bliss is your true nature.

### **Supreme Sacrifice of Buddha**

*Embodiments of Love!*

Buddha was not an ordinary person. He was born in a royal family and brought up amidst princely comforts. But he renounced everything overnight. He performed a supreme sacrifice. *Na Karmana Na Prajaya Dhanena Thyage-naikena Amrutatthwamanasu*

(immortality is not attained through action, progeny or wealth; it is attained only by sacrifice). Buddha followed this Vedic injunction. He had no attachment. Hence, he could detach himself from his kith and kin. His father suffered because he had attachment.

Buddha moved far and wide. He carried on his ascetic practices. Once a lady wanted to offer food to him. Buddha said, "This is not the food I want. I want Jnana Bhiksha (food of wisdom). I am wandering in search of the food of Jnana, not this worldly food."

One day he saw a farmer distributing grains. Buddha went to him and asked, "Where is my share of alms?" The farmer said to him, "Oh lazy monk! Why should I give you alms? I give food to those who work hard. I also work hard. I till the soil. I sow the seeds, remove the weeds, water the fields and harvest the grains. But you do not do anything." The farmer thought that he was working hard. Buddha replied, "I cultivate the land of the heart, I water it with love, I remove the weeds of bad tendencies, I harvest the grains of wisdom and I get the fruit of bliss." There are many such stories related to the life of Buddha. In fact, they are not mere stories but his personal experiences. He made tremendous sacrifice at young age. The joy that you derive from sacrifice is immeasurable. Experience the joy of sacrifice.

The joy you get by singing Bhajans and by performing worship is temporary. But you will get eternal joy by experiencing the Soham Mantra. Soham is also known as Hamsa Gayatri. "So" means "That" (God), "Ham" means "I am". "I am That" is the meaning of Soham. You should experience it with every breath. When you breathe in, you listen to the sound "So" and while exhaling, you hear the sound "Ham". Watch your breath carefully and experience the reality of Soham with every breath. The word WATCH has an important message to convey. WATCH means

*W - Watch your Words*

*A - Watch your Actions*

*T - Watch your Thoughts*

*C - Watch your Character*

*H - Watch your Heart*

The watch you have may break some day or the other. But this "watch" is unbreakable. So, possess this "watch". Watch whether you are speaking good or bad. Watch whether you abuse others or appreciate them. You should not use your tongue to abuse others. Abusing others is a sin. Do not let your tongue indulge in such sins. You cannot escape the consequences of your sinful acts. Everything has reaction, reflection and resound and it comes back to you in some form or the other. Hence, exercise control over the tongue.

Buddha observed Mounam and became quiet. Every sacred act has manifold rewards. By being quiet, Buddha began to experience Soham within him. You may chant the Names of Rama, Krishna, Govinda, Buddha and Sai to steady your mind. Once the mind becomes steady, you don't need to chant. Observe total silence. That is why it is said, silence is golden. Once words become less, the activities and vagaries of the mind also become less. As words increase, the vagaries of the mind also increase. Annihilate the mind by quietude. However, it is easily said than done. Man may die but the mind will not die. The mind vanishes when words vanish from it. Observing Mounam (silence) is one of the ways of silencing the mind.

That is why our ancients practised Mounam. We should not allow the mind to go wherever it likes and do whatever it likes. We should not allow the mind to ridicule, hurt and hate others. If you hurt anybody, you will be hurt ten times more. You may take pride that you have abused somebody. But there will come somebody who will abuse you also some day. The sin you commit today will bring retribution to you later many times more.

*Embodiments of Love!*

We have taken human birth. What should we do having taken birth as a human being? Should we use human birth for earning wealth? No, not at all. We should earn the wealth of virtues. Modern students are interested in acquiring wealth, power and friendship but not virtues. What is the use of leading a life without acquiring virtues?

*“In spite of his education and intelligence, a foolish man will not know his true Self and a mean-minded person will not give up his wicked qualities. Modern education leads only to argumentation, not to total wisdom. What is the use of acquiring worldly education if it cannot lead you to immortality? Acquire the knowledge that will make you immortal.”*

(Telugu Poem)

The body is temporary like a water bubble. The body comes and goes as the water bubbles come and go.

*“This body is a storehouse of dirt, and prone to diseases; it cannot cross the ocean of Samsara. O mind, do not be under the delusion that body is permanent. Instead take refuge at the Divine Lotus Feet.”*

(Telugu Poem)

First and foremost, we should develop the spirit of surrender. Perform all deeds with a spirit of devotion to God and as an offering to Him. Then every action will become divine. This is the teaching of Buddha. In this world, the five senses of man play a most important role. Buddha gave utmost importance to sense control. To control the mind, we should control the five senses. Only then will we be able to realise God. Everything can be acquired by love alone. *Love is God, live in love.* We can understand spirituality only by cultivating love. That is why I often say,

*“Start the day with love,*

*Fill the day with love,*

*Spend the day with love,*

*End the day with love,*

*This is the way to God”.*

Everything is possible by the power of love. Love is everything in this world. The world cannot exist without love. Do not entertain bad desires. They will bring about your ruin. Those having bad desires cannot have a peaceful death. We must keep the mind peaceful and sacred. We can acquire peace of mind only by love for God.

*Embodiments of Love!*

You have come here from distant countries bearing many difficulties and inconveniences. Lead a life full of peace and bliss. You may have troubles. But you should not allow the troubles to gain hold over you. You can have peace only when you ignore the troubles. Sing



the glory of God with love. It is not enough if you pray to God. You should consider that you are God. Say emphatically, "I am God" and contemplate on it incessantly. Buddha also declared that man is divine. God is always in you, with you, around you, below you, above you. See, for example, the word 'God'. If you start with the letter 'G', you read it as God. But if you start with the letter 'D', it becomes 'Dog'. The difference lies in your vision. Everything in this world is divine. So, cultivate the feeling of oneness with God.

### **Body is the Temple of God**

You have come here from different parts of the world. I bless you all that you go back home safe and sound full of peace and bliss. Cultivate the faith that everything happens by the Will of God. Buddha tried different kinds of Sadhana. He studied sacred texts. But no literature explained clearly the nature of the five senses. Ultimately, he came to the conclusion that there was no other Sadhana superior to sense control. He realised that the control of the five senses was the real spiritual practice. We should not allow the senses to go wayward. Senses can be controlled only by love. Always live in love. Make others happy by your love. Never harbour hatred or ill-will towards anybody. The quintessence of Vedanta is: *Help ever, hurt never*. As the scriptures say, *Paropakara Punyaya, Papaya Parapeedanam* (one attains merit by serving others and commits sin by hurting them).

Your mind will remain steady once you believe that God is in you. In the beginning, your Sadhana may not give you immediate results. But if you continue contemplating on God within you, you are sure to achieve peace and bliss. God is not present in temples, mosques and churches. Body is the temple of God.

*"God does not exist in a foreign land, He is in you.*

*Sin is not elsewhere. It is there where a wrong action is committed."*

(Telugu Poem)

Everything is within you. You do not need to study scriptures. All that you need is self-confidence. Self-confidence is most important for spiritual development.

*Where there is self-confidence, there is truth.*

*Where there is truth, there is bliss.*

*Where there is bliss, there is peace.*

*Where there is peace, there is God.*

Hence you must cultivate self-confidence. Otherwise, there will be utter confusion. Take, for example, this very building. It stands on its foundation. The building cannot exist without the foundation. Similarly, self-confidence is the foundation for everything in life. You can achieve everything with self-confidence. Perform your duty with sincerity and self-confidence and follow the ideals set by Buddha. Buddha had all the luxuries at his command. But he renounced everything. Bliss lies only in Thyaga (sacrifice) and not in Bhoga (sensual pleasures). Once you take to the path of sacrifice, you will attain bliss. That is the sacred teaching of Buddha.

*Embodiments of Love!*

First and foremost, reduce your attachment to the body. As your attachment to the body increases, your suffering also increases. The body is the temple of God. Think that this is not your body but the temple of God. The body is sacred as God resides in it. It is God's gift to man. Hence, use the body for performing sacred deeds and attaining bliss therefrom. When you share bliss with others, you will experience divinity. Continue your spiritual practices. But remain always suffused with the feeling that God is in you, above you, below you, around you. Never think that God is away from you. "I am not alone. God is with me." Strengthen this feeling in you and shape your life accordingly. Lead your life with love.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, "*Prema Mudita Manase Kaho...*"

- **From Bhagavan's Buddha Purnima Sandesh in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, Brindavan on 26th May 2002.**

## **DASARA DISCOURSES – 2**

### **TRUTH IS THE LIFE PRINCIPLE OF MAN**

*In this world, truth is God,*

*Truth is the goddess (Saraswati) that abides in the lotus,*

*Truth lies in striving for the welfare of others,*

*There is no goal higher than truth. (Sanskrit Verse)*

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

Truth is the true wealth of Lord Easwara. Ephemeral worldly pleasures are subsidiary to this supreme wealth. There is nothing superior to truth in this world. There is no power mightier than truth. Truth is latent in every human being. *Sathyam Sarvabhutantaratma* (truth is the indwelling spirit in all beings). Truth is God.

#### **Never Forget Truth**

Where is truth? It is here, there and everywhere. There is no place in the world where truth does not exist. Truth is the source of all prosperity. Man is subjected to misery and hardships as he has forgotten this divine principle of truth. What is the reason for the conflicts and disturbances prevailing in the world today? The reason is that man has forgotten truth. Truth and morality are like twins. Yesterday, I spoke about the importance of Neeti. It is Neeti (morality) that brings you Khyati (reputation). Not merely that, Neeti and Nijayati (integrity)

are the life-breaths of Manava Jathi (human race). Even the Lord of Death is afraid to enter the place where morality and integrity reign supreme. The sanctity of human life lies in adherence to these two principles. A true human race is that which adheres to morality. Listen to this truth, oh valorous sons of Bharat!

The foremost duty of man is to experience the manifestation of divinity in the form of truth. Such a person alone is a true human being. *Sathyannasti Paro Dharma* (there is no Dharma greater than adherence to truth). Emperor Manu taught to the world the principle of truth in various ways. He said, there was no path greater than adherence to truth.

*The creation emerges from truth and merges into truth,*

*Is there a place where truth does not exist?*

*Visualise such pure and unsullied truth.*

(Telugu Poem)

Truth is the very form of Divinity. But modern man has totally forgotten truth. One who forgets Sathyam (truth) cannot attain Nityatwam (immortality) or Daivatwam (Divinity). So, never forget truth. In order to impart such eternal teachings, God incarnates in human form. In ancient times, kings ruled over their kingdoms strictly adhering to the path of truth. King Harischandra considered truth as his very life-breath. He dedicated himself to the cause of truth so totally that he gave up his kingdom and even had to sell his wife and son in the process. He considered truth as his kingdom. He held the view that he could not call himself a king without truth. He sacrificed everything at the altar of truth. Truth is the very life of man.

### **Where there is Truth, there is Dharma**

Truth cannot be attained by worldly means. Man craves for worldly and physical possessions and forgets truth in the process. Hiranyaksha, Hiranyakasipu, Ravana, Kumbhakarna, Duryodhana, Dussasana were mighty and powerful, but they were ruined because they forsook truth. They were highly intelligent and educated, yet they lost everything as they did not uphold morality and integrity. One should never run after worldly possessions because they are transient. Truth is always with you, and it protects you. It is changeless and steady. You will have plenty and prosperity, comforts and conveniences if you have truth with you. One should not be in the mad pursuit of worldly and ephemeral gains. One's foremost duty is to protect and propagate the twin principles of morality and integrity. Today man is giving up Sathya and Dharma (truth and righteousness) for the sake of temporary gains. Dharma is where Sathya is. Dharma is the true friend of Sathya. They are inseparable. Having attained sacred human birth, man should resolve to foster truth. Today man wants to enjoy various kinds of pleasures disregarding truth, righteousness, morality and integrity. One devoid of truth cannot uphold morality and integrity.

The youth today should have morality and integrity as the main goals of their life; they should be prepared to dedicate their entire life to foster these virtues. If one forgets truth, one loses everything in life. One should safeguard truth. Having given up his kingdom, King Harischandra was walking along the banks of the Ganga with his wife Chandramati. He was wondering as to how to take his wife across the river. Then Chandramati infused courage in him, saying, "We have dedicated ourselves to truth, we are treading along the path of truth. If

we give up truth, we will certainly get drowned. However, if we strictly adhere to truth, we will be protected. So, we need not be afraid. Truth will take us across the river.” In this way, Chandramati encouraged her husband in the face of difficulties. Both of them stuck to the path of truth and righteousness under all circumstances; even today people remember King Harischandra as Sathya Harischandra. One should never go back on one’s promise. This is the meaning of truth in the worldly sense.

When Emperor Bali promised to give three steps of land to Vamana, his preceptor Sukracharya dissuaded him from keeping his promise. He warned him that Vamana was not an ordinary person, but Lord Narayana Himself. He cautioned Bali not to grant Vamana’s request. Emperor Bali smiled and asked, “Is it proper for a king to go back on his promise?” And he further said, “One must uphold truth under all circumstances to redeem oneself. So, I will never give up truth.” He was not prepared to stray away from the path of truth even if it meant disobeying his Guru’s command. He felt that there was no greater sin than going back on one’s promise.

### **Total Dedication of the Pandavas to Truth**

Among the Pandavas, Dharmaraja was truth personified. At no point of time, he transgressed the path of truth. When his wife Draupadi was being humiliated by the wicked Duryodhana in the royal court, he pacified his brothers saying that they had to be subservient to the Kauravas as they had lost the game of dice. Under such circumstances, it was not proper for a king to give vent to anger, greed, malice or hatred, he added. Draupadi praised Dharmaraja for this quality and said, “Dharmaraja, it is the sacred quality of truth in you that has helped me to retain my peace and composure under these trying circumstances. Otherwise, I cannot imagine what would have been my fate. Your principle of truth will safeguard all of us. It was certainly a mistake on our part to have indulged in the game of dice with the wicked Kauravas, knowing fully well their evil intentions. We have done something which kings are not supposed to do and are paying the price for it.” In those days, women were pious and noble-hearted, and were instrumental in making their husbands tread the right path. It is because of such men and women of virtue that Bharat has been spreading the light of truth to the rest of the world since ancient times.

When Aswatthama, who killed the Pandava offspring while they were asleep, was captured and brought before Draupadi by Arjuna, what was her reaction? Any ordinary woman would have hurled abuses at Aswatthama, but Draupadi was one of compassion and forbearance. She fell at the feet of Aswatthama and said, “It is at the feet of your father, Dronacharya, that my husbands have learnt all that they know. Being the son of Dronacharya, was it proper for you to kill my children? How could you have the heart to kill them, who were unarmed, young, quietly asleep, were not having any grudge against you, and were not contemplating any harm to you?”

(Telugu Poem)

On hearing Draupadi trying to reason with Aswatthama in this manner, the mighty Bhima exploded with anger. He felt that Draupadi was too kind to Aswatthama and said that such a wicked person should not be forgiven. He wanted to smash Aswatthama’s skull with his powerful fist. Draupadi calmed him with words of wisdom. She said it was a sin to kill Aswatthama who was their preceptor’s only son. Moreover, as she herself was already in

grief after losing her children, she did not want to cause grief to another mother by killing her son. But Arjuna had vowed to kill Aswatthama. Draupadi told him, *“O Partha! It is not righteous to kill a person who is afraid or has lost courage, who is asleep or intoxicated, who seeks refuge or is a female. You should not kill Aswatthama, for he is your preceptor’s son.”*

(Telugu Poem)

It is because of such woman of virtue and chastity that our country Bharat has been able to uphold truth and righteousness till this day. Even today there is no dearth of such noble women in the world.

All worldly achievements are only temporary. Truth alone is eternal. Therefore, install truth in your hearts and dedicate your lives to foster truth. *“Even King Harischandra, who strictly followed the path of truth, had to leave this world ultimately leaving behind his vast kingdom and riches. Emperor Nala, who reigned over a great empire, could not take with him anything when he passed away. Did King Mandhata, who adorned the Krita Yuga, carry any wealth with him when he left the earth? Even Lord Rama, who built the bridge across the ocean, is not to be seen on the earth today. Many kings have ruled over the earth, but none of them could carry even a fistful of dust with them. Oh noble one! do you think you can carry the kingdom and its riches on your head when you leave the world?”*

(Telugu Poem)

In the past, many kings ruled over many kingdoms, but could any of them carry with him even a Naya Paisa at the time of departing from this world? No. Truth alone will follow you when you leave this world. Truth cannot be hidden nor can it be subjected to change. Truth shines eternally but man is forgetting such eternal principle for the sake of mean pleasures. Having been blessed with human birth and endowed with the divine principle of the Atma, man is acting contrary to his divine nature. This is not expected of man. Man’s chief goal is to practise and propagate the principle of truth. This was the ideal set by our ancients. Likewise, men and women of today should resolve to uphold our ancient culture by adhering to truth and fostering morality and integrity.

One has to practise truth before preaching the same. Come what may, one should have the courage and conviction to tread the path of truth. Even at the cost of food, raiment and shelter, even at the cost of one’s own life, one should be prepared to practise truth and righteousness and revive the ancient culture of Bharat. Lord Krishna declared in the Bhagavadgita,

*“Yada Yada Hi Dharmasya Glanir Bhavati Bharata,  
Abhyutthanam adharmasya Tadatmanam Srujamyaham”.*

(When there is a decline in Dharma and rise in Adharma, I incarnate Myself for the establishment of Dharma.)

The Bhagavadgita commences with the Sloka,

*“Dharmakshetre Kurukshetre Samaveta Yuyutsava,  
Mamaka Pandavaschaiva Kimakurvata Sanjaya”.*

Here the blind king Dhritarashtra enquires from Sanjay as to what the Kauravas and the Pandavas were doing in the battlefield of Kurukshetra. Is it not foolishness to put

such a question? Having entered the battlefield, what else would one do other than fighting the battle? Would anyone enjoy a feast there? Dhritarashtra was blind in all respects. He considered the kingdom which belonged to someone else as his own. In the end, Sanjay tells him,

*“Yathra Yogeshwara Krishno Yathra Partho Dhanurdhara*

*Tathra Srirvijayo Bhutir Dhruva Neetirmathir Mama.”*

(Where there is Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, and where there is Arjuna, armed with mighty bow, there lie wealth, victory, glory and everlasting morality. This is my opinion.)

The first word in the first Sloka of the Gita is Dharma and the last word in the last Sloka is Mama. Together it becomes Mamadharma (one's own Dharma). Man's foremost duty is to protect Dharma. This is the essence of the Gita. Only when you safeguard Dharma will your mind become steady.

Our ancient texts are replete with many great ideals. Unfortunately, modern students do not pay attention to them. They are acquiring high degrees, but what is the use of these degrees when they lack morality and integrity? That is why I often tell the teachers to conduct moral classes and teach the students the principles of morality and the importance of our ancient culture. In ancient times, the children were initiated into education with the sacred Panchakshari Mantra ‘Om Namah Sivaya’ or Ashtakshari Mantra ‘Om Namo Narayanaya’. It is because of such ideal education that the students became ideal men and women. Today children's education starts with rhymes like “Ding dong bell, pussy in the well ...” and “Ba Ba black sheep ...” It is because of such meaningless education that students are turning into black sheep! Education of children should start with God's Name.

### **Adhere to the Ideals of Indian Culture**

I have high expectations that you will strive hard to revive and revitalise our sacred ancient culture. I do not expect even a Naya Paisa from you. My only desire is to re-establish our ancient culture through you. You have the capacity and you are the right persons to do it. Culture is not something which can be acquired; it has to be manifested from within. The great epics like the Ramayana and the Mahabharata set forth great ideals of Indian culture which should be put into practice. Moreover, one should give up bad qualities and bad habits and cultivate good qualities and high character. There lies the true meaning of culture. Here is a small example.

Farmers separate paddy from straw and remove husk from the paddy. Rice thus obtained is boiled and cooked well before one can partake of it. Such refinement is called culture. One does not eat paddy or grass. Only animals eat them. Take another example. You have bought a two-metre cloth, but you don't wear it as it is. You give it to a tailor who makes it into a beautiful shirt. This entire process of cutting and stitching a cloth into a shirt is a cultural process. This is essential in every aspect of life. People have various notions about culture. They think it is something archaic and outdated. It is foolishness to think so. That process which destroys animal tendencies, fosters humanness and makes you divine is true culture. You are born as a human being. What is your achievement if you die as a human being? What

is the use of all your education? You should rise to the level of divinity before you give up the body.

You should put your education to proper use and achieve a good reputation. Your education will find fulfilment only when it is used for the benefit of society. Modern education merely fosters bookish knowledge. I have been watching modern students. They fill their heads with bookish knowledge. At the time of examination, they keep awake at night and learn their lessons by rote. They pour out whatever they remember on the answer paper and come out of the examination hall empty-headed, feeling greatly relieved. They will not be able to answer the same questions the next day. Such is the plight of modern education. What is the use of merely acquiring bookish knowledge which is nothing but superficial knowledge? You should acquire practical knowledge which will help you in your daily life.

### **Uphold the Ideals of Ancient Indian Culture**

Since ancient times, the culture of Bharat has been propagating sacred ideals. People of other countries may make fun of the Bharatiyas, saying it is foolishness to worship stones, trees, earth, snakes, dogs, cows, etc. Those who know the real meaning of Bharatiya culture would give a fitting reply to this criticism. They may say, “My dear one, what we are doing is not out of foolishness; there is a noble intention behind our act. We don’t want to limit the God-given love principle to human beings alone. Our intention is to share it with birds and animals too. Our lives will find fulfillment only when we share our love with all.” You will experience inexplicable joy when you love all beings. You may argue that it is dangerous to feed a snake with milk as it may try to harm you, in spite of the good done to it. But if you foster a snake wholeheartedly, it will never cause harm to you. You should have such firm faith.

Our Rishis in the past spent their lives in dense forests amidst wild animals without any sense of fear. Lions and other wild animals lay on their path when they went to take bath in rivers. But they never harmed them. What is the reason? There was absolutely no trace of hatred in them. Consequently, even the wild animals were friendly with them. *Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavathi* (as your feelings are, so will be the result). The animals will reciprocate your innermost feelings. The Rishis did not carry any weapons with them. They only had a Japamala (rosary) with them. However, the weapon of Divine Name was always with them. But today, one cannot be sure of one’s safety even if one carries a pistol, a gun, etc. One need not carry any weapon other than the weapon of Divine Name. When you have the weapon of Divine Name with you, no wicked person can come near you, no poisonous snake can harm you.

Our ancients used to offer food grains to birds and rice flour to ants. Rice flour was used for Rangoli in front of the house. The main purpose of this was to feed the ants. Without understanding the purpose behind this, today people are using lime powder for Rangoli. Ancient Bharatiyas had the firm faith that divinity was present in all beings. That is why Thyagaraja sang, “Oh Rama, you are present in Cheema as well as Brahma. You are present in Siva and also in Kesava.” Divinity pervades all beings right from an ant to a lion and from a bird to a Paramahansa (enlightened one). So, you should share your love with all. This is the teaching of Bharatiya culture. You have to understand this truth and share

your knowledge with your friends. This is the greatest help that you can render to them. I am not asking you to give money and gold in charity to others. It is enough if you share your noble qualities with them. That is the sign of true wisdom. *Advaita Darshanam Jnanam* (perception of non-duality is supreme wisdom). God has granted you love. Do not use it for your selfish purposes. Share it with all. Cultivate broad-mindedness. This is called expansion love. But today we find only contraction love which is equal to death. Never hurt anybody. Help ever, hurt never. In this way, you should lead a life of love and truth.

King Harischandra sanctified his life by practising and propagating truth. He achieved a great victory due to his unflinching adherence to truth. Sage Viswamitra who put him to hard tests himself asked for his forgiveness and returned his kingdom, his wife and his son to him. He told Harishchandra that he had passed all the tests he was subjected to by him. He was ready to grant whatever Harischandra would ask for. Harischandra said, he did not need anything as his only aim in life was to uphold truth. I wish our students emulate the ideal of Harischandra and earn a good name.

*Students!*

There is nothing wrong in acquiring degrees, seeking a good job or even going abroad. But never become hard-hearted. Today many people have become stone-hearted to such an extent that they disobey even God's command. What is the use of leading such a life? You should have a soft heart like Venna (butter). Only then will it have the brightness of Vennela (moonlight). Then you will have peace in your life.

Yesterday and today, I spoke to you on the importance of morality and integrity. You may not be aware but human life is highly sacred. Just because God has given you eyes, ears, tongue, etc., you should not use them as you please. You should always speak the truth, listen to sacred words and try to visualise divinity. Tomorrow, I will explain to you how to make proper use of the five senses.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, *Prema Mudita Manase Kaho ...*

- **From Bhagavan's Dasara Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 21st October 2001.**



## EXCELLENCE OF ANCIENT INDIAN SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

*“If money is lost, one need not be worried about it, for one can earn it again.*

*If a friend is lost, one can have another.*

*If wife is lost, one can marry again.*

*If one loses one’s piece of land, one can purchase another.*

*All these can be regained. But if the body is lost, one cannot get it back.”*

**(Sanskrit Verse)**

One may lose one’s wealth but it can still be earned back; one may lose friends but better ones can be befriended later; one may lose one’s wife but remarriage is still possible; one may lose land and property; but these also can be regained. All these can be recovered somehow or the other but the body once lost can never be regained. One can have the experience of bliss so long as the body exists. So, one should make every effort to experience bliss while the body lasts. Our ancients made relentless efforts to protect and safeguard their bodies so as to experience bliss. But they were not able to retain their bodies permanently. Since the body is not permanent, one should spare no effort to attain the state of bliss in one’s lifetime.

### **Ideals of Education in Ancient India**

Since time immemorial, this sacred land of Bharat has been the birthplace of all branches of knowledge and education. Numerology, grammar, music and fine arts, etc., had their origin in India. In fact, that which is not found in India cannot be found anywhere else. It is therefore said, “*Yenna Bharathe, thanna Bharatha*”. This sacred land is the birthplace of many men and women of pristine virtues and high ideals.

*“This land of Bharat has given birth to many noble women like Savitri who brought her dead husband back to life; Chandramati who extinguished wild fire with the power of truth; Sita who proved her chastity by coming out of blazing fire unscathed and Damayanti who reduced an evil-minded hunter to ashes with the power of her chastity. This land of piety and nobility attained plenty and prosperity and became the teacher of all the nations of the world because of such women of chastity.”* (Telugu Poem)

However, some foolish people are deluded to think that they would find in foreign countries what is not available in India. What is it that you cannot obtain in this sacred land? It is the treasure trove of all knowledge and wealth. Unfortunately, people lack determination. If one is determined and makes sincere efforts, there is nothing that one cannot achieve or obtain in Bharat.

The Indians in the past made strenuous efforts to conduct experiments and research in the field of education and devised a new system of education. In those days, each university specialised in one area of learning or the other. Kasi University specialised in the area of

Vyakarana Sastra (grammar). Alankara Sastra (rhetoric) was the speciality of the University of Kashmir. Ujjaini University imparted knowledge in the specialised area of Nyaya Sastra (law). The science of law was taught and preserved in its pristine and pure form there. Today's laws are distorted into illegalities. On the other hand, at Ujjaini, no scope was given for anything that was unlawful to enter its portals. Bharat was famous for propagating and teaching such lofty ideals and for its dedicated teachers and students. The science of Ayurveda (health sciences and medicine) was very well developed in the kingdom of Bharata. In this way, each university specialised and taught a particular subject and popularised it. There were several such reputed universities in ancient Bharat.

Ujjaini, Kasi, Takshashila (Taxila) and Kashmir – these were all great centres of learning. Navadvipa was a reputed centre for learning logic and law. The tenets of law that could not be interpreted elsewhere were easily explained and assimilated here. Unfortunately, modern students are forgetting the great wealth and power of knowledge of India and are going abroad in search of wealth and knowledge. This is a highly unworthy and mistaken outlook. Such ignorance should be driven away. We should have light of wisdom in us. Only then can we realise the Divine and experience bliss.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

What you need to know today is that India is the repository of all knowledge and power. Spiritual science, physical sciences and fine arts like music, literature and poetry had their birth in India. They were all discovered by ancient Indians. Why are the students neglecting such a sacred land? This is the mark of ignorance of a high degree. Students are unable to recognise this truth and are running after worldly pleasures. They can never give happiness. Even if obtained, it will not last long.

#### **Ideal Student-teacher Relationship**

The universities of yore did not have huge buildings and infrastructure. The residence of the teacher itself was the university. The tree under which they sat was the classroom. The soft words of the teacher wafted over like cool breeze and were imprinted on the minds of the students. The students were few in number. However, the capacity of the teacher to impart knowledge was immense. The teacher taught in such lucid and simple terms that students could easily understand the higher sciences and grasp advanced subjects. Such educational institutions flourished in ancient Bharat. When the Britishers came to India, they were much impressed by our system of education and attempted to investigate the cause for the high standards of ancient Indian universities. They however failed in their endeavour.

The ancient system of education in India was based on Sabdapramana, i.e., the word of mouth. The practice of writing was not prevalent. The students listened to the teachings imparted by the preceptor with utmost interest which got imprinted on their heart straightaway. This was the main reason of high standards of education in ancient India. The entire process of communication was oral. There was no rigid timetable, or even curricula and syllabi. The teachers taught the student any science or subject that he was keen to learn. There was no interference from the government. The teaching-learning process was entirely heart-to-heart. The students kept their hearts open and the teachers filled them with knowledge. It was this heart-to-heart learning that enabled India to propagate wisdom and

knowledge throughout the world. Lessons were taught at any time; it never mattered whether it was day or night. The hearts of the teachers were highly pure and sacred. They did not charge any fee from the students for imparting knowledge to them. It was the responsibility of society to look after the needs of the teachers. Depending on their capacity and capability, the citizens contributed towards the livelihood of the teachers and provided them with all comforts. But never was any fee collected from the students. Thus, the education system of India was deeply sacred, highly valuable and profoundly blissful. But, unfortunately, the Indians are neglecting their ancient system of education and hence are losing an invaluable treasure of knowledge and bliss.

What were the duties of the students in those days? They would rise early in the morning, perform their ablutions and prayers before commencing their studies. The students went from house to house and collected food for themselves and the teachers. The teacher would then take whatever was required for him and the rest would be partaken of by the students as sanctified food. The teachers and students were totally selfless and pure-hearted. It was in such a sacred atmosphere that the knowledge of scriptures, epics and sacred texts was taught and learnt in ancient India.

The teachers were highly dedicated and selfless. Every nectarine thought and word that originated in their heart was transferred to the students in a loving way. As education today has been made into a commercial activity, the mind of man has become perverted. In those days, food or education was never sold. Education was made available free of cost. Goddess Saraswati was not bound by the shackles of commerce and trade. She was worshipped by grateful teachers and students for her grace as the bestower of the sacred knowledge to the teachers and learners.

*“Saraswati Namastubhyam Varade Kamarupini,  
Vidyarambham Karishyami Siddhir Bhavatu Mey Sada.  
Padma-patrasalakhshi Padmakshara Varnini,  
Nityam Padmalaya Devi, Sa Maam Patu Saraswati.”*

(I begin my education with salutations to myriad-formed Saraswati, the bestower of boons. May she always grant me success! That goddess with eyes like lotus petals, coloured like the pollens of the lotus, ever residing in the lotus, may she protect me! *Saraswati, Bhagawati, Bharati, Poornendubimbanana* were her various names. Daily prayer was offered to the goddess Saraswati before starting teaching and learning. But the name of Saraswati is conspicuous by its absence in the modern system of education. Goddess Lakshmi was worshipped by her many names, viz., *Indira, Lokamatha, Ramamangaladevata, Bhargavi, Lokajanani, Ksheera Sagara Kanyaka*, etc. Prayers invoking the goddesses lent purity and sweetness to the teachings of ancient Bharatiyas.

### **The Aim of Education is God-realisation**

It is in such a sacred land that God has repeatedly taken human form. God is not some incomprehensible figure or entity. He can be most easily experienced. *Daivam Manusha Rupena* (God takes the form of man) God incarnates in human form. Today, however, man is not ready to accept this reality of God's incarnation in human form. Our ancients followed

the paths of Karma (action), Upasana (worship) and Jnana (knowledge) to realise God. They offered prayers to God and worshipped Him in many ways.

*“Yasya Jnanadayasindho*

*Agadhasya Anagha Guna*

*SevyathamAkshayoDheera*

*Sa Sriye Cha Amrutaya Cha.”*

(That Lord who is the ocean of knowledge and compassion, fathomless, changeless and replete with all pure attributes is worshipped by the earnest seekers of wealth and immortality.)

The sacred knowledge was offered free of cost. There was no discrimination on the basis of caste, community, race or religion. All were considered equal. Music, literature, dance and fine arts were all encouraged and fostered. Carpentry, pottery and various branches of smithy were also encouraged and taught with dedication. The aim was to make the students self-reliant through proper education. The teacher was the repository of all knowledge. Every student received knowledge directly from the teacher. Without the teacher, there could be no learning. The teachers in those days were noble and virtuous.

The science of medicine was highly developed in ancient India. Charaka was a highly reputed and well-known name in the field of medical science. Today the heart-lung machine and several other complicated and sophisticated equipments are required to treat heart disease. No such gadgets were required in those days. Charaka treated the patients while chanting Mantras in praise of God to invoke His grace. The heart disease would vanish without a trace. For that matter, every disease can be cured by invoking God's grace. One can achieve physical, mental and spiritual strength by chanting the Divine Name.

### **Efficacy of Namasmarana for Man's Liberation**

*Embodiments of Love!*

It is impossible to achieve anything without the grace of God. Sadly today, man is steeped in injustice and unrighteousness. All his thoughts are selfish and evil. His vision lacks the warmth of love. Idealism has reached rock bottom. First of all, man needs to grow the crop of love in the field of his heart. This was the teaching of Charaka. God is not in some distant land but resides in your very heart. He is with you, within you, above and below you and also around you. With such faith, man should chant the Divine Name. Discarding such an easy path, man is subjecting himself to needless agony and suffering. On the other hand, people in ancient days would instantly get rid of any suffering – all by chanting the sacred Name of the Lord. *Harer Nama Harer Nama Harer Namaiva Kevalam, Kalau Nastyeva Nastyeva Nastyeva Gathiranyatha* (chanting of the Divine Name is the only path to liberation in this Age of Kali).

In Kali Age, Namasmarana (chanting the Lord's Name) is the panacea for all our suffering. There is no greater power than the Divine Name. Chanting the Lord's Name bestows infinite bliss on man. No one can estimate the power of the Lord's Name. In Krita Yuga, meditation was the chief means of man's liberation. In Treta Yuga, it was Yajna and in Dwapar Yuga, worship. But in Kali Yuga, Namasmarana is the most potent spiritual

practice to earn God's grace. That is why the practice of Namasmarana has been spreading to all parts of the world.

*Students!*

If you make a proper enquiry, you will realise that all powers are present in you. The tremendous power of magnetism that is latent in man cannot be found anywhere else. All the powers of the world are immanent in man. Though man is such a powerful entity, he considers himself to be a weakling and hence suffers. You are all the embodiments of Divinity. God is not separate from you. He resides in your heart. You can have a blissful glimpse of God if you turn your vision inward. You are unable to see Him because you lack faith.

### **Poetry and Dramas Written by Swami in His Childhood**

During My childhood, I used to compose several songs with deep meaning and gave joy to the villagers by having them sung. It was the time when Hitler invaded Russia in the Second World War. Some people organised a meeting and approached Me with a request to compose some songs which could inspire our freedom fighters. A doll was placed in a cradle on the stage. I then composed a song extempore in the form of a lullaby to the doll.

*"Do not cry, my child, do not cry.*

*If you cry, you will not be called a valiant son of Bharat.*

*Go to sleep, my child, go to sleep.*

*Did you get scared because the terrible Hitler has invaded the invincible Russia?*

*Go to sleep, my child, go to sleep.*

*Do not cry, my child, do not cry.*

*For the Red Army is marching under Stalin.*

*They will put an end to Hitler.*

*All the countrymen shall unite and fight to win freedom;*

*Go to sleep, my child, go to sleep."*

(Telugu Song)

The villagers listened to the song with appreciation and amazement. Many of them wondered as to how this young boy Sathyanarayana Raju had come to know about Hitler and Stalin. These names were unknown to the people in this region. There is nothing that Sai does not know. *(loud applause)* Yet I pretend as if I am not aware. I ask you, "When did you come?" You may think that Sai Baba is not even aware when you have arrived! I do know. But I still ask the question to give you happiness. My only intention in asking such questions is to make you happy that Swami spoke to you. I do not think that you entertain any doubt about My knowledge of your arrival.

One day some school students came to Me. They all used to address Me as Sathya. They said, "Sathya! We are planning to enact a play in the school. We want You to write the story and some songs for it." I agreed and prepared the script for the drama. In this connection, I wrote a song, taught it to two of the students and asked them to sing in public.

*What are these times that have descended on us!*

*Oh folks! What are these times that have descended on us!*

The face powder has formed a cheap substitute for the turmeric powder;

*Oh folks! What are these times that have descended on us!*

*Gold necklaces have given way to cheap trinkets and chains;*

*Oh folks! What are these times that have descended on us!* (Telugu Poem)

In this way, I used to teach the people lessons that needed to be taught. In those days, sporting a wristwatch was considered a fashion.

*People hang silver medallions from a leather strap on their left wrists – and call it fashion!*

*Grotesque appearances are made that cannot be seen by the eyes – and they call it fashion!*

*Long moustaches are cut to tiny patches under the nose – and they call it fashion!*  
(Telugu Song)

I used to compose such songs that made fun of modern fads and tried to draw the attention of the public, particularly the youth, towards ancient customs and traditions.

Karanam Subbamma was a noble and pious lady. She loved Me very much. I was then just seven years of age. She often came to Me, calling “Sathya, Sathya”. I did not respond immediately. Whenever she called Me, she kept asking, “Child! Why do You not come to my house?” I would respond, “I am not a beggar to keep visiting others’ houses. I shall come only if invited and not otherwise.” One day she prayed, “Son! My husband is taking to immoral ways and ruining himself. Can You help me in correcting him?” I replied, “If you do not think otherwise, I will teach him a lesson. I will compose a few songs with suitable wordings and make the boys sing them in his presence.” Subbamma was worried that her husband would get angry with Me. I comforted her, saying, “A person’s anger is his own enemy. It cannot harm Me.” I then trained some boys to sing a song with the objective of correcting the evil-doer. This was a task that could not be achieved by mild and soft words. Only hard-hitting words could correct him and make him feel guilty. The children were scared. I gave them courage by saying that I would be with them. The Karanam’s name was Narayana Rao. I wrote a song specially to correct him, passages of which ran as follows:

*“You will become an outcaste in your own community;*

*Your relatives will not entertain you and will drive you out;*

*Your friends will beat you with their slippers if they see you!”*

I used such harsh words to make him give up his misdirected ways. I was able to hit the mark! The Karanam learnt a good lesson and gave up his vices. Subbamma was thrilled. Though I was a small boy, she ran and fell at My feet and thanked Me profusely. She said, “Raju! You are small only in appearance but there is an enormous divine power hidden in You. There is none else who could be so daringly forceful and set right so powerful a person as the Karanam!” She then told the father of this body, “Venkappa! You are mistaken if you consider your son an ordinary boy. He is very powerful. He will set ideals for the whole world in future. Do not get deluded with the feeling that He is your son. Send Him to my house.” He declined her request and said, “It is not customary in our family to give our

children for adoption. Whatever be our limited capacity, we shall look after Him ourselves. I cannot send Him to another house.”

In this way, I lived a life of freedom and courage. I did not allow anybody to have control over Me. I have no defects or shortcomings. So, why should I fear? I led My life cheerfully and fearlessly.

I wrote some dramas also. I had several small plays staged by small children. One such drama was entitled: “*Cheppinattu Chestara*” (Do they act as they speak?)

### **Develop Divine Feelings from your Childhood**

There live done Panchagam Ramappa. Kameswari was his mother. She used to conduct Satsanga in the evening for a few ladies in which she preached philosophy after reading from sacred books. Whenever she discoursed, I sat there. She read highly philosophical Vedantic texts and explained their meaning somehow, though she herself found it difficult to understand these. She had even the handicap of not knowing the words properly. So, she tried to teach in her own way. She explained to the group of ladies that God is omnipotent, omniscient and protector of Dharma. Taking a suitable opportunity, I used to tell her the correct meaning of these verses so as to help her to explain this to other ladies.

Women were hardly educated in those days. They used to gather in the evening around such literate ladies and spent their time listening to sacred hymns and stories about God. I was organising such groups right from those days. I used to tell them the efficacy of Satsanga. I assembled little children and organised a Pandhari Bhajan group. With anklets that tinkled and cymbals that clanged, they enthusiastically sang and danced along the streets early in the morning, waking up slumbering villagers. Earlier, villagers did not get up till 7.00 a.m. But when I started organising Pandhari Bhajans with the help of children, they started rising at 5.00 a.m., and also started offering prayers to God after their morning ablutions and bath.

*“Taking cymbals in hand,  
Tying them up firmly to hand,  
Clanging them together to beat out  
desire and anger from within,  
Let us take the path to Shirdi,  
Let us sing ‘Jai Jai Ranga’  
Let us sing ‘Jai Jai Sai’  
and hurry towards the Lord.”*

(Telugu Song)

Thus began the idea of Nagar Sankirtan. I started Nagar Sankirtan when I was seven years old! Subbamma would quietly join the group as well, enthusiastically playing the cymbals.

Right from childhood, I have always been engaged in imparting knowledge and propounding sacred teachings to the people. The Pandhari Bhajan group was so popular that people from neighbouring villages also came to participate in it. All those who took part in it experienced ecstasy and bliss. Subbamma felt very happy. For two rupees, a sackful of puffed rice could

be bought. She arranged to have it distributed as Prasadam to all. It is essential to develop divine feelings right from your childhood.

I was sent to Kamalapuram for studies. Kamalapuram lies between Cuddapah and Tadipatri towns. There in Kamalapuram a businessman named Kote Subbanna somehow found out that I had the capability to write poetry. He came running to Me and said, “Raju! I hear that You compose excellent poems.” I told him, “It is not that I compose poems. Whatever I utter is itself poetry!” He said, “I shall get a pair of shirts and trousers stitched for You if You write some poems for me.” I told him at once that he must not approach Me with such cheap bartering offers. “I am not waiting for you to give alms to Me. There is no need to talk to you if you do this!” In this way, I admonished him.

He then explained that he had stocked a brand new medicine in his shop. He wrote down and gave me a detailed list of its benefits. It was called “Bala Bhaskara”. He requested that I compose a song on the “Bala Bhaskara” and teach it to a group of children, and make them go round the streets singing the song. I told him to come back in an hour! The classes were going on. I did not want to shirk My responsibilities. I therefore told Kote Subbanna to come an hour later, after the classes and collect the poem. I then set the tune and composed the song. It ran as follows:

*“There it is! There it is! Oh, children! come, come!*

*There is the medicine Bala Bhaskara;*

*Be it an upset stomach or a swollen leg;*

*Be it a joint pain or flatulence;*

*Be it any ailment, known or unknown;*

*Take this Bala Bhaskara for an instant cure!*

*If you wish to know where it is available:*

*There is the shop of Kote Subbanna;*

*It is in that shop that you can pick it up.*

*Come here boys! come here!*

*It is an excellent tonic*

*Prepared by the famous physician Gopalacharya himself,*

*Come here boys! come here!”*

(Telugu Song)

Kote Subbanna’s joy knew no bounds when he heard the song. He brought a big basket of Laddus and placed it before Me with gratitude. I directed that these be distributed to everyone present there. I never took sweets right from My childhood. Why do I need to have sweets when I have all the sweetness within Me? My mind is sweet, My love is sweet. Why then do I need sweets? In this way, My primary task was to help everybody, make them happy and remove their suffering.

*Embodiments of Love!*



Our Vice Chancellor has prayed that I should speak about the sacred source of joy, the Ramayana. Truly speaking, I am not satisfied with the present educational scenario. Today people can study as much as they wish. But what is the use of this education? They are engaged in Dhanarjana (earning money) and not Gunarjana (imbibing virtues). Money is no doubt essential but it is not the be all and end all of life. Virtues are of prime importance. All that you learn is forgotten at some point of time or the other. What is needed today is spiritual education. It is said: “*Adhyatma Vidya Vidyanam*” (spiritual knowledge is real knowledge). It is this knowledge that needs to be imbibed in the heart. This sacred knowledge is available in the Ramayana. The Ramayana is an ancient text. It has survived the vicissitudes of time, ups and downs of history and several other turbulences, and still stands high as a great ideal for humanity. There are several subtle secrets in the Ramayana that are not understood by many. I shall take these tiny saplings, develop them into huge trees and make you sit and relax under their cool shade. This shall be My endeavour from tomorrow onwards.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, “*Rama Rama Rama Sita ...*”

- **From Bhagavan’s Summer Course Discourse in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall on the evening of 16th May 2002.**

## **News from Prasanthi Nilayam**

### **BHAGAVAN RETURNS TO PUTTAPARTHI**

Eagerly awaiting Bhagavan’s return to Puttaparthi since He left for Brindavan on 19th March 2002, the devotees of Puttaparthi and adjoining villages were ecstatic when they heard the news of Bhagavan’s return to Puttaparthi on Sunday, 9th June 2002. As soon as the news of Swami’s return was received, instant preparations started for the welcome of Bhagavan. The entire route of Bhagavan from the outskirts of Puttaparthi was spruced up, welcome arcs, banners and gates came up on the road in no time. The devotion of ladies was worth seeing who swept the roads clean, washed them with water and put up attractive designs of Rangoli to welcome their Beloved Bhagavan. The joy of the villagers who lined up the entire route of Bhagavan knew no bounds as soon as they sighted Bhagavan’s motorcade at a distance. As Bhagavan’s car came near, people shouted full-throated Jai of Bhagavan. There was joy in every heart and smile on all faces.

Escorted by a large contingent of motorbike riders, Bhagavan entered the precincts of Prasanthi Nilayam amidst joyous Jaikars. On His entry into the Prasanthi Mandir, Bhagavan was offered traditional welcome with Poornakumbham amidst Veda chanting by a group of Institute students. A special feature of welcome this time was the Panchavadyam music presented by the students of the Institute. Bhagavan entered Sai Kulwant Hall at 12.15 p.m., showered the bliss of His Divine Darshan on the devotees, staff and students and received Mangalarati.

## NEWS FROM INLAND SAI CENTRES

**Andhra Pradesh:** A State-level training course on Sri Sathya Sai Educare was conducted at Shivam, Hyderabad on 26th May 2002. Five faculty members were selected specially for this purpose from all over the State to conduct this programme in Telugu. The two books “Educare for Devotees” and “Educare” were translated into Telugu and given to all the participant trainers from all over the State. These trainers will conduct training courses in their respective districts.

**Kerala:** A Disaster Management Camp was organised at Palakkad on 22nd and 23rd April 2002 by Palakkad Sai Samithi of Kerala for the benefit of Sai youth. Trainees from four States of South India attended the programme. Effective training was provided to them in the various aspects of disaster management, viz., identification of the problems of disaster management, key principles to be followed, relief measures, basic equipment needed, First Aid, firefighting, methods of rescue operations, etc.

**Uttar Pradesh:** More than 100 young ladies donated blood at the blood donation camp organised by the Noida Samithi on 12th May 2002. Youth Wing of the Samithi had earlier gone door to door to exhort young ladies for this sacred work. The Samithi provided the infrastructure at the camp including refreshment to the donors and medical staff from All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi. Poor and needy patients getting treatment at the Institute will be benefited from this camp.

**West Bengal:** On 19th May, 2002 Balughat Samithi of South Dinajpur District opened a monthly Free Medical Camp at a local club named “Kabirtha” for the poor village and slum people, where 90 patients were provided medical check-up and necessary medicines.

To meet the summer blood crisis, Midnapore (west) district organised a blood donation and blood grouping camp at Sai Mandir, Kharagpur on 6th May 2002 (Easwaramma Day). 25 Sai youth donated blood and blood grouping was done for 100 poor people. Bankura district also organised a blood donation camp at Bankura Town where 28 Sai youth donated blood to meet the summer blood crisis.

## QUOTATION

*Do not go on adding things that bind you. Bind yourself to the great liberator, God. Be in the world, but do not let the world get into you. Sleep in the mosquito net of Sadhana; do not allow the insects of Kama and Krodha to harm you.*

- **Baba**

## EDUCATION SHOULD LEAD TO PERFECTION

*May all be healthy, happy and prosperous!*

*May all lead a life without sorrow! (Sanskrit Verse)*

### *Embodiments of Love!*

The Bharatiyas pray for the welfare and well-being of all the people of the world. This is the foremost principle of Bharatiya culture. The culture of Bharat is eternal, everlasting and steadfast. Its glory has remained undiminished through the ravages of time. The students today have forgotten this sacred culture and are consequently facing great problems. They are distancing themselves from peace and bliss. The Bharatiyas of yore experienced bliss and shared it with others. Even the people of other countries recognised the greatness of Bharatiya culture and tried to follow the same for the benefit of their respective countries.

### **Truth and Self-confidence are the Key to Success in Life**

Abraham Lincoln, who rose to become the President of America, was born in a poor family. His father was a carpenter. His mother worked hard to earn a little money to educate him. Their income was barely enough to run the family. Lincoln had to face many hardships. He did not have even a proper dress to wear. When he went to school, his schoolmates made fun of him as he was shabbily dressed. Unable to bear their taunts, one day Lincoln went to his mother and wept bitterly. She enquired as to what the matter was. Lincoln said, "Mother, all my schoolmates look down upon me because I am poor and do not have a good dress to wear. They dislike my company." Then his mother pacified him, saying, "Son, you should understand our financial condition and act accordingly. Your schoolmates are able to talk in this manner because they are well-to-do. We have to conduct ourselves keeping our financial condition in view. We are not rich. We have to face this situation with fortitude." She drew him close, wiped his tears and said, "You should not feel unhappy over such a trivial matter. We do not have rich friends and relatives. But we are rich in self-respect and self-confidence. Understand that self-confidence is our true wealth. One with self-confidence and self-respect is the richest of all. Money and comforts are transient. So, strengthen your self-confidence and self-respect. They will certainly bestow on you all the prosperity. Do not get carried away by what others say." These words of wisdom made an indelible impression on the tender heart of Lincoln. He started believing that self-confidence was his true wealth and his very life-breath. He stopped paying heed to the taunts of his schoolmates and continued his studies with determination. As there was no light in his house, he used to study under streetlights at night. At times, he had no food to eat and went to sleep after drinking a cup of water. His mother used to work day and night tirelessly to make both ends meet. Sometimes, she used to starve herself in order to feed her son. Lincoln lost his mother

when he was still a child. So, his father Thomas married again. His stepmother was a noble lady and looked after Lincoln with love and affection. She also taught Lincoln to develop self-confidence. Lincoln was happy under her loving care. He paid glowing tributes to her, saying that he never thought that a stepmother could be so kind and compassionate as she was towards him. He made all efforts to keep her happy.

Unmindful of adverse circumstances, Lincoln worked hard and pursued his studies with determination. He passed his examinations with distinction. People were amazed at his success in examinations. He attributed his success to self-confidence. He never uttered a lie. He considered truth as God. Later he got employment in a store where he worked with diligence and honesty. Gradually he earned reputation as a man of truth and integrity. Recognising his nobility, his friends requested him to contest the election. They said, "There is no trace of truth or morality in politics. There is no justice at all. The country needs a person like you who should uphold truth and justice." Initially, Lincoln was reluctant to enter politics. He felt he did not have the strength to achieve success in politics. Even some elders started exerting pressure on him to contest the election. They promised that they would extend all the necessary help. Lincoln stood in election and emerged victorious. Ultimately, Lincoln became the President of America. Just imagine a boy born in a poor family rising to the level of the President of America. His self-confidence was responsible for this.

Time, country and circumstances may change. But the purity and power of the heart do not change. Before Lincoln became the President of America, people did not realise the power of self-confidence and faith in God. It was Lincoln who taught these values to the people of America. Following the example of Lincoln, more and more people started developing self-confidence and faith in God. It is enough if a country has one person like Lincoln.

*"The moon illumines the world at  
night and the sun during the day.  
Righteousness illumines the three  
worlds, and a noble son illumines his  
entire clan." (Telugu Poem)*

### **Culture Emphasises Cultivation of Virtues**

*Students!*

You should become the noble sons of Bharat. Strive to reverse the present trend and lead the country on the right path. First of all, transform your heart. Only then can you bring about transformation in others. If you want to be

respected, in the first instance you should respect others. Respect all without any difference of caste, religion, etc. Understand that the same Atmic principle dwells in all. *Ekoham Bahusyam* (the One willed to become many). This is the teaching of the culture of Bharat. As people have forgotten this sacred culture, they are unable to earn the love of their own parents.

What is Samskruti (culture)? Samskara (refinement) is culture. That which purifies is culture. We do not partake of paddy without processing it. We separate the husk and boil the rice before eating it. This denotes refinement. Likewise we should refine ourselves by giving up wicked qualities and filling our hearts with purity. Only then can we get strength and happiness. A healthy body will have a healthy mind. Some people have a misconception that the body and the mind are two separate entities. The body cannot exist without the mind.

*Manah Eva Manushyanam Karanam Bandhamokshayo* (mind is responsible for both bondage and liberation of man). So, you should fill your mind with sacred thoughts. Both the body and the mind are closely interrelated. The body is the vesture of the mind and the mind is the basis for the body. So, the body and the mind should be put to right use.

Today students are pursuing various types of studies and are acquiring high qualifications. But mere academic qualification will not give you true happiness. Food sustains the body but cannot give bliss. Money provides comforts but cannot ensure bliss. Both the body and the mind are important. How should we maintain our body? How can we purify the mind? Students should clearly understand this. When you have a healthy body and a pure mind, you become a perfect human being. Without this, you are only half man, not full man. The purpose of education is to mould man into a perfect human being. Modern education lacks this capability. Many feel that they can be happy in life if they have money. But money cannot give you true happiness. It cannot ensure sound health. You have to cultivate virtues if you want real happiness. It is not by Dhanamu (money) but only by Gunamu (virtue) that one can remain happy and healthy. Modern students are interested only in Kalimi (wealth), Balimi (power) and Chelimi (friendship) but not in Gunamu (virtue). What is the use of possessing wealth and power without virtue? One should depend on character and not on wealth, power and friendship. Ancient Bharatiyas made this country ideal as they relied on the cultivation of virtues. Bharat is a sacred land. One who is devoid of virtues cannot be called a true Bharatiya. Give up bad thoughts. Never utter unsacred words and never indulge in evil deeds. This is the teaching of the culture of Bharat. It lays great emphasis on unity.

*"Let us move together, let us grow  
together, let us grow in intelligence  
together, let us live in harmony with  
each other without giving room for*

*conflicts."*

(Telugu Poem)

We say, all are our brothers and sisters, but how many are translating this ideal into action? Our actions should be in harmony with our words. Jesus taught, *Brotherhood of man and Fatherhood of God*. The same truth is professed by the culture of Bharat. Sow the seeds of good thoughts, water them with good actions and remove the weeds of wicked qualities. Only then will you reap the crop of bliss.

*Students!*

Today is the first day of the Summer Course. Purify your body and mind. Put into practice the teachings of our ancients. Follow the ideals demonstrated by great men like Lincoln. His mother taught him that self-confidence was the greatest wealth of man. Develop self-confidence. Uphold self-respect. Do not do anything artificially. Whatever you do, do it 'heartfully' (wholeheartedly). Art is outside, heart is inside. Follow the dictates of your heart. People greet each other 'good morning', 'good evening', etc., but most of them do it in a mechanical and artificial manner. Truly speaking, there is no morning or evening. We call it morning when the sun rises in the east, and evening when the sun sets in the west. But actually speaking, there is no sunrise or sunset. It is because of the rotation of the earth that we see the sun during the day and the moon during the night.

Moon is the presiding deity of the mind. Before Rama lifted the Siva bow in the court of King Janaka, Sita's mind was not at peace. When Sita went to Ayodhya after her marriage with Rama, one day she confided to Him how the moon of her mind was clouded before Rama lifted the Siva bow. Rama then told Sita that at the time of His birth, thick clouds covered the moon; so, it could not have His Darshan at the time of His birth. Rama then promised to the moon that He would add Chandra (moon) to His name to make it happy. Rama further told that in His next incarnation in Dwapar Yuga, the moon would be the first to have the Darshan of the Lord and to pay salutations to Him. True to the words spoken by Lord Ramachandra, the moon had the good fortune of having the first Darshan of Sri Krishna when His father Vasudeva was carrying Him across the river Yamuna. Thus, the moon was the first to do Namaskar to the Lord on His incarnation as Krishna.

**Give up Body Attachment and Experience the Atma**

*Embodiments of Love!*

You may not have any material wealth; it is enough if you have self-confidence and self-respect. Respect everybody. Offer your Namaskar (salutations) to elders wholeheartedly. What is the inner meaning of Namaskar? When you do Namaskar, you join your palms and bring them close to your heart. The five fingers of each hand symbolise the five Karmendriyas (senses of action) and five Jnanendriyas (senses of perception). These ten senses should follow the dictates of your heart (conscience). That is true Namaskar. Some people do Namaskar in a mechanical way. They do not bring their two palms together. They say Namaskar and lift their hands, as if they are going to hit you. When you do Namaskar, bring the ten fingers together and keep the two thumbs close to your heart. (Here Bhagavan demonstrated on the stage how Namaskar should be done by keeping His joined thumbs on His chest.) It means that you are doing it wholeheartedly. Thumb is the most important finger, without which the hand becomes useless.

This is the way our ancient sages and seers did Namaskar. They led a sacred life and performed penance without any sense of fear in dense forests amidst wild animals and wicked demons. What was the source of their courage and strength? They had no Dehabhimana (body attachment). They had only Atmabhimana (attachment to the Self). What was the weapon they carried with them? They carried the weapon of self-confidence with them. That is why they could even tame wild animals like lions and tigers and play with them. They had absolutely no sense of fear. It is from self-confidence that one gets courage. Today man is fear-stricken because he lacks self-confidence. Life has no meaning if one lacks self-confidence. Modern youth do not have faith in the Atma at all. They ask, “Where is the Atma?” The Atma is everywhere. *Atmavat Sarvabhutani* (see the same Atma in all beings). *Sarvata Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvata Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Thisthati* (with hands, feet, eyes, heads, mouth and ears pervading everything, God permeates the entire universe). Take, for instance, air. It is present everywhere but you can neither see it with your eyes nor catch it in your hands. You cannot deny its existence because you cannot live without it. The same can be said of the Atma too. The Atma is the life principle of all beings. That is why in temples a ritual called Prana Pratishtha (investing life principle) is performed to the idols. You cannot live without the Atma. Who is responsible for your breathing process? It is the Atma.

The five elements are the very forms of the Divine. This was the teaching of Buddha. In the beginning, he visited many noble souls and listened to their teachings. He studied many sacred texts but he was not satisfied. Ultimately, he came to the conclusion that the five elements are the very forms of God. In order to understand divinity, you have to understand the nature of the five elements. You may worship God in the form of idols and derive some satisfaction out of it. There is nothing wrong in idol worship. But understand that God is not confined to idols. He dwells in your heart. Understand the nature of your senses and put them to sacred use. Only

then can you attain Nirvana. Buddha understood this truth and attained Nirvana. His stepbrother Ananda was by his side during his final moments. Buddha noticed Ananda shedding tears and said, "Why do you have this body attachment? Body is negative, whereas I am positive. This negative has to be given up some day or the other." Today people are deluded by Dehabhimana because they lack Atmabhimana. No doubt, you have to take proper care of your body. You have to discharge your duties but do not be unduly attached to the body. *"The body is made up of five elements and is bound to perish sooner or later but the indweller has neither birth nor death. He has no attachment whatsoever. Truly speaking, the indweller is verily God Himself who is in the form of the Atma."* (Telugu Poem)

### **Sense Control Imparts Lavanya**

The body needs to be maintained well in order to carry on our life journey. But do not waste your time by constantly thinking of it and getting attached to it. Without the Atma, the body cannot exist. So, the Atma is the fundamental basis of life. It is a grave mistake to repose faith in the body forgetting the Atma. You should have faith in the Self and make sacred use of your senses. Only then can you cultivate Lavanya. According to our ancients, Lavanya connotes beauty of character. Today we find many women bearing the name Lavanya. As one's character develops, the splendour of one's personality increases. Such a person will remain youthful even in advanced age. He will be ever blissful and beautiful. He will be the very embodiment of Sathyam, Sivam and Sundaram. This body (Swami points to His body) is approaching its 77th year. How is it that this body remains youthful and attractive? It is full of Lavanya due to the purity of My character and sense control. Whoever has sense control will have Lavanya. You do not find the pictures of Rama or Krishna looking old. They were ever young and full of Lavanya. Today youngsters lack sense control and consequently are ageing very fast. A youth of 16 or 17 today looks like an old man of 60 or 70! Lack of sense control is the cause of their ageing fast. You will have all the physical strength and vigour when you have sense control. Put the senses to proper use and exercise control over them. You will then be endowed with Lavanya. Be cheerful and smiling. Do not laugh in an artificial manner. Man has no reason to be sad because it is contrary to human nature. Where is the need for him to cry when he has the ever blissful spirit within? Never cry. Always be happy. You should lead an exemplary life and set an ideal to society by helping the poor, the sick and the needy.

### **Follow Me and Attain Bliss**

*Students!*

This is the first day of the Summer Course. Understand the purpose behind conducting the Summer Course. You would have wasted a lot of time during these two months of vacation. If you waste your time in futile pursuits, you cannot have sense control. And if your senses are not brought under control, your health as well as your



studies will suffer. Make sacred use of your time in this Course. This Summer Course is meant to cultivate virtues in you so that you may attain Pushti (strength) and Santhushti (happiness) and experience Sathyananda (true bliss).

*Sathyanandam, Parama Sukhadam, Kevalam Jnanamurtim, Dwandwateetam,*

*Gagana Sadrisham, Tattwamasyadi Lakshyam, Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee Sakshibhutam, Bhavateetam, Trigunarahitam*(you are the embodiment of truth and bliss, you are wisdom absolute, the one without a second, beyond the pair of opposites, expansive and pervasive like the sky, the goal indicated by the Mahavakya Tattwamasi, the eternal, pure, unchanging, the witness of all functions of the intellect, beyond all mental conditions and the three Gunas of Sattwa, Rajas and Thamas). This is your true nature. So, you should always be in a state of bliss. It is possible only when you give up body attachment. One with body consciousness can never attain bliss. However, the body has to be maintained properly. You should not eat as you please. The stomach is like a petrol tank; it should not be overloaded. You should have Mithaharam and Hithaharam (moderate and wholesome food). Take, for instance, Swami's example. Many people dine with Me everyday. They are aware of this. For the past one month, I have stopped eating even Ragi Sankati which was My regular diet. I am taking only one Chapati and nothing else. You all can see how blissful I am. Some people may think that Swami is looking weak. It is just a reflection of their feelings. There is no weakness in Me whatsoever. I am very strong. I can walk any distance. If necessary, I can even run. What is the secret of this? My Lavanya is responsible for this. Many people wonder as to how Swami appears so young and blissful even at this age. How can you expect Me to be otherwise? I have no worry at all. I am always full of bliss. Follow Me. I keep saying, My life is My message. Follow in My footsteps and you will also remain energetic and blissful forever. Lead a happy, healthy and ideal life and serve the nation. Understand that you are born to serve and not to rule over others. Develop the spirit of service and sanctify your lives.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, *Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin ...* (After showering bliss on the participants by the melody of the Bhajan, Bhagavan further advised the participating students.)

*Students - Boys and Girls!*

Everyday after the classes are over in the morning, do not waste your time in roaming about. Ruminates on the good things taught to you by the learned speakers. Imprint their teachings on your heart. This is what you are supposed to do in the following fortnight. When these teachings are firmly imprinted on your heart, they will become a part of your being. When Uddhava brought the message of Krishna to the Gopikas, they told Uddhava that they wanted Krishna and not His message. They told him that the form of Krishna was imprinted on their

heart like a picture imprinted on a sheet of paper. It was not possible to separate Krishna from their heart. Like the Gopikas, develop the feeling of oneness with God and say with firm conviction “God and I are one”. Do not waste your time in idle gossip. Observe Mounam (silence). Talk less, work more and study more.

**-From Bhagavan's Inaugural Address at Summer Course in Indian Culture and Spirituality on 16th May 2002 in the Brindavan Campus of SSSIHL.**

## **STICK TO THE IDEAL AND THE PATH**

Indian culture, as you learnt at this Summer Camp from distinguished exponents, never encourages the use of force for effecting changes in law or social conditions or people's attitudes. Mahatma Gandhi directed the movement for Indian Independence along spiritual lines with emphasis on non-violence and truth; he drew courage and confidence, and communicated both to the people, from Namasmaraṇa, the recitation and reflection on the Name of God. He cleansed the heart of the nation, of hatred and envy, of fear and doubt. He stuck to the ideal and the path; you too should do the same.

- *From Bhagavan's Valedictory Discourse: Summer Course for College Students, Brindavan, 31-05-1972*

## **EASWARAMMA DAY DISCOURSE**

### **MOTHER IS YOUR FIRST GOD**

*All the names and forms are but the manifestations of the Supreme Being who is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute and non-dual. He is the embodiment of Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram (Truth, Goodness, Beauty).*  
(Sanskrit Verse)

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

*Yad Drishyam Thannashyam* (all that we see with our physical eyes is bound to perish). It is not only man who is endowed with physical eyes but birds and animals also have them. Even worms and insects have eyes. But what is the use of eyes if we cannot see that which is eternal and changeless? These eyes perceive only ephemeral, impermanent and unreal things. In the world, we find people spending their whole life in mundane activities, perceiving only ephemeral things. Jnana (wisdom) is true and eternal. Only he who has the eye of wisdom deserves to be called a human being. It is therefore essential that man should turn his vision inward and try to recognise the Atmic principle. We can experience the Atmic principle only when we turn our vision inward. With our outward vision, we perceive only transient, ephemeral phenomena.

#### **Imprint the Teachings of your Mother on your Heart**

In the land of Bharat, the ideal of motherhood has been held in high esteem. Every individual has a mother. But today reverence and love for the mother is on the decline. People do not try to make their mother happy. There is no love greater than that of the mother in the whole phenomenal world.

*Rama's divinity blossomed under Kausalya's loving care;*

*Because of the tender feelings and austerity of Sita,  
Lava and Kusha achieved name and fame;  
The loving care of Jijabai made Sivaji a great warrior. (Telugu Poem)*

Similarly, many eminent persons in the world achieved greatness in life due to the loving care of their mothers. It is therefore important for every individual to respect his/her mother. The ideal conduct of children is based on the ideals set by their mothers. The sacredness of motherhood is unparalleled all over the world irrespective of country or time. Material wealth or high levels of scholarship are not necessary for this. Character is the basis for this ideal. Every mother aspires for the welfare of her children. There may be bad children but there can never be a bad mother in this world. There is an urgent need for ideal children who obey the instructions of their mothers and follow the ideals set by them. They should imprint the teachings of their mothers on their hearts.

Bharatiya culture declares: *Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava, Acharya Devo Bhava, Atithi Devo Bhava* (revere your mother, father, preceptor and guest as God). But the highest place has been given to the mother. She is truly your first god. How many are there today who give due respect and love to this embodiment of divinity? Let alone giving love or respect to their mother, how many behave in a proper manner so as to deserve the love of their mother? A true son/daughter is one who acts in a way that earns him/her the love of his/her mother. One can never hope for peace or happiness in life if one hurts the feelings of one's mother. It is the duty of every child to respect and love his mother; he should never cause her any distress. Be one a great scholar or an officer having high authority, one is but a child to one's mother. But due to the influence of Kali Age, modern boys/girls are forgetting their duty towards their mother. This is a grave error. Those who forget their duty towards their mother are sure to lose themselves in wilderness. You are but a reflection of your mother. Therefore, first of all you should carry out your duty towards your mother and make her happy.

### **Fulfil your Mother's Wishes**

The mother of this body Easwamma looked upon all children with great love and tenderness. Whenever she saw little children, she caressed them with great affection without observing any differences whatsoever. As Karanam Subbamma had no children, she requested Easwamma to send her children to her house once in a while. Thus, Subbamma took Me to her house and looked after Me with great love. Once when I was in Subbamma's house, Easwamma came in a hurry. I asked her, "What is the hurry? What has happened?" She replied, "Swami, near our house there is a young mother whose little daughter is sick. She is helpless and in great distress. Even a dispensary does not exist in this desolate village. There is no one who can treat even a simple cold, cough or fever. So many devotees are coming to You. Do not think that all of them are true devotees. Only those who feel the distress of others and try to help them are true devotees. Wealth, scholarship or authority is of little consequence. Sympathising with others in their suffering and trying to alleviate it is the true sign of devotion. One should share the sorrow of others. But this is scarce today. There are people who keep talking at great length about the achievements of their own children but they have little concern for the suffering of others' children. Thousands of devotees come here but it has occurred to none to do something to solve the problems that exist here. It is now left to You. So, You must construct a small hospital in this village for the poor children." I comforted her and said, "Why are you disturbed so much over such a small matter? It will be done. But for everything the time must be ripe. A new born child cannot become a youth all at once; some time is required. Do not worry so much; in due course of time, Swami will fulfil your desire. Try to comfort those who are suffering and pray for their well-being." Easwamma was a little upset thinking that Swami was unconcerned and indifferent. But I had this Sankalpa all the time. Mother's wish had to be fulfilled, be it small or big. Any task to help others is My responsibility and so I resolved to undertake this task.

### **Society Needs Selfless Doctors**

The very next day, I arranged for the foundation to be laid, and within a month a hospital started functioning. There was a doctor named Brahman. He was a great devotee. He acted in a manner befitting his name. After him, there came another doctor called B. Sitharamiah. He was a great devotee of Swami. He prayed to Me to give the responsibility of the hospital to him. From that day till his last breath he worked in the hospital. You do not see any such doctors with dedication and commitment these days. From the moment they qualify, the sole concern of modern doctors is how much money they can earn. They are prepared to risk even their life for the sake of money. They neglect their prime duty which is healing the sick. They do not want to work in villages. They want to stay in cities and enjoy all the comforts of city life. They want to earn more and more money. What is money? What can it give us? It does not stay with anyone forever. It is transient and impermanent. Money is required but too much money is harmful. Today people are ready to

go to any length to earn money. As the proverb goes, man today is ready even to eat grass to gain a rupee. So, a greedy man can earn only grass, not grace.

Today we need men of sacrifice in the world. What I want is not your devotion. You must apply your mind to the problems of society and find remedies for them. One should aspire for social welfare. Society today needs the service of self-sacrificing doctors. Doctors these days have large incomes of thousands of rupees per month. But they do not want to do work worth even a rupee. They want to have money without work. Society today needs servants. Only those who truly serve can become true leaders. When a leader looks upon himself as a servant renders true service to society.

### **Ideal Motherhood Exemplified Mother Easwaramma**

Easwaramma breathed her last in this very Mandir. Summer classes were going on in the month of May 1972. She used to come and sit in these classes. Swami used to be amused at her presence and asked her what she followed in the classes. She used to say, "I am not interested in these studies. I come here to see how the students of Swami conduct themselves, how they obey His commands and how they react to Swami's advice and teachings." The parents take great pains in bringing their children with expectation that they may lead a respectable life. Are the children behaving in accordance with the expectations of their parents? They wear new clothes provided to them by their parents, but do they spare any thought for the hardships their parents undergo to procure these clothes?

### *Embodiments of Love!*

You are boys today; tomorrow you will be men. If your children cause you worry how will you feel? Will you be happy? No not at all. All that happens to you in future will be in accordance with your conduct today. Everything is reaction, reflection and resound. Today's good deeds will blossom into good results in the coming time. If you do bad deeds today, you cannot expect to be rewarded with good results in future. If you do evil today, you cannot escape its consequences later. You may become a powerful officer or an employer. But the results of your past bad deeds will always keep haunting you. Keeping these facts in mind, make your parents happy and serve them to your utmost capability. Only then will you find fulfilment in life. What for is man born in this world? Is it merely to roam around and indulge in the pleasures of the world? You should understand that worldly pleasures are not permanent. A true son will see to it that his parents do not shed tears of sorrow.

It is not a matter of great celebration when a son is born in a family. Only when he earns a good name in society should his birth become an occasion for celebration. Many parents in their exuberance of joy at the birth of their son indulge in all sorts of senseless celebrations. Such parents spoil their own children. Mothers should keep a close watch on the conduct of their children. Is he going on the right path? Is he working for the welfare of society? Is society approving his conduct? Is he gaining the respect of society? Mothers should keenly observe all this. Easwaramma was very conscious of these matters; she was, in fact, an ideal mother. When visitors came to the house, she would send out her children to greet them properly, to enquire about their welfare and requirements and to offer them a seat in a respectful manner. You scarcely find such conduct anywhere today. Children are well educated, their talents are encouraged, but what for? To earn money? Even a beggar earns money. Money is not the goal of life.

When you have a visitor to your house, you should greet him with respect and love. These days you cannot find any such courteous behaviour at all. That is why I often say: *You cannot always oblige but you can speak always obligingly.* But today's education is making the children veritable demons. There is no humility or friendliness in them. They learn the stuff given in books by rote, go to the examination centre, empty the stuff in their heads on the answer papers and return home with empty heads. Is this education? Not at all. True education is that which is imprinted on the heart of the learners. It should remain unchanged over the years. Such sacred feelings are not to be found in today's students. Everyone pretends to be a devotee without any trace of devotion. What is all this acting for? People learn such false values from cinema and TV, etc., which are ruining them, especially the children. The world today seems to be happy with TV and cinema. But Swami does not approve of them. Are cinema, TV, etc., helping in the redemption of mankind? Everyone should cultivate human qualities and lead the life of a true human being. But there are few such people to be found. There are, of course, a few parents who bring up their children with great love and affection and put them on the right path. Only such parents can be called ideal parents. Their children grow up to be ideal and noble.

### **Ingratitude is the Worst Sin**

Today people have little sense of gratitude. Even if you get a little help from anyone, you should always remember it. It is unfortunate that people even harm those who help them. Such people are the worst sinners. We should help even those who have harmed us. This is the vow of Sai. No matter if some people criticise or ridicule Me or even try to harm Me, I will always look at them with kindness. I have declared: *My life is My message. How many people follow the path shown by Me?* If you follow in My footsteps, no harm will ever touch you. Swami is giving free education to lakhs of students. Education in Sai institutions is free up to Ph.D. level. What is the cost of education these days? Even for admission to primary class, many schools charge 20 to 30 thousand rupees. It is in this environment that Swami is giving free education to all His students. The students should remember this with gratitude. It is harmful for them if they do not recognise it. These were some of the truths that Easwaramma taught. When somebody came to see her, she would tell him, "See how much help Swami is giving to the poor and needy. It is all for their welfare. But some people are not at all realising its value and are not grateful for it. It is not good for them. Everyone should bear this in mind." She spoke in a gentle and sweet manner to all the visitors. She was a source of great solace to women who lost their husbands in young age. She helped them to relieve their suffering.

Ever be grateful even for a small help. Do not be a Kritaghna (ungrateful). Ingratitude is utter cruelty. There is a Mantra in Suryanamaskara, "Kritaghnagnaya Namah" (salutations to the sun who punishes the ungrateful). What is the significance of this? It emphasises the fact that any help received should be reciprocated to the extent possible. Hurting someone who has helped you will result in losing your eyesight. It is the radiance of the sun that is reflected in man's eyes. All that you see is through the reflection of the sun's radiance. The sun withdraws its radiance from the eyes of those persons who commit the sin of ingratitude. Some people may brush it aside, saying it is a mere Katha (story). Truly speaking, it is not a Katha but a Vyatha (suffering) that an ungrateful person has to undergo. Therefore, we should always be grateful. We should return help for help to the utmost extent possible.

### **Do Charity with Discrimination**

You should always help the aged and distressed. At the time when this building was being constructed, the Rajmata of Jamnagar prayed to Me to stay in her house. I accepted her prayer and started staying in her house. There was a driver in that house. One day, it was very cold and the driver was shivering as he had no coat or rug to protect himself from cold. My driver came and told Me. I gave him a rug. As he got the rug given by Me, he started crying loudly, saying even his parents had not given him so much love. He lived for quite a long time and stayed with the Rajmata. The Rajmata was also a very considerate lady and used to look after the welfare of all her staff. There are many such needy persons in the world. Whoever it may be, do not make distinction between your people and others. When you see anyone in distress, help him immediately. Education that does not inculcate such values of caring and sharing is not fit to be called education. *"In spite of his education and intelligence, a foolish man will not know his true self and a mean-minded person will not give up his wicked qualities. Modern education leads only to argumentation, not to total wisdom. What is the use of acquiring worldly education if it cannot lead you to immortality? Acquire the knowledge that will make you immortal."* (Telugu Poem) What is the use of such an education? What is the outcome of endless arguments? One thinks oneself to be very learned but this arrogance is the source of one's utter downfall. Students! It is necessary for you to cultivate humility and obedience. There are a large number of people who are in much poorer circumstances than you. You must strive to ameliorate their condition as much as you can. When you help others, that itself is your reward. The scriptures declare: *Paropakara Punyayaya Papaya Parapeedanam* (you earn merit by helping others and commit sin by hurting them). Hence, always try to be helpful. Do not commit the sin of hurting others. Set an example before young children. This is an important duty of the students today. I have noticed that students today have a craze for going to foreign countries. When they return, they are dressed in a pompous manner and their behaviour is obnoxious. What is the use of wearing a costly dress if your behaviour is mean?

There are many foreigners who come here and feel moved to help poor people. But this creates more complications. They are not aware of the conditions here. It is said that if there is somebody distributing money, even the dead will get up and stretch out their hands. So when these foreigners start giving money, poor people run after them. If somebody is hungry, give him food, not money. Similarly, if he is in need of clothes, give him clothes. Indiscriminate distribution of money does more harm than good. People of this country should not run after money. Lead a respectable life. Maintain the dignity of human life. Honour and respect cannot be bought with money.

Here is a small matter Swami wants to tell. The other day, a devotee came and told that since My cars had become old, he wanted to replace them with new cars. He brought the cars. Three days passed. I did not even look at him. What is the

reason? I already have a sufficient number of cars. I have no desire to move about in fancy big cars. I do not accept anything from anyone. When I was coming here, Srinivas came to Me and said, "That person is feeling miserable. Please accept the cars." I told him, "Do not interfere. He can take back his cars. In fact, I am ready to give My own car. Rather, I will give you two cars; you and he can take one each." Develop the spirit of sacrifice and set an example before others. I have been practising this since My childhood. If you follow the path shown by Me, you will become blessed. This path will lead you to liberation. It is liberation that is the goal of life. What is Moksha (liberation)? Moha Kshaya is Moksha (giving up of attachment is liberation). You must reduce your attachment (Moha). That is Moksha.

Love everyone. But do not trust everyone without discrimination. One who puts his trust wholly in others is headed for ruin. *Love all, Serve all.* But put trust in yourself. Develop self-confidence. Give up worldly desires. Develop divine feelings and give up worldly feelings. This is the Dharma (righteous path) of humanity. Students! You have been studying in Sai institutions. You have studied well and passed examinations. Take to the right path. Develop good qualities. Love all, hate none. Love even those who bear hostility towards you. This is the characteristic of Sai. There are many who are hostile towards Me. Many ridicule or criticise Me. If they say it aloud, it is lost in air. If they do it internally, it returns to them. None of it will reach Me. Therefore, one should attach no importance to praise and abuse. See to it that love principle is installed firmly in you. This is what Mother Easwaramma practised and taught.

Face the vicissitudes of life with confidence. I am never deterred by hardships or obstacles. When there is no defect in you, why should you have fear? Love even those who criticise you. This is the ideal that Swami expects when He says, "My life is My message". If you lead your life strictly according to My ideal, you will rise to the same level. Therefore, develop good qualities and help those who are in distress.

### **Good People have a Sacred End**

Mother Easwaramma used to go to the house of Gogineni from Brindavan. On the day of her passing away also, she walked all the way to their house and came back. After coming back, she had a cup of coffee. She used to have Paan (betel leaf). In fact, I Myself used to like Paan in the early days. She was pounding the areca nut in a mortar and was eating it bit by bit. Suddenly she shouted, "Swami, Swami, Swami". I called back, saying, "I am coming, I am coming, I am coming." She said, "Come quickly, come quickly." As I came down, she caught hold of My hands and said, "You are capable of helping all the people of the world to any extent. But children need more help. You have to transform them. You need not make them scholars. Make them good and virtuous." Saying this, she placed My hands on her eyes and breathed her last. She had Anayasa Maranam (peaceful death). What more can one desire in life than a glorious death?

Bodies come and go. "*Punarapi Jananam Punarapi Maranam, Punarapi Janani Jathare Sayanam*" (man is caught up in the cycle of birth and death; time and again, he undergoes the agony of staying in his mother's womb). Birth and death are natural to man. One need not worry over this matter. I called the driver. The body was placed in a van and sent to Prasanthi Nilayam. I sent Ramabrahmam with the body. He was a very good person. He performed all the work assigned to him personally. Ramabrahmam requested Me to go to Prasanthi Nilayam for the final rites. But I firmly told him, "This is a matter relating to the external world and I have no connection with it. I have seen her and blessed her here. So, you may take her body for the final rites to Prasanthi Nilayam." Ramabrahmam carried out My instructions faithfully. Gokak and Bhagavantam came and said that the classes were cancelled. I asked them, why. They said, it was because of the demise of Swami's mother. I said, "What if she is dead? The boys are all alive and so the classes must go on." Gokak was amazed. He announced that the classes would be held. Everyday I used to go to the classroom at the beginning of the class. The students were anxious whether Swami would come or not. I went to the classroom that day. As I entered, all the children started shedding tears. I asked, "Why are you grieving? Whoever is born is bound to die one day or the other. So, there is nothing to grieve about. After that, the classes went on as per schedule. It is because of this self-confidence and courage that I have been able to make everything happen according to My resolve.

The father of this body also had an easy death. I had selected some people for interview at Prasanthi Nilayam when he came there. I asked him why he had come there. He replied, "Swami, I have something to tell You." I told him to wait until I finished the interview. But he said, it was an urgent matter. So, I called him and asked the reason for his coming. He took out some money from the knot of his Dhoti and told Me, "Swami, this is all the money I have. With this, You should perform my last rites on the 10th day in a proper manner." I gently chided him, saying why he was talking about his death as if he knew all about it. He went back and bought four bags of rice for this purpose. Rice was very cheap those days. One could get a bagful for Rs. 20 or so. Besides rice, he bought some jaggery and other provisions. After reaching home, he

played with his grandson for some time. Then he called his wife. Men never used to call their wives by their names those days. 'Hey, hey' was the way they used to address them. He told her, "I have just now seen Swami. I have no worries now." He then asked her to get him some water to drink. As she gave him water, he breathed his last.

Good people have a good death. What sort of death? Anayasa Maranam (peaceful death). How was that possible for the parents of this body? They shared My sacredness and led a sacred life. I Myself chose My parents. My selection is always correct. That is why My parents had such a blissful life. Every person must serve his parents. When they fall sick, you should serve them with total dedication. Service leads to liberation. *"It is not through performing penance or going to places of pilgrimage or studying sacred texts that one is able to cross the ocean of worldly life. It is only through service to the good that you attain the ultimate goal of life."* (Sanskrit Verse) Such a sacred end is possible only for people who have earned it in this way.

#### *Embodiments of Love!*

All of you who have gathered here have to take a pledge today. Live a good life. Be ready to help others. Love children, respect elders, respect all according to their status in society. If you live according to these principles, there is no better way of life. Imprint these principles firmly on your heart. Act in a manner so as to please your parents. Only then will your life find fulfilment. You are conducting Bhajans at various places and at different times. But mere singing of Bhajans is not enough. Behaviour and conduct are vital.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, *Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin ...*

- **From Bhagavan's Easwaramma Day Discourse in Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, Brindavan on 6th May 2002.**