29. Ways of the Divine

EMBODIMENTS of Divine Love! Bharatiyas have been able to win independence, but have not succeeded in achieving unity. Freedom without unity is like an electric wire without current.

Sanathana Dharma (Eternal vedic religion) is the great heritage of the children of *Bharat* (India). It is a culture that is sublime, sacred and ennobling. It has testified to the advent of many *Avatars* (incarnations of the Divine). Bharat is the birth-place of numerous sages, savants, men of God, warriors and great women who have upheld chastity.

Like the clouds that occasionally obscure the sun, the effulgent face of Indian culture may have been covered by some dismal developments and modem trends, but it is bound to shine always. Even today great souls are incarnating in this land. In fact, there has been no epoch in India's great history when such figures have not appeared.

Today people from foreign countries are looking at India with a myriad eyes. Foreigners are coming to India not only for studying its philosophy but primarily for getting spiritual insight. But Indians themselves are seeking to give up their cultural inheritance. This is the paradox of the present situation.

Indians must stand out as an ideal to the world

It is unfortunate that despite the unique greatness of Bharatiya culture, Indians, in a craze for worldly comforts and pleasures, are giving up their glorious divine cultural heritage. Doubtless there is need for having material comforts, but, along with these, only if we preserve our spiritual and cultural treasures will we be able to stand out as an ideal to the world. Unfortunately, even the government is ignoring the nation's cultural inheritance. Whatever their brave words and high sounding professions about India's greatness, their vision is turned towards western culture. Indians by and large are enamoured of occidental accomplishments and civilisation and are seeking to imitate the ways of the West. This is a supreme misfortune.

When you have the golden Meru mountain,

why search for silver and gold?

When you have the wish-fulfilling Kalpataru,

why go after other fruits?

When you have the bounteous Kaamadhenu,

why go elsewhere to buy a cow?

There is an old adage that Bharat is a land which contains all that is good and precious not to be found anywhere else. It is a tragedy that a country which is full of so many things good and great should be looked upon with disdain by Indians themselves and be the subject of flippant criticism and comment.

The inner vision

The greatness of India's spiritual and cultural heritage is indescribable. But to enjoy and experience it, one should be duly qualified. One may have scholarship, may be well educated or eminent in other ways, but if he has no spiritual urge, all these are of no avail. Only those who

have turned their vision inwards and experienced the bliss of the Divine are entitled fully to appreciate and understand the greatness of Indian culture.

All Indians are children of one mother and are members of one family, even though they may speak different languages and wear different costumes and vary in their manners and customs. The Bharatiyas should look upon mankind as one family, of which the Supreme Lord is only one. Without earning the grace of that Lord, all other acquisitions are of no value. Love alone can bind one to God, because Love is His being. One who is the very embodiment of Love can be realised only through love and not by any other means. Human beings are also endowed with love. Through that love man should secure God's love, fill himself with love and lead a life filled with love.

Men earn wealth by engaging themselves in business or a vocation. This is not permanent. They should endeavour to acquire spiritual wealth which is enduring and everlasting. This wealth has to be got by loving God and earning His grace and love.

God responds only to *Parama Prema*

Love is like the mariner's compass, which points always to the north. The thoughts of a devotee filled with love are always directed towards God, whatever he may be doing or saying. Such love has been described as *Parama Prema--Supreme* Love. God responds only to such love. It is not easy for everyone to understand the nature of this love. Love in man, if it is based on ego, assumes undesirable forms. If it is directed towards the *Atma* it redeems man and sublimates him. Hence everyone should strive for *Atmic* realisation.

Many imagine that they are engaged in the quest for the Spirit. The very idea of a search for the *Atma* is misconceived. The Spirit is Omnipresent and is the active principle in everything everywhere. There is nothing in the world without the Spirit. But when the spiritual vision is absent, the *Anaatma* (the non-spiritual or phenomenal) appears to exist. Therefore, the quest for the Spirit calls for a change in the vision. Vision does not mean the physical sight. It is the inner vision which seeks to see the One who enables the eyes to see. The spiritual quest is thus an attempt to know the Seer behind the power of sight.

Today all spiritual *sadhana* is being done through the mind. As long as the mind dominates spiritual exercises, the goal of Self-Realisation cannot be attained. The mind is like a thief, who will not allow himself to be caught. There is no use in relying on the mind to realise the Self. When the vision is centered on the Self, the mind fades away.

In the yearning for Self-realisation aspirants seek to obtain *Upadesa* (spiritual messages). But can mere words like *Namo Narayanaya* or *Namah-Shivaya* become spiritual messages? The root meaning of *Upadesa* is leading one to *Swasthaana* (the abode of the Real .or God). By merely reciting names, the divine destination cannot be reached. We repeat the names of Rama, Krishna, Govinda, Narayana. All these names have been conferred by someone and have not emerged *suigeneris.* Such acquired names cannot be eternal. Anterior to all names is the word *Aham* ("I"). Even the *Pranava* ("Om") came after *Aham.* Everyone has to find out who is this "I". When one utters the *Mahaavaakya, Aham Brahmaasmi* ("I am the *Brah*man") even there *Aham* is present. Therefore, one has to enquire into and ascertain who this "I" is. When the truth about "I" is known, the *Brahman* will be self-evident.

The *Mahaavaakyas*

Today we are wasting our time on physical and mental exercises for spiritual realisation. The truth is there is 'only one Divine Spirit that is immanent in everything. There is no dichotomy between the worldly and the spiritual. The phenomenal universe is a projection of the Spirit. All that exists in the Cosmos are like sparks from a Divine flame. All living beings have emanated from the Divine and they have all the qualities of the Divine.

Take the other great Pronouncement: *Tat-Twam-Asi* ('What thou art"). What art thou? Unless you know' what "That" is, you cannot understand the real meaning of this Upanishad declaration. From a seed, a plant has come, which grows into a tree, with branches, leaves, flowers and fruits. All the leaves, flowers and branches proclaim that they have come from the seed that became the plant. The seed is the basis for everything in the tree. As long as the seed remained a seed, it could not become a tree. It is when a seed gives up its form to become a plant that it can put forth the branches, leaves, flowers, etc.

Man should also realise his essential nature and not be deluded by identifying his true being with the body-consciousness. For all the sorrows and sufferings man experiences, it is the body-consciousness that is responsible. As long as this bodily delusion remains the fruit of *Ananda* (bliss) cannot be got. The seed of bodily attachment has to be given up for the tree of life to grow and yield the flower of *Jnana* (wisdom) and the fruit of *Ananda* (bliss). The Upanishads have declared that Immortality can be achieved only through *Thyaga* (sacrifice) and not through rituals, progeny or wealth.

The One is the basis for the Many

To boast about one's knowledge, scholarship or mastery of the sastras is really a sign of ignorance. The wise man is one who knows his true nature. As long as one is filled with. ego, he cannot experience the Divine. The actions undertaken to destroy the ego become *Akarmas* (unattached acts). Love-filled devotion is the easiest path to the Divine. You must love all. The great quality of love is that it is the royal road to unity. All the diversity and manifoldness that we see in the world have come from the One. The One is the basis for the Many. Once we realise the Unity that underlies the diversity, the problems arising out of differences can be resolved.

Develop the sense of human unity

The greatest task facing Indians today is the achievement of unity. Without unity, even the smallest task cannot be accomplished. Proper human relations are not to be found in this nation of 78 crores of people. Every individual is wrapped up in his own selfish concerns. Is this the real worth of a human being? Selfishness and self-interest and differences based on caste and creed should be totally eliminated. Everyone should deem himself a member of the human family. All caste distinctions are based on physical differences, similar to distinctions relating to age or sex. All bodies are made up of the five basic elements (ether, air, fire, water and earth) which do not have any distinctions of caste. All the elements are common to all beings. It is from a recognition of these basic common elements that we should develop the sense of human unity.

To promote the feeling of unity, we have to participate in service activities. We must utilise the body for cultivating good qualities, pure thoughts, doing good actions, and experiencing sacred feelings. Only through sacred acts can our life be sanctified and made worthy.

Embodiments of Divine Love! Do not indulge in speculative debates while proceeding on the spiritual path. The spiritual legacy of Bharat is not a product of blind faith. It is the ripe fruit of the spiritual investigations and experiences of sages and saints, which was enjoyed by them and

handed down to humanity for its enjoyment and emancipation. This heritage is the butter got. by the churning of the *Vedas, sastras* and the *puranas.* Bharat should not be regarded as a lump of earth and a mass of flesh. It is nectar itself. It is a treasure-house of bliss. It contains the cream of all the sastras. Without understanding these truths, it is ridiculous to engage in all sorts of idle talk.

The ways of the Divine

It is not easy to understand the nature of the Divine. Because the Divine is omnipresent, He can undertake any kind of activity. No one is competent to ask whether God can do this or that, whether He can work through one agency or another. There is nothing that is beyond His power. He can make one weep, He can avert one's tears. He can turn a hedonist into a *yogi and a yogi* into hedonist. He can drive away madness or cause madness. He can create, He can protect, He can punish, He can destroy. Only the Divine knows what to do, when, how and in what circumstances, with regard to any particular individual. No one has the authority to tell the Divine how He should act. In the case of Hiranyakasipu and Prahlada for instance, God punished the former and protected the latter. God deals with a person according to his past activities and according to the requirements of the prevailing situation.

The Cosmos is the embodiment of the Divine. Differences arise when anyone acts out of selfish motives. But the Divine has no self-interest at all. Hence whatever he does is only for the good of the others. Every act of His is holy. It is *Dharma* (righteous action). It is Truth.

When the Divine is the very embodiment *of Dharma and Sathya,* no one is competent to question the actions of the Divine. Even the great sages, after all their enquiries and explorations, could only say about the Divine: “Not this," "Not this." They could not define what *It is.* It is possible to say what *It* is *not,* but who has the capacity to declare what *It is?* He is the cosmic stage director, playwright and-actor. He is acting even in your form. He is the critic and the criticised. He is the one who weeps and one who causes weeping. Such being the nature of Divinity, what can anyone declare about the Divine?

Power of attraction through Love

There is one thing, however, that is the unique attribute of the Divine. It is the power of attraction through Love. This magnetic power cannot be found in all. The ocean is vast and deep beyond measure. A tumbler of water taken from the ocean cannot have its vastness. It may have the same taste as sea-water but it cannot have any of the ocean's other attributes. Individual human beings may have some Divine qualities according to their past record, their spiritual and other attainments and what they deserve, but these are strictly limited.

You are witnessing today the presence here of thousands and thousands of persons. What is it that has drawn them here? Were any invitations sent to them? Was there any publicity in the media to bring them here? The only reason for their coming is the attraction of the Divine love. It was this which impelled Thyagaraja to sing,

Is it not because you had

The bliss-conferring Chintamani,

Oh Rama, that all of them

Gathered round you,

With their hearts in unison

To experience perennial joy

From the Source of all Prosperity,

From the Ocean of Compassion

And the embodiment of Intelligence

That you are, with no equal?

(Swami sang the Telugu song "Lekhana ninnu juttukunnaaru" in His own mellifluous voice, filling the entire gathering with ecstasy).

Heart-to-Heart Love

It is because that wish-fulfilling Jewel (Chintamani) of Love is manifest here that these thousands of people from all parts of the world have come here. Whatever one may say,can anyone point to any person who can attract so many thousands? Elsewhere, even when people are brought in lorries, they choose to run away. Here, even when we try to dissuade people from coming for lack of proper accommodation, devotees will not desist from coming and staying under the trees or in the open. This is the love that flows from heart-to-heart. There is no compulsion on anyone to come here. It is the cord of love that binds them. That is the power of the Divine.

Some may say that Swami is making a *Pradarsanam* (demonstration) of this power or that. It may appear to you as "demonstration." For me, it is simple *Nidarsanam* (manifestation). This is natural for Me. I am doing what is innate for Me. It is the manifestation of Divine love. This is not something all can do. Not *all the sastras and sutras* can enable one to act this way. Only those who have experienced the power of Love can understand this phenomenon. Love is not something that can be bought. It is inherent in you. When you try to experience it naturally, you will realise it.

Chant Rama's name

Ramadas sang ecstatically,

Oh devotees! Here is the wonderful sweet

That has been prepared from the

Vedas and the Puranas:

The sweet name of Rama.

Come, all ye, and partake of it!

This Rama lollipop is in many colours

And is the cure for all ills. It costs you nothing.

Come and take it, oh devotees!

To partake of Swami's love, you have to spend nothing except the cost of travel. But even that expense is a sacred offering. Regard the expenses of your Puttaparthi trip not as expenses but a *Prapti* (blessing). Without that expenditure, you cannot get this grace. We have no right to get anything without giving something. Likewise, unless you make some small sacrifice you cannot

have the blissful experience you get here. The Lord's love for the devotee is mutual giving and receiving love.

Develop henceforth the firm faith that whatever the Divine thinks, says or does is for the welfare of the world and not for Himself. There is not the slightest trace of self-interest in it. Whether you believe it or not, all are the same to me. But what each is entitled to receive varies according to his Praapta-anusaaram (what he has earned to deserve reward or punishment). The ocean is full of water. But what anyone can take from it depends on the capacity of the vessel he carries. Likewise the extent of one's *adrishtam* (luck or fortune) depends on his past record and what he deserves now.

Strenghten your faith in God

Today what you have to do is to promote good thoughts. Action proceeds from thoughts. Sadhana is based on action. Character is the outcome of the *sadhana.* Character determines your *Praapti* (what you are destined to get). Hence what you regard as your good fortune or misfortune is based, in the final analysis, on your thoughts. As are your thoughts, so are the fruits. You cannot avoid doing your duty whatever it may be. You have to go on with it. But, even while engaged in the performance of your duties, there can be nothing more rewarding than remembering and meditating on God.

If, however, while entertaining bad thoughts and bad intentions inside, you behave outwardly as if you had good thoughts, you will be guilty of deceiving God. There is no room for playing blind man's buff with wealth. You have to cultivate good qualities, not flaunt your wealth. Strengthen your faith in God. Your life must be based on the principle of surrender to the Divine.

There are some who ask: “I have surrendered everything to God. Why then, am I subjected to so many trials and tribulations?" One who has truly surrendered to God will not raise such questions. To say that "after I have surrendered I am put to suffering" itself shows that the surrender is not real, because where is the place for "I" after surrendering everything? To the person who has completely surrendered, everything that he experiences {good or bad) is a gift from God.

Oh man! Can you get away from the
consequences of your Karma?
Whether you take your vessel to a well
Or to the boundless ocean
You can fill it only to its capacity.
You cannot get more than what your
Karma entitles you to.
Remember this, Oh man!
Wherever you may go,
Whatever you may study,
Whatever penances you may do,
You cannot get away from the decrees of Karma!

Power of Divine Grace

However there is one way of getting over the results of *Karma.* If you earn the grace of the Divine, even mountains of sin can be reduced to dust. Only the Divine has the power to confer such grace. A spark of fire can bum down a mountain of cotton. How is the spark to be got into the "mountain" of human predicament? Only through love. Develop love. Serve all with love, ever remembering the Lord's name. Without the name of the Lord on your lips, the mind will be running hither and thither. The mind is the birth-place of unsteadiness. Hence engage yourselves in action, concentrating your thoughts on God.

Embodiments of Divine Love! From this day when you are celebrating the birth anniversary, there are three things that you have to remember and practise: (1) Eschew criticism of others. Cavilling at others is a grievous sin. To cavil at the Divine is an even more heinous sin. Do not discuss other people's faults or lapses. (2) Greet everyone with love. Embark on your duties with dedication. (3) Take up service in the villages whole-heartedly. I have often declared: "*Grama seva* is *Rama seva"* (service to villages is service to Rama). Ramarajya is the reign of love. Keep aloof from the Government.

The three things to be borne in mind

One more thing will have to be borne in mind by everyone connected with Sai Organisations. Whatever activities they may undertake, our organisation should have no connection with the Government. Let the Government do its job. Our activities should be confined to what we can do, to the limits of our capacity, without depending on the Government. There is no need to attempt something big. Even a small bit of service done well is enough.

Bear these three things in mind: First, our service organisations should keep aloof from the Government. Second, plunging into the society, render service. Third, avoid finding fault or talking ill of others. This is the real *sadhana.*

Do not hesitate to reprove those who indulge in back-biting. They should be corrected on the spot, so that they may not persist in that vicious habit. They must be told that it is unbecoming of one born as a human being to talk iii of other fellow-beings. One who indulges in such talk will himself get it back tenfold, When you start developing love, all these evil traits will drop away.

Henceforth, engage yourselves in social service, remembering and worshiping God and recognising your inherent Divinity. This is the way to sanctify your lives.

Be aware of the divinity in you. There is no need to search for God anywhere outside you. The bodily vesture you are wearing should not produce the delusion that you are the body. Shed that delusion and you will realise the *Brahman* that you really are.

Do *bhajans* and have the name of the Lord always on your lips. Do not waste even a single moment. By chanting the name of Rama, Hanuman the monkey, became all-powerful, the embodiment of peace and the exemplar of all noble qualities. Sita was full of praise for him. It is such qualities that you should all try to cultivate.

Discourse at the Poornachandra Auditorium on Bhagavan's 62nd birthday 23-11-1987.

The divine will not consider your status or position, your pomp and show. The Lord is bound only by the devotees' devotion.

BABA