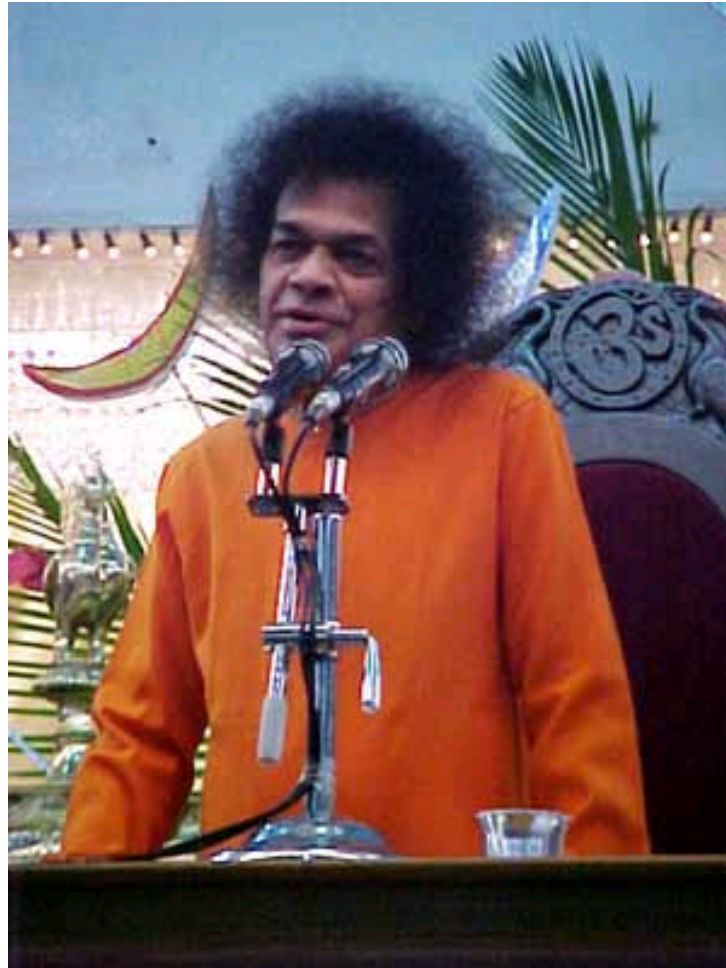


Summer Showers

(Summaries of Divine Discourses, May 16 – 27, 2002)



Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba



**Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centers of
Northern California & Nevada**

Summer Showers - 1

(Summary of the Divine Discourse - May 16, 2002 AM)

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Indian culture is eternal. It is unshakeable by time, untarnished by history. The youth, in particular the students, have forgotten this great culture today and are hence being subjected to all kinds of agitations and turbulences in life. They have lost their peace and are unable to experience bliss; in contrast, ancient Indians were steeped in our culture and therefore lived in bliss by sharing their joy amongst themselves.

There are several examples of people who understood the importance of culture in moulding their lives. Abraham Lincoln, the late president of America, is one such. His childhood was spent in poverty as a consequence of which he was often subjected to ridicule. Many a time he would be miserable at his sorry state, but his mother always gave him courage. She once told him that though they had very little by way of material opulence, they had abundance of self-confidence and self-respect. Riches are bound to melt away, but these two attributes are one's own and none can steal them. Lincoln hence believed firmly that the SELF was his true wealth. He thereafter strove to live with self-confidence and self-respect.

This firm belief paid dividends because Lincoln's name and fame as an honest, courageous and sincere person spread far and wide. He was never known to utter or encourage a lie. Rising from such a poor background, he went on to become the president of his country. He still remained humble, as he always believed what his mother told him. She advised him to be thankful for these gifts of God that had brought him to such a position.

Abraham Lincoln set a shining example that was emulated by his countrymen. It is said:

*"The sun lends illumination
during the day
The moon lights up the night sky
The three worlds are
illuminated by dharma
A good son lends splendor
to the entire family."*

Students should all become good sons - *Suputras*. They will then succeed in changing the state of this country. Give up communal feelings and follow the dictum "*ekoham bahusyanaam*" - it is the same *atma* in all.

What is culture? It is a process of refinement. It is to shed away all the evil and unwanted and extract the pure substance. An example is the dehusking of paddy. Once the husk is removed, the rice can then be boiled and consumed. It is this pure cultured state that gives good health to the body and mind.

The body and mind are very closely interlinked and are vital to man's evolution. One must purify the mind and foster the body. Food by itself can give nourishment and wealth can give comfort, but both food and wealth still cannot obtain for you the bliss you seek. A complete man is he who has both a pure mind and a healthy body. He alone experiences bliss. You must not think that it is *Kalimi* (wealth), *Balimi* (strength) and *Chelimi* (friendship) that give you peace. *Gunamu* (character) supercedes all and can alone guarantee peace and bliss.

One's actions should not be artificial. "Art is outside - Heart is inside". When one says "Brothers and Sisters" or "brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God", he should put his entire heart into the statement. When you offer '*namaskaram*' to others, you must actually feel what the term conveys. '*Namaskaram*' is the whole-hearted offering of the five organs of cognizance (*jnanendriyas*) and the five organs of sense perception (*karmendriyas*) from the *Atma* in a person to the *Atma* in the other. This is the significance of combining the five fingers of each palm and placing it on the heart. It has an underlying principle of unity in it.

Students today don't even know what *Atma* is. It is not localized. It is in all and envelopes all. It is like the air that cannot be seen or caught and yet one cannot survive without. *Atma* is '*Prana*' (life force) itself --- helping one to breathe and survive.

The key to understanding the nature of the creator is to understand the creation. The great Buddha realized this and hence first understood the inner significance of the five elements. He then understood and mastered his five senses.

For example, ' $2+2=4$ '; the number four forms only when '2' combines with '2'. '2' is hence the building block. Similarly, the

key to understand God is to first comprehend nature.

This cannot be developed by body attachment. The body must certainly be fostered and protected, but no attachment must be developed towards it. The *Atma* within the body is more fundamental. While the body will perish sometime, the *Atma* within is eternal. A healthy body enables one to control one's senses. A healthy body and a pure mind in turn combine to give '*Lavanya*' - beauty.

True beauty is that of the character and not of the body. It is this *Lavanya* that gives one an eternal youthful countenance and bliss. Eat in a limited way. Do not give scope for tensions and worries. Follow Bhagwan's message ("MY LIFE IS MY MESSAGE"); I don't eat much or worry at all. That is why my body retains its youthful appearance despite being 76 years of age!

Students!

After the sessions everyday do not waste time in gossip. Ponder over what good things have been taught and imprint the substance on your heart. The Gopikas once told Uddhava that since Krishna was imprinted on their hearts, it was impossible to separate Krishna from them. These lofty ideals too must be imprinted on your hearts. They will then become a part of you.



Summer Showers - 2

(Summary of the Divine Discourse - May 16, 2002 PM)

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

One can regain or recover lost money, friends, lands and prosperity by the dint of one's efforts. A person may also get remarried if he has lost a wife. However, the human body once lost, cannot be regained. It cannot be protected eternally. Hence, one must attain and experience life's goals while the body lasts.

India is a land that is the birthplace of all ideals, sciences and arts. Numerology, Grammar, Arts and Literature - they all had their origins in India. In fact, that which is not available in India is not available elsewhere - "*Yenna Bharathe, thanna Bharata*". It is a land that gave birth to noble souls like Savitri, who by her spiritual powers, could even get her dead husband back alive, Sita who made even the fire bend before her purity and Damayanti who burnt to death the evil hunter who misbehaved with her. Sadly, there is an exodus from this land today. What is lacking here is not the wealth or knowledge - it is determination. If only one is determined, one can achieve anything in India itself. Ancient India was home to several outstanding Universities. Each was highly specialized in a particular field. For example, the University at Kasi specialized in teaching Grammar - *Vyakarna Sastra*. Kashmir University has masters in the Science of decoration and beautification - *Alankarana*. The one at Ujjain imparted unparalleled knowledge in the field of Law-*Nyayashastra*.

The great king Bharatha had Panini in his court, whose treatise on grammar (Panini Grammar) remains a masterpiece to date. There was Charaka, who contributed much to the medical sciences. There were

several such universities imparting knowledge to many students. They were not buildings with large infrastructure. The residence of the teacher itself was a university college. The student strength was limited; however, the quality of teaching was exceptional. The class would be held under a tree; in that cool environment, the students absorbed the soft words of the teacher immediately.

The outstanding feature of the education in those days was the reliance on the power of sound. Lessons dropped from the lips of the teacher and directly reached the ears of the students. There were no slates or notebooks to aid the learning process. High standards of learning were thus achieved. There were no rigid timetable or curricula. The teacher taught whenever he felt the need to and wherever he wanted. He always taught that which the students wanted and what he knew would be good for the students. The students in turn opened their hearts and the teacher filled these hearts with knowledge.

No fees were ever charged for education. The society took upon itself the responsibility of maintaining and looking after the welfare of the teacher. The students would get up early in the morning, perform their ablutions and prayers and then go from house to house to collect alms. Every house would give whatever they could spare. These were all then collected and the teacher first took whatever was necessary for him. The students partook of the rest as sanctified food. The students resided in caves like

those of Ajantha and Ellora; where they lived and dined.

The education process was closely linked to spirituality. Charaka was a very famous physician. He never used modern gadgetry. Instead, he would combine his medical knowledge with prayers to God, which caused perfect healing. Every disease hence had a certain cure because the process relied on God's grace. Charaka proved that God's grace could rid man of any difficulty. He demonstrated that God is within, around, above and below man at all times.

"When Bhagawan was very small, He composed a poem that spoke of Russia under Stalin invading and causing Hitler's ruin. People sometimes wonder how Sai Baba knows all this!! Let me tell you that there is nothing I do not know. I merely pretend to ask you questions to give you the joy of conversing with Me. Don't doubt Me based on what I ask you or speak to you."

"I had also composed poems that mocked modern items and the craze for these

items. My poems were also used to correct people who went astray. Karnam Subbamma once prayed that I help bring her husband to the right path. I wrote a very hard-hitting poem that highlighted his immoral ways. This shamed him in public and he changed for the better. The grateful Karnam Subbamma fell at Swami's feet and advised Venkappa Raju that I was Divinity itself and that they must not develop bodily attachments with Me."

"I would also compose poems and teach people how to explain and interpret the scriptures properly. By starting the Pandari Bhajan group, I would cause the villagers to rise in a holy atmosphere by 5 am itself. When Kote Subbanna, thrilled with My poems, complimented Me on My capability, I told him that whatever I speak was always poetry! He offered Me a basket of *laddus* as a mark of his appreciation. But I had it distributed to everyone. I have never taken sweets because I am full of the sweetest of all sweets - LOVE. I am always distributing it and making people happy."



Summer Showers - 3

(Summary of the Divine Discourse - May 17, 2002)

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Today, it is rare to find children who revere their fathers or fathers who care for their children. The teacher-student relation is deplorable and tainted without any respect being exchanged. Parents at home do not know how to set ideals for their children. Brothers do not care to stay united and children do not bother to maintain the family's honor. Husbands and wives lack understanding and are unable to set examples to the society in which they stay. Honor and respect are ignored and too much freedom is given to all.

The problem begins at the home, which is the first school of a child. The parents are the first teachers. They should teach their children how to respect elders, speak the truth, follow righteousness, respect the teachers and interact with other children at the school. The discipline of the school must be followed. Such an exercise alone can generate ideal students.

In the days of yore, students would arise as the cock crowed at dawn. After their ablutions bath, meals consisting of nourishing and palatable items would be taken in limited quantity. Loitering about in dirty and unhealthy locations was never done. Willing participation in sports and games was common. It was these set of practices that ensured good health. Good health is essential for a sound education.

Basic courtesies and ideals, absent in the modern age, are demonstrated in ample measure in the holy text of Ramayana. The way that Dasaratha received the sage Vishwamitra with courtesy demonstrated the honor and regard with which a guest

was treated. Sage Viswamitra came to the court of Dasaratha to seek his help in destroying the demons that kept defiling and troubling the yajna the great sage was performing for the welfare of the world. When Dasaratha put himself along with his army at the sage's disposal, Vishwamitra instead asked for Rama. Afraid that the tender-aged Rama would come to harm, Dasaratha hesitated; but sage Vasista explained to him the Divinity of Rama. He told him that his sons were like the lightning bolts that would destroy the demons. Hence pacified, Dasaratha summoned Rama and Lakshmana to his presence. Viswamitra, who knew their Divinity, was lost in their splendor and kept offering his prayers to them in his heart.

The sons of Dasaratha have some unique habits. While Lakshmana always stayed with Rama, Shathrugna shadowed Bharatha! The secret to this bond can be traced to Divine *payasam* that Dasaratha presented to his queens. Sumitra's share was whisked away by an eagle. The three queens lived in great harmony and loved each other dearly. Hence, Kaikeyi and Kausalya each gave Sumitra one half each of their share. They then took sage Vasista's blessing and drank the sacred *payasam*.

However, when the children were born, it was discovered that Sumitra's twins - Lakshmana and Shathrugna - set up a constant wailing! They would neither sleep nor eat. Sage Vasista saw the reason with his divine vision. He explained that since Lakshmana was born from Kausalya's share of the rice pudding and Shatrugna

from Kaiakeyi's share, the twins craved to return to their origin! When Lakshmana was placed next to Rama and Shatrugna next to Bharatha, they finally calmed down and started playing happily! In truth, all four brothers lived as one.

The ladies in the royal family were equally noble. Sita and Urmila were daughters of Janaka while Manadavi and Shrutakeerti were daughters of Janaka's brother. All the four were ideal daughters-in-law to the queens. The family hence stayed united, strong and peaceful.

Kaikeyi is depicted as having succumbed to the evil promptings of Manthara and demanding the two unjust boons. She was a lady of strong character and was too noble for such petty things to overcome her. She knew that unless Rama was sent to the forest, the annihilation of the demonic hordes would not occur. She loved Rama more dearly than her own son Bharatha. She knew that unless she asked for the boons, the destruction of Ravana was impossible.

Ravana had acquired a boon that his death could not be caused by the Gods, Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Demons or Kimpurushas. Thinking men to be insignificant, he had not included them in the list! One should hence be extremely careful about what he asks from God and how he asks it! It was also prophesized that the day a monkey would defeat the guardian of the city - Lankini, Lanka would face its doom.

This may be the modern age. But truth must still be spoken; humility and obedience must be incorporated in our behavior. Man is born to set and live by ideals. Children must know that the entire humanity is one family living in the huge mansion of this world. Unity must be fostered. For example, all the organs of

the human body have their specific allotted tasks. Yet each is vital in contributing to the total human body.

Parents would also not weep with sorrow when their daughters married and went to their new homes. On the contrary, they felt proud that their daughter was to assume new responsibilities. Real tears must be tears of joy and not sorrow. '*Nayana*' means eyes and '*Nara*' means water. Scholars depict Kausalya to have been extremely sorrowful at the exiling of Rama. On the contrary, she blessed him whole-heartedly and sent him. She told him, "By giving birth to you, I have discharged my responsibility. You are now earning great fortune by discharging your responsibility. Ayodhya without you will henceforth be a forest. The forest in which you dwell shall become Ayodhya." She hence sent him so graciously.

Rama firmly believed in the dictum: "All are one, be alike to everyone." The nature of Avatars is inscrutable and worthy of emulation. Dasaratha means one who controls his ten senses. To such a person, a noble son like Rama will be born.

I was speaking about *Lavanya* the other day. This causes eternal youth and can be got only by perfect sense control. Krishna and Rama are never seen or depicted as old men! Age never goes with the years. This body is 76 years old; but I can still walk at a rapid pace. No Avatar was ever bothered by the problems of old age. My eyes are as radiant as bulbs and I can clearly see distant objects. There is no problem of cataract either. My ears are of sound hearing and I have unlimited strength and energy in this body. Sometimes speed breakers are set up to control the car's speed. That does not indicate a defect in the car. Similarly, I Myself exercise control and regulate the flow of energy through My body.

In days to come you will see more evidence of this Divinity. I do not deal at the physical level. I am beyond all such issues. Rama and Krishna both left their bodies by their own will and were not slain in battles or by old age, as is stated in the texts. The bodies of the Avatars cannot be touched by anything evil. You are blinded by ignorance because I talk, walk and move amongst you. This

ignorance hides and masks your wisdom. Some ladies have been complaining that I am afflicted by some kind of knee pain. I walk slowly because I have to see that My feet do not get entangled in the folds of my long robe and the dhoti. My gait is always gentle, soft, tender and delicate. There is not an iota of roughness in Me- it is all softness and sweetness.



Summer Showers - 4

(Summary of the Divine Discourse - May 18, 2002)

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

*"As long as one has ego, he will not be loved. As long as one has anger, he will cease to discriminate.
With excessive desires, his mind will never be under his control.
The moment he rids himself of greed, he will gain happiness"*

Rama and Lakshmana sought Vishwamitra's permission to see the beautiful city of Mithila. As they went walking, all eyes were drawn to them as if a powerful magnet was at work! Everybody wondered who these divinely handsome young boys were. A young housewife from Ayodhya, who had married into a house of Mithila, explained that these boys were King Dasaratha's sons and extolled their virtues. Several ladies tried to attract the attention of the two boys towards them and dropped flowers and waved *arathi* lamps. Rama and Lakshmana continued walking without being perturbed. Such was the sacred ideal of those times. The youth would not allow their vision to stray. They maintained the sacredness of their vision. Staring at ladies was unheard of.

After Rama and Lakshmana had arrived to the great hall where the bow was displayed, they saw that all had failed to lift the sacred bow. As Rama opened the box to lift the bow, Lakshmana was seen to tightly press down on the earth! When Vishwamithra sought an explanation, Lakshmana replied that he had to do that because when Rama would lift the bow of Shiva, the turbulence was certain, as the stability of the earth would be disturbed. He said that this was the least he could do to help his brother!

Such was the affection amongst the brothers that they appeared to live for each other. Once, Bharatha came crying

to mother Kausalya and complained that despite his best efforts, Rama deliberately kept loosing in games so that his younger brothers could win. Rama knew and believed that his own happiness lay in the prosperity of his younger brothers. He did not mind suffering in the process.

The sacred ideals exemplified by the youth of those days were indeed laudable. The four brothers Rama, Lakshmana, Bharatha and Shatrugna were to be married to the four sisters Sita, Urmila, Mandavi and Srutikeerti respectively. As they sat on the dais, they would not rise their eyes look around or even look at each other. They attentively followed and obeyed the priest's directions but kept their eyes lowered in modesty and dignity. Even when Janaka offered Rama Sita's hand with his benedictions, Rama did not look at her. This is because Sita would become his wife only after he tied the sacred thread- *Mangalasutra*- around her neck. Such was the strict discipline and control exercised in those days.

At the time of the garlanding ceremony, all the brothers waited to garland their brides until Rama garlanded Sita. Similarly, all the sisters waited till Sita garlanded Rama. But Rama, the broad-shouldered and tall her, would not bend to enable Sita to garland him. He was a valorous and strong prince, full of dignity. He had amply demonstrated it by lifting and breaking it in full view of all. He was not about to lower his honor and dignity by

now baring his head! Finally, Rama signed silently to Lakshmana who came to the rescue and broke the deadlock. He abruptly ran, fell at Rama's feet and would not get up! Rama bent down to raise him and grabbing the chance, Sita at once garlanded him! Such were the intricate ways in which the brothers interacted with each other.

The four sisters were not far behind their husbands when it came to setting model standards in honor and dignity. When Kausalya asked that Rama take her too to the forest with him, Rama advised her thus, "Your husband is your God. Father is now old, shattered and ill. It is your responsibility to serve him, give him courage and support. It is your duty to remain with your husband". However, when Sita wished to accompany Rama to the forest, he prohibited her. Sita then gently reminded Rama the advice he had given his mother. She said that she too considered her husband to be her God and could hence not be separated from him.

Lakshmana went to Urmila and told her that he was going to the forest to serve Rama and Sita. Unlike Sita, Urmila did not demand to come with him. On the contrary, she wisely decided to stay back so that under no circumstances would Lakshmana be distracted from his service. She even extracted a promise from her husband that he would cease to think or worry about her and instead concentrate on looking after the welfare of Rama and Sita. She hence gave the courage to her husband and sent him with her full support. She live up to her role of being a '*Dharmapathni*' by helping her husband tread the path of righteousness.

Sumitra's laudable character too bears attention. She had a noble heart. When Kausalya grieved at Rama's departure, she

consoled her by saying: "Sister! Rama is going to the forest for the emancipation of humanity. My son Lakshmana will always be with Rama and Sita and look after their welfare. This is all God's master plan and is bound to unfold. What is happening is essential for the upkeep of Dharma and welfare of the world. If you cry when your sons leave, it will prove to be inauspicious". She hence consoled Kausalya and gave her support to bear her grief. Lakshmana stayed with Rama and Sita for 14 long years in the forest. Yet, never once did he look at Sita's face. When the bundle containing Sita's jewel was displayed before him, he could identify only her anklet! Rama asked him how he identified it so and Lakshmana replied that everyday after his bath, he would respectfully touch Rama's and Sita's feet, considering them to be his father and mother. In the process, he would regularly see the anklets! Such was the steadfastness of his character. This is '*Lavanya*' which in Sanskrit means a steady and strong character.

When Rama and Lakshmana accompanied Vishwamithra to his hermitage, they came to the lovely land of Anga. Its king was Manmatha. He was extremely handsome and due to Shiva's grace did not have a physical form - Anga. Hence the kingdom was called Anga, a gift of lord Shiva. The citizens of this kingdom welcomed the princes and the sage with open arms, lavishly hosted them and then gave them a warm sendoff.

Rama and Lakshmana reached a fearful forest where the Sarayu river merged with the Ganges, setting up a mighty roar. This forest was the realm of the demoness Soorpanakha. Strangely, Lakshmana started abruptly grumbling and bemoaning his fate. He criticized the injustice heaped on Rama and wondered why Lakshmana had to suffer with him! Rama merely

smiled and led him by his hand out of the forest. At once, Lakshmana felt thoroughly ashamed of his outburst. Rama consoled him and explained that the forest was the domain of the evil Soorpanakha and other demons. It was their bad vibrations that had got the better of Lakshmana and forced him to behave thus. '*Sthala Prabhava*' - the effect of the place - is demonstrated here.

Rama, Lakshmana and the sage then arrived at Siddhaashram, Vishwamithra's heritage. This was the place where Varaha was born. It was said that Lord Shiva once resided here. At the time of Viswamithra's *yajna*, Rama and Lakshmana sincerely guarded the site of the *Yajna* without any rest or food. They wholeheartedly dedicated themselves to the service of the great Sage. At the conclusion of the *yajna*,

Vishwamithra received an invitation from Janaka, the king of Mithila, to attend the function where the sacred bow of Shiva was to be displayed. Vishwamithra extolled the qualities of the Divine bow and asked Rama and Lakshmana to come with him. However, the brothers gently refused by saying that their father's orders were merely to guard the *Yajna*. Vishwamithra reminded them that they were also asked to obey the sage's command. In this way all the three went to Mithila.

The Ramayana has several secrets and ideals to share with humanity. There are absolutely no contradictions in this epic - it is only the distortions introduced by various scholars. It is all Truth (*Sathya*), Eternal (*Nithya*) and Peaceful (*Nirmala*).



Summer Showers - 5

(Summary of the Divine Discourse - May 19, 2002)

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Man's speech earns him wealth; his speech helps him find friends and endears him to his relatives; his speech is responsible for his bondage; his speech is responsible for his death and destruction".

Words carry enormous weight. It is therefore essential that man weigh his words carefully, discriminate thoroughly and only then speak. Every man has sacredness inherent in his words. He should not misuse them to hurt others or cause harm to himself either.

The Ramayana is a storehouse of sacred words that are as sweet as the honey, nectarine, fragrant, and profound. Rama is an ideal example of a character in Ramayana who always used sweet words. He always spoke with restraint and used pleasing words. Before exercising one's speech, a great deal of vision and foresight is essential. In the thick of battle, Kaikeyi had lent great help to Dasaratha. Pleased, Dasaratha, without discrimination, gave her his word to satisfy any two of her wishes. The agony that resulted was a direct consequence of this lack of foresight.

"This world is impermanent. The age of youth and wealth are all like passing clouds; your wife and children have to be left behind some day. It is only Truth and one's good name that are permanent". Under these circumstances, man has only four true friends within him. They are the four sages: Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatkumara, Sanatsujatha. They are ever vigilant and always guard him from misfortune and danger. They never develop any hatred for man and are alert day and night,

protecting him. Even Kausalya blessed Rama at the time of exile, invoking these four eternal friends to always be with Rama and guard him.

There is one aspect of Ramayana that is relatively unknown. Kausalya and Dasaratha already had a daughter named Santha. But being a female child, she could never be a legal heir to the throne. Consequently, she was given away at a very young age in marriage to Sage Rishyashringa. Thereafter, Dasaratha did not even bother keeping in touch with his daughter. This ill treatment of the girl-child was common even in those days! Meanwhile, Santha grew up to be a noble and virtuous lady. She attained great spiritual powers with her austerities.

When Dasaratha set out to perform the 'Putrakameshti' yajna to seek Divine help and obtain male issues, Sumantha, his chief Minister, suggested that they invite the great Sage Rishyashringa to be the chief priest. The sage agreed; but he insisted that Santha too should accompany him. It was said that in whichever kingdom this couple set foot, their purity would remove all problems. There would be timely rains, rich harvests, peace and prosperity. Such was their spiritual strength. It may even be emphasized that ultimately, if Rama, Lakshmana, Bharatha and Shatrugana were born as a mark of success of the yajna, it was Santha who was equally responsible for it.

There is also a story associated with the great sage Vishwamithra. Vishwamithra was actually none other than the emperor

Kaushika. When he tried to take the Divine cow Sabala to his kingdom by force, she issued forth an army that decimated Kaushika's own soldiers. His sons too were killed in the subsequent battle. Realizing the futility of the material strength before that of the spirit, he renounced his riches and kingdom and became an ascetic. As he progressed, he became intimately acquainted with these four inner friends - Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatkumara and Sanatsujatha. He was also quick to realize how much they actually helped him.

When Rama and Lakshmana were told that Rama would marry Sita since he had broken the holy bow, they politely replied that unless their father gave his permission and blessed them, they would not agree to the marriage. Viswamitra, who was himself a king once, knew Rama's honorable character and directed that Dasaratha be sent for. The clan of Ikshvaku, of which Rama was a scion, stood by two important vows. One was they would always obey their father's command. The second vow was that they would never turn back on their promise. Breaking any of these vows was as good as inviting death upon themselves. Vishwamithra therefore honored Rama's request to obtain His father's permission.

The episode of Parasurama is introduced after the wedding ceremony of the brothers. Parasurama knew fully well the divinity and purpose of Rama's incarnation. Rama had only twelve of the sixteen divine attributes. Two more were distributed among the remaining three brothers. Parasurama was to hand over to Rama the last two divine attributes and then leave the scene. From a worldly point of view, he challenged that whoever could wield his mighty axe would inherit those two attributes. He was fully aware that it was only another incarnation that could

succeed in accepting the challenge; and so it proved to be. Rama not only wielded the powerful axe of Parasurama, but also won him over with his sweet words and all-encompassing love.

Parasurama handed over to Rama the two remaining Divine aspects and departed the scene. Rama was now in possession of all the 16 attributes of Divinity and set out to Ayodhya.

Long before Rama was born, the Gods, demigods, men, rishis, sages and yogis prayed to Lord Vishnu to relieve them off the burden of Ravana's atrocities. Vishnu, who knew about the fatal flaw in the boons Ravana asked, assured that he would incarnate as a human being and vanquish Ravana. This was heard by Lankini - the guardian deity of Lanka. Brahma told her that the day she would be beaten in battle by a monkey, Lanka's doom would descend and all the demons would face redemption from their misguided ways. Hence, when Hanuman defeated her, she could clearly see the impending destruction of Lanka and Ravana.

The four brothers were very close to each other. While Lakshmana went to the forests along with Rama, Bharatha spent the 14 years in Nandi Grama - about 12 miles from Ayodhya - dressed exactly like Rama and living exactly like him - shunning all royal comforts. It was said that the four sons of Dasaratha were the very embodiments of the four Vedas. Rama was the embodiment of Yajur Veda. Since Lakshmana would always stay close to Rama, he was the embodiment of the Rig Veda. Since Bharatha spent his days singing Rama's glory, he was personified as the Sama Veda. Shatrugna of immense strength destroyed all the enemies of his brothers and kept them safe and secure.

He was hence the embodiment of the Atharvana Veda.

It was also said that at the end of the 14 years in exile, when all the four brothers and sisters got together, people were astonished to see that Bharatha looked exactly like Rama. This significant fact points to the twin truths; '*Yad bhaavam tad bhavathi*' and '*Brahmavid Brahmaiva Bhavathi*'. The more seriously you contem-

plate on a name and form, the more of its attributes you begin to acquire.

The role of women in the Ramayana is especially laudable. People mistake them to be weaklings. In truth, they embody 7 kinds of strengths in them, while men have only 3. If India retains its purity and piety today, it is because there are still such women in India who are chaste and pure.



Summer Showers - 6

(Summary of the Divine Discourse - May 20, 2002)

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

None can estimate or comprehend the power of Divinity. Yet, there are enough people to criticize God! Divinity remains unaffected by praise or censure. Praise cannot enhance it nor criticisms diminish it. Divinity does not aspire for praise or publicity. Thousands of students have passed out of this University, having obtained an education totally free of cost. But we have never advertised this fact. The joy of the students is all that gives me enough pleasure.

In the Ramayana, Bharatha resided at Nandigrama, lost in the contemplation of Rama. Laksmana was away serving Rama and Sita. It was Shatrugna who governed the kingdom during those 14 years. Though Bharatha was Rama's representative, it was Shatrugna who carried out the day-to-day administration of the kingdom. He strove from dawn to dusk to solve problems. He guarded its boundaries and kept the kingdom safe and secure. He was so totally dedicated to Bharatha's service that he would never report to Bharatha for the fear of disturbing his meditation.

Sumitra once explained to Kausalya and Kaikeyi: "If Rama were to be the King my son Lakshmana would dedicate himself to Rama. If Bharatha were to become the King, my son Shatrugna would dedicate himself to his service. I gave birth to the twins not for them to achieve name, fame, or kingdoms, but for them to engage themselves in service". An ample measure of the fame Rama and Bharatha achieved was due to the brothers Lakshmana and Shatrugna. Their unity and rock-like

affection for each other is an ideal worth emulating.

This is the reason why Rama lamented bitterly when Lakshmana swooned in the battle. He wept: "I may find a wife of Sita's virtues; I may find a mother of Kausalya's caliber and nobility; but never will I be able to find a brother like you!" It was Hanuman that came to the rescue and picked the entire mountain that contained the life saving Sanjeevani plant.

On his return journey, he had to pass over Ayodhya. By that time, Bharatha was already aware of the troubles the demons were heaping on Rama. Sighting the huge form overhead, he shot an arrow at Hanuman, thinking him to be a demon. Hanuman descended with the mountain, introduced himself and explained the situation.

The ecstatic Bharatha sent for the queen mothers. Mother Sumitra's noble quality is again illustrated here. She said, "Lakshmana is forever lost in Rama's *seva*. I do not worry for him. I only worry that there is now a disturbance in Rama's *seva*. If something does happen to Lakshmana, my son Shatrugna shall go to serve Rama." Urmila too expressed such noble sentiments. When told that her husband's life was in danger, she said, "My husband has only the thought of Rama in him. Rama will certainly take up all his problems. My husband shall always be peaceful and safe". The four sisters were certainly not far behind when it came to noble traits!

Meanwhile, under Shatrugna's able administration people spoke the truth and followed righteousness. He never rested and it was his constant apprehension that problems of the kingdom would reach Bharatha and disturb him. Such was the love that the brothers had for each other.

Meanwhile, news reached Shatrugna that in the forest, the demoness Soorphanaka had raked up trouble for Rama and Lakshmana. She succeeded in goading the demons Kara and Dooshana to wage a battle against the brothers. These demons were close aides of Ravana. Shatrugna sought his mother's advice; Sumitra counseled that Rama was divinity incarnated and hence there was nothing to worry. Shatrugna always had problems when confronting Bharatha with such news. He would never dare to talk back to his elder brother or even give him any advise. He set a perfect ideal. One should never talk back to elders or even attempt to advise them. Extreme care must be exercised before replying to their questions. One must always speak the truth. Shatrugna exemplified these ideals. Shruthakeerthi, Shatrugna wife, too was known not to talk much. True to her name- '*Shruti+Keerthi*'- She always paid attention to hearing only noble and virtuous words. Therefore, she always did only good and spread good ideals.

The brothers were always united in their love for each other. Rama loved Lakshmana dearly and would always love to have Lakshmana at his side. The brothers and their wives exemplified the Vedic ideal:

*"Let us all move together,
let us all grow together
Let us all stay united
and share our knowledge".*

When Rama and Lakshmana left for the forests, they took only a crowbar and a wick basket. They did not take any weapon from the kingdom of Ayodhya. Sage Vishwamithra turned his entire armory of Divine weapons and missiles to the brothers and they used them. Using them, Rama alone could destroy the entire army of 40000 demons of Khara and Dooshana who tried to trouble them.

When Rama, Lakshmana and Sita visited Sage Aghastya's *ashram*, the great sage directed them to Panchavati. The brothers decided to set up their hermitage and stay for the rest of their time of exile at this place. It was also at this place that the episode of Soorphanaka occurred. When She came to Rama to ask him to marry her, Rama and Lakshmana decided to humor her and sent her shuttling to and fro between them. When the infuriated demoness tried to attack Sita, Lakshmana cut off Soorphanaka ears and nose.

Soorphanaka went and complained to her brother Ravana. When Ravana wanted to know why she waited long enough for Lakshmana to cut off both her ears and nose, she confessed that she went into trance when Lakshmana touched her, smitten by his handsomeness!

Rama had advised Bharatha, "Our father ruled wisely. You are now the King. Do not talk much and do not waste time in arguments. Act more. Respect one and all". The brothers followed the advice and Ayodhya prospered.

Today you have been told about what the Super Specialties Hospital has achieved. I do not generally like these incidents to be made public. My advise to the boys has always been that you must publicize less;

give joy to the people with your sincere work and that will make me happy. But I would like to tell you that we never turn

away deserving cases. I can spend anything and do anything if it will give joy to people.



Summer Showers - 7

(Summary of the Divine Discourse - May 21, 2002)

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

"He whose heart is filled with compassion, whose words are steeped in Truth, and whose body is engaged in service to others will never be affected by the influence of the Kali age"

Just before Ravana shed his mortal coils, several sages, scholars and good men gathered and asked him, "O Ravana! In your life you have done several deeds that were both good and bad. What did you consider to be the greatest lesson that you have learnt?" Ravana replied, "O Sirs! He who wishes to enter into any noble task that can cause only good to others should never entertain any delay. The instant such pious thoughts are born in the heart, they should be executed. I too had such idealistic thoughts that I would build a bridge linking earth with heaven, that I would sweeten the saline waters of the oceans around Lanka and distribute it to people and that I shall provide succor and relief to all those poor souls suffering in hell. I delayed and I could never do it because my evil overtook me. You must not repeat this mistake." Today, the main item of agenda for humanity is to indulge in good behaviour and good conduct and to put into action all the good thoughts. Ravana did several deeds. But the lack of proper direction and good intent in these actions defiled them and he could hence never execute the good tasks that he had planned to do.

As Rama and Lakshmana searched for Sita after her abduction, they encountered a strange creature called Kabandha. Kabandha's face was in his stomach, from which protruded a huge tongue. He espied the two brothers and learnt about their mission. He then asked that a pyre be lit and his body be burnt to ashes in it. If so done, he promised to help them.

Lakshmana did as he was told and out of the pyre emerged a beautiful form that bowed to him and said, "O Prince! Due to a curse I was forced to assume that terrible form. I was destined to be burnt and liberated by You. I know that you are merely enacting a role in the Divine drama. None can harm You; agony and grief cannot approach you. However, I shall perform my role too. Sita has been abducted and kept in Lanka. She is a pious and a chaste lady. None can touch her without being burnt to ashes. Go and befriend the monkey king Sugreeva. He will help you." Advising Rama thus, the form vanished.

The episode of Vali and Sugreeva is that of the enmity between two brothers. Vali was Sugreeva's elder brother, who drove his younger brother out of the kingdom and retained his wife. Earlier, Vali had killed a demon Dundubhi and hurled the carcass far away. Unfortunately, the body landed on the Rishyamukha hills, where some drops of blood fell on the sage Matanga. Infuriated at this act of defiling his hermitage and person, the sage cursed that whoever was responsible for this act would suffer instant death if he came to the hill. It was to this Rishyamukha hills that Sugreeva with some of his trusted courtiers and followers escaped to.

When Sugreeva spotted the two noble princes, he dispatched Hanuman to find out their intentions. Hanuman discovered who they were and carried them on his shoulders to Sugreeva, the son of Sun

God. Before sealing the act of friendship and hence seeking Rama's help to slay Vali, Sugreeva wished to test Rama's strength. The rule one must remember is that one must always befriend someone who is more powerful than one's enemy. Rama demonstrated to Sugreeva that he was more than a match for Vali's valor and strength. The pact of friendship was sealed between Sugreeva and Rama, with the fire God as witness. Sugreeva agreed to help Rama rescue Sita and Rama promised to help Sugreeva get back his wife and kingdom.

When Vali rushed out to meet the challenge, his wife Tara, stopped him. She wisely counseled him, "Surely, he must have made a powerful friend else he would not have dared to challenge your might. I hear that the princes of Ayodhya are lending him their support. Please enquire before accepting the challenge." Vali brushed aside her advice and went on to give a sound thrashing to Sugreeva. During their fight, Rama could do nothing because both the brothers looked exactly alike in stature, features and strength! Sugreeva, beaten black and blue, showed a clean pair of heels and retreated. Rama consoled him with sweet words and sent him out again. This time, Lakshmana placed a garland around Sugreeva to distinguish him from Vali. Rama did not miss his mark and Vali fell, with Rama's arrow in his chest.

The conversation between Vali and Rama is very interesting to follow. When Vali demanded to know why Rama interfered in an internal matter between the brothers, Rama replied, "Your mistake was that you trumped up charges of treachery against Sugreeva just to grab the throne. You should treat your brother's wife like your mother. Instead, you usurped Sugreeva's wife. You have sinned grievously and hence deserved punish-

ment." Vali then asked if it was justified for Rama to hit him from behind a tree. Rama replied, " You belong to the animal race and I am a prince. Animals must be killed from hiding and I hence did nothing wrong." Vali demanded, "If so, you could have alerted me and then faced me in a fair fight." Rama replied, "You have the boon that whoever fights you face to face would lose half his strength to you. I hence had to shoot you from behind a tree." Vali repented, made peace with his brother and asking that Angada, his son, be made the crown prince, died.

Ramayana contains in it three important battles.

1. The battle between Vali and Sugreeva.
2. The one between Vibheeshana and Ravana
3. The one between Bharatha and Rama.

Sugreeva asked for Rama's help, had Vali killed and took over the kingdom. Vibheeshana surrendered to Rama, fought against his brother Ravana, helped Rama to kill Ravana and became the king of Lanka. In stark contrast, both Bharatha and Rama 'fought' that the other be made the king! Rama vowed that he would not enter Ayodhya for fourteen years and hence commanded Bharatha to be the king. Bharatha was equally firm and said that as long as Rama did not enter Ayodhya, he too would not enter the city. Instead, he would wait for Rama to be the king! This 'battle' is highly *dharmic* as opposed to the other two.

In the battle, before killing Ravana, Rama extolled his virtues. Ravana was indeed a person of great accomplishments. Rama, in fact, was liberating Jaya and Vijaya from a curse when he killed Ravana.

After the battle was over Rama wished to show the world the purity and chastity of Sita. Rumors were bound to fly otherwise. He hence made her undergo the trial-by-fire. When Sita emerged unscathed, Rama accepted her and effectively scotched any rumors.

In the entire Ramayana, we see Rama acting his role like all the other characters; still he remained unaffected by anything.

He is the actor and also the director! Though the epic is centuries old, its' values retain their relevance even to this day. Valmiki's original Ramayana is pure and unsullied - giving no room for distortions. It is only the interpretations in between that introduced confusions in the great epic. It is a story and some call Ramayana History. History = HIS + Story. It is nothing but the story of the Lord Himself!



Summer Showers - 8

(Summary of the Divine Discourse - May 22, 2002)

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

"True education is that which facilitates universal peace, which destroys any scope for mean thoughts to germinate and which fosters unity and co-operation. A true student must acquire such an education"

The sacred story of Rama is ageless. It does not satiate one's heart even after one listens to it any number of times. He who sings, hears or narrates this sacred story is indeed blessed.

Mother earth has enormous powers hidden in her depths. There has not been any investigation that has succeeded in probing this secret. Sita is the daughter of mother earth. At the time of the *swayamvara*, mother earth saw that among all the princes and kings gathered for Sita's hand, Rama was the most ideal. Hence, even nature helped Rama when he lifted the sacred bow of Siva and broke it. Rama is depicted as lifting the bow with his left hand which is normally weaker than the right hand. This is just to show to the world that there is nothing called a difficult or impossible task for the Divinity.

Man is the storehouse of every mineral, metal and energy that the earth contains. He has in him the electric, magnetic and several other forms of energy. Sadly, man does not realize this. There is the enormous strength of Divinity latent in him that enables him to do anything that he sets his mind to. Man's achievements such as bringing the dust from Moon are the glimpses of the great potential that is latent in him. All he needs is have the will and the determination to realize this strength and potential.

Ravana abducted Sita to Lanka. He wanted to influence her by showing-off

his opulence, power and acquisitions. He took Sita to his inner palace. But Sita was only lost in the contemplation of Rama and would not even look up. Mandodhari, Ravana's wife, was extremely unhappy with her husband's behavior. She cautioned Ravana, "Lord! Surely your destruction is near; else you would not plan and commit such dastardly acts! Sita is a highly chaste and pure woman. She is already wedded to Rama. You are inviting your doom by abducting here. Being away from her lord, she will never be happy even if you put her in this great palace. Keep her in a simple peaceful place where she can contemplate on her lord and can derive some solace!" Listening to her words Ravana accommodated Sita in the beautiful Asoka gardens.

Mandodhari further warned Ravana, "Lord! Instead of spending time in '*Rama chinta*' you have become a slave to '*Kamachinta*' (lust). Why are you inviting your own death? One must never let a woman suffer. If you make a woman shed one drop of tear, you will yourself shed thousands." Her advice fell on deaf ears. She then visited Sita and pleaded to pardon her husband for his mad adventure and protect her from widowhood. Sita was thinking of Rama alone and therefore could not hear anything else or talk to anyone else.

None in Lanka was happy with Ravana's deeds. Fearing his wrath, they kept silent. Vibhishana's wife Sarama with her daughter attended to Sita. One night, both

of them had a dream that Lanka had become an arid and barren land; the trees had all withered and fallen; the palaces and houses were all in ruin and Ravana himself was seen stumbling about seeking water. Sarama realized that the doom was inevitable to Ravana as well as Lanka. She resolved to serve Sita better and make her as happy as possible.

When Hanuman reached Lanka, he searched through all the inner palaces for Sita. At once He felt that it was inappropriate to look at all the women there. But to accomplish the task of searching Sita he had no choice but to continue. Finally when he saw her sitting forlorn under a tree at Asoka gardens, his joy knew no bounds. He jumped on to the tree and started singing in Rama's praise. Sita was overjoyed for a moment. But later she thought that it was just another trick orchestrated by the demon servants of Ravana to win her attention. It was only when Hanuman showed her Rama's ring that she relaxed. The ring was gifted by king Janaka to Rama during the wedding. Seeing Sita's plight of being away from her lord, Hanuman offered to place her on his back and take her back. Sita said, "If you were to do that it would be a repetition of the same mistake that Ravana did. Rama has to come to Lanka, kill Ravana and take me. Please tell this to my lord." She then gave Hanuman a jewel to be presented to Rama on her behalf. It was one amongst the several jewels presented to her by Anasuya, sage Agastya's wife.

Hanuman assured Sita that he would do what she had said and was prepared to leave. But before returning he destroyed the beautiful Asoka Vana and proceeded to cause enormous destruction to Lanka in order to teach a lesson to the Asuras. While doing this he was caught and brought before Ravana.

Ravana was furious and demanded, "O, monkey! Who are you and who sent you here? You have caused such enormous destruction!" Hanuman retorted, "Foolish fellow! I am here as a messenger of the One who cut off the ears and nose of your sister!" Taken aback, Ravana said, "How dare you address me thus! No one has the audacity to use such words with me!" Hanuman replied, "Maybe it applies to the Gods, Demigods, Gandharvas and others whom you have subdued. But I am Lord Rama's messenger and will use these words because you deserve nothing better."

After reaching back safely, Hanuman described the sorry state of Sita and how she was eagerly awaiting Rama's arrival. Lakshmana excitedly wanted instant action! Rama calmed him down and told him that one must not leap into action without assessing the situation properly. Plans were made and Sugreeva mobilized his army to reach Lanka.

As the hordes of vanaras occupied every space on hills and land in Lanka, the city shivered in the thought of their looming doom. The earlier destruction caused by Hanuman was still fresh in their minds. He had come back and had brought several more of his kind!

The terrible battle was fought. Indrajith, the mighty son of Ravana, who had conquered Indra himself in a battle, appeared in the battlefield and caused a great deal of destruction in the Vanara army. Vibhishana told Rama the secret of Indrajith's apparent invincibility. Defenseless now, Indrajith was killed in the battle.

Ravana's second brother Kumbhakarna too met a similar fate and died. Then Ravana himself came to the battlefield. Vibhishana revealed the secret of the weak point of Ravana and told Rama to

shoot the arrow at that point. As the arrow hit there, Ravana fell dead. Mandodari wailed thus, "Lord! I warned you repeatedly not to foster lust and not to abduct chaste and pious ladies. But you never ever listened to a sane advice. You have now got the punishment for your sins."

When Sita was brought before Rama, in order to prove to the world her chastity, Rama had her pass through the fire. She emerged unscathed. Meanwhile, Vibhishana brought the aerial vehicle - *Pushpaka Vimana*. Rama, Lakshmana, Sita, Sugreeva and all others got into it and proceeded towards Ayodhya. *Pushpaka Vimana* earlier belonged to Ravana's stepbrother. Ravana defeated him and took away the *Vimana*.

Bharatha meanwhile emerged from his self-imposed exile and kept a chariot ready for receiving Rama. Shatrughna too arrived from Ayodhya with a garland. Wonder of wonders! Shatrughna could not distinguish between Rama and Bharatha! Bharatha had spent 14 years meditating on Rama and had acquired his attributes. Lakshmana finally helped

Shatrughna to garland Rama. Then they all proceeded to the palace.

Sumithra was very happy at this site and blessed all the sons. Urmila too fell at Lakshmana's feet. She had vermilion on her forehead, as was the custom of those days. Lakshmana's feet were anointed with that vermilion as she kept her forehead on his feet. Kaikeyi appeared and profusely blessed Rama, Lakshmana and Sita. Though she had earned disrepute it was for a good purpose. The truth is that Rama in His young age while learning archery from her, had already explained her His Divine Mission. She was merely playing out her role. She was as thrilled as Sumithra to see the successful completion of the Divine mission. Sumithra and Kaikeyi were in peace completely. They had no more aspirations in the world. They died peacefully and contentedly seeing the return of Rama from exile.

All the people in Ayodhya were very happy to get back their beloved princes and their wives. They rejoiced and decked the city up grandly. Their Rama was back home.



Summer Showers - 9

(Summary of the Divine Discourse - May 23, 2002)

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Our warden has asked me to speak about the three 'Akasas' today. It is said, "Aakasam Gaganam Soonyam"- Ether (Akasa) is total emptiness. It may hence mean that I am not expected to speak anything today!

'Akasa' is not just the sky that you see above, with the sun, moon and stars. It is much more than that and classified into three categories. (1) *Bhootakasa* (2) *Chittakasa* (3) *Chidaksa*.

Bhootakasa - It is the entire cosmos. It spans the entire physical plane that you see and can investigate. It includes the sun, stars, moon, galaxies and every thing seen. The sun that showers its rays on the earth is at a distance of 9,11,00,000 miles away from the earth. There are several thousands of suns more out there that appear as small stars because they are so far away from earth. The light from these stars travel at a speed of 16,000 crore miles per second. Some of the light rays have not even reached earth still! This should give an idea of the expanse of *Bhootakasa*. All the suns radiate a brilliant amount of energy. It is the power of *Atma* that causes this brilliance.

Chittakasa It is the cosmic mind. All that you visualize and see in the *Bhootakasa* appears just as a tiny blip on the *Chittakasa*. For example, you have seen a huge mountain. When you close your eyes and think of the scene, you instantly see it in your mind. *Chittakasa* hence contains within itself the entire constituents of the *Bhootakasa* in a subtle form. One can say that it contains the reflection of *Bhootakasa*.

Chidaksa This is the *Atma* itself. *Bhootakasa* is associated with the physical plane; *Chittakasa* is associated with the subtle plane. *Chidakasa* is beyond all these planes of existence. It has neither form nor attribute. It is pure bliss - unalloyed, untainted, beyond comprehension and the reach of knowledge. He that understands this truth will experience pure bliss. *Chidakasa* can only be experienced and not understood. Scientists may conduct any number of investigations. It can take them only up to *Chittakasa* and not a step beyond.

Hence, *Bhootakasa* is reflected in *Chittakasa*. *Chittakasa* is contained in *Chidaksa*. This may be explained as follows:

The one you think you are:

This is *Bhootakasa* because it constitutes of what you see, hear, feel, sense and experience in the physical world.

The one others think you are :

This is *Chittakasa* since it is what others think of you based on the mind's projections and impressions.

The one you really are :

This is *Chidaksa*. You are really the *Atma*.

The letter 'I' is the true definition of *Atma*. It is just one letter and has nothing attached to it. One may call anybody by name and ask 'who is so-and-so?' Invariably, the answer is 'I' from one and all. The letter 'I' therefore indicates unity in diversity. It represents the truth. As is said, "Truth is one; scholars interpret it in different ways - *Ekam sath viprah bahuda vadanti*."

The Vedanta declares "*Aham Brahmasmi*". Here, *Aham* (I) comes first and '*Brahma*' follows. Hence everything, including *Brahma*, originates from 'I'. This 'I' cannot be explained by scholarship or knowledge. It is also not right to associate 'I' with the names given to the body. The body, at birth, had no name. Yet it existed! So how is it to be correctly described? The worldly names are attached artificially to help identify you in this physical plane. They are not born with you and can never identify your true Divine Self.

'*Aham*' does not mean ego. Ego is when 'I' is attached and experienced with the body. Your true identity from the time of birth till death and beyond is *Aham* - I. Once you realize this Truth, there is nothing else left to learn, because '*Aham*' is its own identification.

Chidakasha is beyond Reflection, Reaction and Resound. A story is told about a bangle seller in Uttar Pradesh. He sold bangles to a divine form that appeared from the river Ganges. Further, she guided him to collect the money from a particular person, whose name and address she gave and disappeared. It turned out that this was the house of a devotee of Mother Ganga! He hurried to the spot and pleaded again and again that the mother appear in her physical form. All that appeared was a hand with the new bangles. A soft voice said, "Son! I do not have any physical form and hence cannot show you any. All forms are mine and I assume the form that the devotee prays for. I really have no form or attributes. I showed you my hand as a proof that I have indeed bought the bangles!"

God appears in any form that the devotee desires. Divinity has no name, form or shape. When you think of Divinity, think

of the *Atma*. You may say that you have seen Rama, Krishna or Sai Baba - it is all illusion (*Bhrama*). As long as you have this *Bhrama* and associate God with physical forms, you will never realize "*Brahma*". You must not determine to see the form. Instead, consider all forms as His and recognize that truth.

Bhootakasa is not the absolute. Whatever is in the physical plane is temporary and will be destroyed sometime or the other. It is only the bliss (*Ananda*) of realization that stays with you all the time. *Ananda* or bliss is not the same as laughter! Laughter is '*Prahasana*' - a loud guffaw. God always has only '*Hasana*' - a blissful, soundless, delicate smile. It is this '*Hasana*' that confers bliss on all.

What is the true gift you must give God? Only gratitude. Today, you are all taking free education, medical help and water from me. So many of you are also taking plenty of happiness from me. All I expect is your gratitude. Never fail to express your gratitude to anyone who helps you. An ungrateful wretch will suffer sorrow all through. There will be no end to his cycle of rebirth. He will never taste success and will suffer pain and agony.

The gratitude I expect from you is your own happiness. Always be cheerful and spread good cheer. Real gratitude is to take bliss from God and share it with others. It is 'To Give and Take'. It is no gratitude if you aim to please only God. God is happy if you make everyone else happy. Obstacles, pitfalls and problems in life are like passing clouds. If you determine not to be bowled over by them, you are a true devotee. Forget the body and think of the *Atma*. As illustrated in '*Tat Tvam Asi*' - 'that' must combine with 'this' to give *Atma* - 'thou art that'.



Summer Showers - 10

(Summary of the Divine Discourse - May 24, 2002)

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

*" There is no disease greater than greed; One's worst enemy is his anger;
There is no bigger sorrow than one's misfortune; there is no greater joy than Wisdom "*

Love, *Aham*, *Atma*, I - these are all synonyms of one and same entity. When every man uses these words, he is actually expressing his true nature. It is said, "*Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*" - whatever there is to see and experience is all Brahma. Brahma is another synonym for Atma. The great scientist Einstein made a conclusion after extensive investigations that, "There is nothing in this creation except energy and it is present everywhere." About thousands of years before Einstein, the seven-year-old Prahalada had already come to the same conclusion without the help of any experimentation! He would avidly state; "You cannot say that God is present here and not present there. God is present everywhere."

How was it possible for the young Prahalada to have such a firm conviction? He withstood all the punishments heaped on him by his father by chanting "*Om Namoh Narayanaya*". It is this faith that saved him. Firm faith is the basis. Without faith, any amount of '*Namasmarana*' will fetch no result. Man's body is like a powerful dynamo - a generator from which the Divine current always flows. Prahalada constantly experienced this and hence was confident that God is Omnipresent.

Newton was another great scientist who experienced this truth like Einstein. Newton spent his entire life in investigating the gravitational attractive power of earth. He stated that this

gravitational power cannot be created or destroyed and has no birth or death. It is all encompassing. Newton attributed the gravitational force of earth to the Divine power of magnetism and experienced Divinity thus.

Though energy can neither be created nor destroyed, it can certainly be transformed from one form to another. Through these transformations, each form of energy still retains its identity. For example, magnetic energy can be transformed to electrical energy, which in turn can be changed to light energy. There can be many such forms, but magnetic energy is still magnetic energy. It can change its intensity, but it remains indestructible.

At the time of birth, man has no desires. He is pure and peaceful. His body is the storehouse of an enormous quantity of energy and power. There are about 13 *crores* of light-sensors in the retina of his eye, about 30 *lakh* taste buds on his small tongue and around 50 *lakh* cells involved in helping him hear! The divine power pulsates in him from head to toe, keeping a powerhouse at his disposal. However, as desires steadily increase, this Divine power starts to ebb. Just try to reduce a few of your desires and you will see how much your power increases. Your memory sharpens too. The ancient *rishis* had little or no desires. Their memories were hence so powerful that they could recall anything instantly, however long the time past.

Sage Saraswat was the first one to initiate the recitation of the Vedas, in that he contributed the eight letters – *Ka, Cha, Ta, Tha, Pa, Ya, Sa, Ha*. From these eight letters came the entire vocabulary. Words that praised God originated and were conveyed everywhere by the wind God. God has been given eight names- each depicting him to the embodiment of an important power of nature: *Sabdha Bramhamayi, Chara charamayi, Jyothirmayi, Vangmayi, Nityanandamayi, Paratparamayi, Mayamayi, Srimayi* - i.e., God is the embodiment of sound, mobility, light, speech, eternal bliss, supreme strength, illusion and prosperity, respectively. The entire Vedas came from these eight names of God. The ancient seers and sages declared: "Divinity, that is radiant like a thousand suns, lies beyond *Tamas*." They experienced Divinity everywhere. They would not even travel anywhere since they felt that if they walked, they would stamp on Divinity. Today, perversions abound. People even keep their feet on idols. Rightly is it said: "*Vinaashakaale Viparithabuddhi*" - As one's doom approaches, good sense takes leave. Those were good times and sacred ideals abounded.

Based on their experience, the seers of the past termed Divinity as: -

Saikatikam: - It means that whenever or whatever you see, it is only the sound, feeling and vision of God alone.

Bhakshakthi: - It is the Divine power that none can touch. It was this power that was experienced and shared in the past.

Today, you need faith in God to experience Him. Where there is Love, there is peace. Where there is peace, there is Truth. Where there is Truth, there is bliss. Where there is bliss, there is God. The cycle hence begins at faith and finally

leads to God. Faith alone is a strong shield and weapon that can save man in any situation. It can accomplish anything.

Children, as young as 6 years, would be stricken with the desire to seek God in those days. Dhruva was hurt by his stepmother's humiliating treatment and went to a totally secluded spot, silent and peaceful, to do penance. When Lord Narayana appeared, the conversation between the Lord and His devotee indicates the maturity of the child. When the Lord asked Dhruva what he wished for, the child answered, "You, who could find me out in this isolated spot, will certainly know what I want!" The Lord replied, "*Manas ekam, Vachas ekam, Karmanyekam Mahatmanam*. You have resolved in your mind to meditate and have done the action of doing penance. I wish you to ask in words what you need." Dhruva answered, "I set out to ask for a glass piece. I have found a huge diamond instead. I don't want the glass piece, take me into you!" The Lord replied, "You had done penance to obtain the chance to sit on your father's lap and rule the kingdom. Your words do not match your thoughts. Hence, though I can give you anything, you must finish your desire; I shall then grace you." Such was the keen intelligence of the children of those days.

As desires increase, bondage too increases. If you reduce your desires, you experience peace and security. As is said, "Less luggage, more comfort". I have no desires in me at all and hence, I am always happy.

" When people's wishes are granted
they praise Me,
When they fail to succeed,
they criticize Me,
You commit all kinds of sins,
and pray for liberation,

How is it possible to do this,
pray, tell Me?"

As far as possible, you must help others.
God helps everybody - follow Him

" Follow the Master ; Face the Devil ;
Fight to the End ; Finish the Game "

You have been conducting *Bhajans*,
Satsangs and doing prayers for God for so
many days. But neither has the dirt in your
mind reduced an iota nor have you
experienced bliss even for a moment.
What can you achieve by worrying?
Instead, offer everything to God and
experience bliss.

When creation first came up, there was
total darkness. Then came a deluge of
rainfall and oceans formed. Then the
clouds cleared and the sunshine fell on the
earth. Crops grew, life forms thrived and
living was eked out. But as more light

dawned, man's desires too multiplied.
Today, man starts his day with desires!
But when it is dark, he sleeps peacefully.
On this count atleast, man must welcome
darkness since it gives no scope for
desires to proliferate!

Truth is all-pervasive. Creation originates
in Truth and terminates in Truth. When
Truth is realized, Lord Narayana presides.
Where the Lord resides, His consort
Goddess Lakshmi too appears. Hence,
Truth alone can give you prosperity, peace
and plenty. You must help others as far as
possible. Do not entertain jealousy
because it will ruin everything you have.

God's grace is always there. But you need
to put in some effort to earn it. Using the
rope of *Bhakthi* (devotion), and tying it to
the bucket of your Heart, you must send it
down the well of *Anugraha* (Grace). This
will give you the sweet water of *Ananda*
(Bliss).



Summer Showers - 11

(Summary of the Divine Discourse - May 26, 2002)

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Man wants to enjoy bliss. In the process, he listens to the wise words of his elders, performs rituals and austerities, reads scriptures and undertakes pilgrimages. Yet, he has no experience of bliss.

Buddha too went through this routine and finally discovered the Truth - that he was himself the embodiment of Bliss. Man undertakes *Sadhana* in the hope of enjoying Bliss. Whatever is seen and heard is in the material world contributes merely to external happiness. True Bliss is internal.

Man in the embodiment of five elements - Earth, Water, Fire, Wind and Ether. God resides in each one of the five elements. Since there is no place in creation where the five elements do not exist, it can be argued that God is all-pervasive. And yet, why is man not able to experience this Divinity?

Water can certainly reflect objects. However, the reflection is not steady like the object. Similarly, God cannot be seen as a reflection in each of us if we suffer from '*Manochanchala*' - a wavering mind. Such a mind leads to confusion and depression and such a mind can never enable a seeker to realize the Divinity within. What is essential for a steady mind is the control of the five senses.

Too many desires also contribute to a wavering mind. One must therefore exercise a ceiling on desires if he is to experience Divinity. Do not maintain foolish aspirations. The Buddha prescribed good vision, good hearing, good words, good feelings and good

thoughts as the pre-requisites to God-Realization. Good vision in particular is of primary importance. Today, cinema, TV and advertisements show all kind of perversions. There is nothing good to see there. Lack of good vision goes hand-in-hand with bad hearing. Both cause humanity to degrade to demonic and bestial stages.

There is a severe degradation of noble traits like honesty, mercy, compassion, cooperation and the like in man. One must first develop good habits. Good habits lead to peace of mind, which in turn gives good thoughts. One must master the mind and be a mastermind by controlling his senses. Today, man is a slave to his senses. He has become highly intolerant to criticism. This intolerance is a sign of body-attachment. Body is perishable like a water-bubble. Hence, why should you be so agitated when someone criticizes the body?

When you say, 'My Body', 'My senses', 'My intellect' and the like, who is this 'My'? Clearly, you are the master and the body, mind, senses and intellect are merely your instruments. Identifying your true Self with these is '*Bhrama*' (illusion) that is dragging you away from 'Brahma' (Divinity). Today, the social action too is contributing to the confusion of the mind and creating illusions. Several people start with the ideals that they do '*Jana Seva*' and '*Samaja Seva*' (Service to society). What they actually do is '*Swayam Seva*' (serving oneself)!

Buddha realized the temporary nature of the world and renounced it. He knew that

it could give him nothing but misery. Students! You aim to run abroad with the view to earn much. You only lose what you have in the process. You take to lowly jobs there to sustain yourself and earn a little extra. Can't you do those jobs in your own country? The mistake lies with the parents also for encouraging such foolishness. They proudly declare, "My son is earning well abroad!" He is only earning sin! Instead of going abroad and earning sin, stay in the country and earn some merit. Follow the dictum "Help ever, Hurt never". Do good to the society you live in.

People from several countries have been inviting Swami to come to their country. Your body is itself not yours; how can you then claim a country to be your own? Give up this attachment to the body. By all means foster the body; but extinguish body attachment. Else, you will fall into the endless cycle of rebirth.

Do not be swayed by the praises people shower on you. Craving for such praises is a sign of body attachment too. It builds up your ego. Do not feed your ego. Instead, foster peace. Peace is your biggest asset. Bliss is your greatest property.

The Buddha came from a royal family. He lacked nothing by way of material comforts. Yet it was only when he sacrificed everything that he realized his Self. When he was moving about on the streets once, a lady said that she would give him some food since he was starving. The Buddha said, "I am starving for the food of wisdom. The food that you want to give me is eaten by one all. Why should I aspire for that?" At another time, he saw a farmer gathering in his harvest and giving the workers their share. He went to him and asked for his own share. The farmer replied that the distribution was being made only for those who put in an

effort to till and cultivate the land. Buddha replied, "I too have tilled the land of my Heart and have watered it with Love; I tilled the land with my *sadhana* and have grown the trees of wisdom on it. I now enjoy the fruits of Bliss from the trees!"

Your *sadhana* like *bhajans*, meditation etc give temporary results. Bliss is eternal. The eternal *sadhana* to do for attaining the eternal bliss is to watch your breath. The answer lies there. When you inhale and exhale, you chant every time 'SO-HAM' - I am that! This is the *Hamsa Gayathri*. Know that you are verily Divine. 'WATCH', and your true form will reveal itself. What must you 'watch'?

W-A-T-C-H.

Watch your Words, Actions, Thoughts, Character and Heart. In particular, you must watch your words very carefully. Avoid criticizing others. For every one person you defile thus, a thousand others will criticize you and cause you suffering. Chanting the names of Gods is essential upto a certain extent, till the mind is steadied. After this stage, silence is best. Lesser the words you speak, greater the stillness of the mind. That is the only way to kill the mind.

Students today aspire to earn only *Dhanam* (wealth), *Balam* (Power) and *Kalimi* (Friendship). Of what use is an education that will serve you only till your death? Earn the wisdom that will help in releasing you from bondage and put you on the road to immortality. If you entertain bad thoughts you will not have a peaceful death. God's love can give you a peaceful, pure & serene mind. Obstacles in life must be overcome and not bowed to; God's love can be got by the best *Namasmarana* - the chant of 'I am God'. Today, you do not see G-O-D, but see D-O-G instead! If you face problems head

on, you are making a front entry-'G'; you see GOD. If you buckle and turn back, you see the rear entry -'D'; you see DOG!

No visit to Temples, Mosques, Churches or other holy places will confer bliss on you. Your body is itself a temple. Why look for God elsewhere? Buddha's biggest *Bodha* (teaching) was to undertake *Tyaga* (Sacrifice) and not *Bhoga* (indulgence). If you increase your body attachment, suffering will multiply. The body is the

temple of God; He will look after it. When several people prostrated to the Buddha, he said, "I am Myself saluting My body because it is the temple of God."

Your body is given to you to seek and experience Bliss. Do your *Sadhana* by all means. But never forget that God is in you, with you, around you, below and above you. Believe "I am never alone! God is always there with me."



Summer Showers - 12

(Summary of the Divine Discourse - May 27, 2002)

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

*"Wealth, opulence and indulgence cannot give man an iota of satisfaction.
It is only when he realizes the nature of Atma that man attains contentment and peace."*

Health is wealth. Without a healthy body, man cannot execute any of his thoughts, however good they may be. A healthy body leads to a healthy mind. Several civilizations have treated various limbs and organs of the body as specialized individual entities that contribute to the body as a whole. The people of France maintained strict control on their eating habits and contents and maintained good health. The body is a temple of God. It may be temporary like a water bubble; but unless the house is safe, how can the inhabitants residing inside be safe? There much good you can do with a healthy body. The youth today neglect this aspect and suffer from deteriorating health.

Several scholars and intellectuals have attempted to control, if not eradicate, ill health. The Romans were front-runners in this aspect. They maintained healthy and strong bodies and kept each limb and organ of the body in as near perfect and strong condition as possible. They did this by watching the three main aspects - Conduct, Character and Sensitivity. They remained self-sufficient as far as bodily needs were concerned and did not like depending on their fellow men to help them move about for their daily needs.

Today, a sixteen-year-old boy looks like a sixty-year-old man! Bad habits are the main reason for this premature ageing. In the first instance, as soon as you arise from bed, brush your teeth well and clean your tongue. The mouth is the main entry point to the entire body. There is always

the danger of germs entering the body from an unclean mouth.

In each limb and organ of the body resides Divinity. He is therefore called '*Angeerasa*' - the vital force in each organ of the body. Maintaining such good health was common in ancient India. Bheeshma, was 115 years old when he assumed the command of the Kaurava army! Bheeshma, Arjuna, Krishna all had healthy, active and strong bodies and hence were always happy. They were those men and women who set ideals to the society. Their good health was caused by correct diet and sleep at the right time and in right quantity.

Some helpful hints to maintain good health would be: "Wake up at the crack of dawn, when the cock crows; Finish your ablutions and bath; Never move about in slushy areas and places where garbage is dumped; Participate in games and sports with Joy."

Today, people get up at 8 / 9 O'clock! This is because the entire night is wasted away in watching TV or listening to the radio. What the entertainment media has to give today is complete trash - filled with vulgar, obscene and dirty features. The government is the chief culprit since it has no control on these. They even import junk and show it! What is needed is to use the media to show good ideals and thought provoking features. Apart from the government, the teachers, parents and elders too are equally responsible. They

dare not correct the youth because they themselves have the same bad habits! Some parents even encourage their children to makeup for the time they have lost watching TV! Such attitudes cause the youth to pick up bad thoughts, which end up in bad actions and dirty feelings.

Money is the other culprit in this degradation. Money leads to arrogance. Arrogance leads to bad habits. Stop wasting money. In this aspect, Bhagawan is very strict and does not show mercy. Several people rush abroad with the single-minded purpose of earning money there. Even if you earn, what are you managing to save? You struggle to earn more by taking up jobs like washing dishes in restaurants and delivering newspaper! Do you need to go abroad to do that? If you do want to bring back something from abroad, bring back good ideals. But know this - The ideals that you cannot find in India, you will not find anywhere else! (*Yenna Bharata Thanna Bharata*) Though there is a mad rush to go abroad, Bhagawan is telling you now. In 5-6 years time, every one will start coming back. The situation is worsening day-by-day. No foreign land can ever match the security and safety your motherland can offer you. Go abroad if you must. But earn and come back. Foster your parents as a form of gratitude for what all they have done to make you what you are now. Be proud to declare that you are an Indian. If you are not proud to declare your roots and culture, you are as good as a dead person.

India is called *BHA + RATHI* - that sacred land that spreads the effulgence of wisdom. It is a land of sacredness, sacrifice, service and prosperity of all types. It is the teacher to the world of spiritual lore and wealth. All Avatars were born here; Truth and Righteousness were

treated as the two eyes of man in this country.

I do not want to praise, but students of our Sathya Sai Colleges and Schools stand as ideals today. None can match them when it comes to setting ideals. What a pity it is today that a father shudders to correct his own son! Why should such sons live at all? Students must develop good thoughts, good behavior and foster unity in the country. India is one large joint family- Do not divide yourself on the basis of language, region and religion. Unfortunately, today's multi-party political scenario is doing just that!

Students ! Never divide the country. Do not succumb to the promptings of the older generation if they try to do this.

It is rather unfortunate that there is none to guide the youth on ideal lines today. On the other hand, they will criticize Sai Baba for doing this! But I do not care for that; I am convinced that what I say is true.

Students must foster unity by setting ideals. Brush aside individual differences and work and live as one - as brothers and sisters. It is only then that you will get devotion, emancipation and liberation. True devotion is to see unity in diversity. What you should learn from the Summer Course is to set these ideals. Smile and Spread Cheer. Your face assumes contorted shapes only if there are bad thoughts in you.

Why is Sai Baba always cheerful? It is because there is no bad thought in him anywhere! "You must follow me in this regard." Never harm others. Follow the principle, 'Help Ever; Hurt Never'. The essence of Indian culture is "Merit lies in helping others. There is no bigger sin than hurting others."

Students !

I want to have your assurance that you will foster good thoughts, actions and feelings. That is all that I need from you all this day. In the first instance, give up all bad habits; you will automatically gain good health, which will confer a strong body on you. You can then set ideals and earn some merit. This alone will give you happiness and bliss. Eat on time and relish what you eat; your parents have given you this food after struggling with their sweat; eat with love - that will give you good health.

Do not indulge in criticizing others. You are bound to get it back manifold as the Reflection, Reaction and Resound of your action. Speak pleasantly and do not hurt others with your words; do good to others

- I need no more *Ananda* from you. I can sacrifice anything for you then.

I have spent *crores* on you, setting up this infrastructure and facilities that are the best - all without taking a *paisa* from you. On the other hand, I even give scholarship to deserving students! All I expect is that you give up all bad thoughts, actions and habits. Develop good thoughts and actions instead. Set ideals. All you need to earn in this world is health and happiness - *Aarogyam* and *Anandam*. Hankering to earn wealth (*dhana*) without virtue (*guna*) is an exercise in futility. There is no harm in telling even your parents that they are contributing to your "*kshaama*" (destruction or barrenness) and not "*kshemam*" (welfare) if they try to misguide you. Always do good to others.



