28. How to win the Lord's grace

Oh good and noble people assembled here!

May you be filled with mutual affection and unalloyed Joy!

May you be compassionate towards all those who are afflicted!

May you lead righteous family lives and be an example to all;

May you be ever earnest in the pursuit of Dharma and Jnana!

This is my benediction for all of you. What more can I tell you?

EMBODIMENTS of Divine Love! All the animate beings in the cosmos emerge from the Divine, are sustained by the Divine and merge in the Divine. The Divine is the root cause of creation, sustenance and dissolution.

Man is born out of desire, lives on desire and passes out by desire. Man's life is based on desires or thoughts *(sankalpa).* As are his thoughts, so are his actions. As are the actions, so are the fruits thereof. The fruits determine the goal. It follows that man's destiny is determined by his thoughts.

Embodiments of Divine love! Cultivate sublime thoughts, lead ideal lives, realise the highest fruits and strive to reach the supreme goal.

Man should possess Divine Consciousness

Man's life is based upon his qualities and character. A true man is one who acts according to his *Atma-Dharma* (the integrity of the Spirit) and not according to the impulses of his senses. *Atma-Dharma* is the true *Dharma* of man. Acting *according* to the dictates of the senses is the code of the animals. Man should elevate from the animal to the Overlord of the animal nature (Pasupathi or Siva). What man should have is *Iswara-bhaava* (the Divine Consciousness) and not the *Prakriti-bhaava* (instinctive nature).

It should also be recognised that all Nature is an embodiment of the Divine. Creation is the primary symbol of the Divine Consciousness. It is called *Prakriti* (Nature). Every man who is a product of Nature should have the consciousness of his divinity and proclaim the Divine basis of creation. Human existence is supremely sacred. It is precious, divine and should be lived befittingly. The divinity in man, who is part of creation, is not something distinct. To demonstrate the inherent divinity of man, *Avatars* (Divine incarnations) appear from time to time.

Embodiments of the Divine Spirit! God does not exist as something apart. All of you are embodiments of the Divine. *"Iswaras-sarvabhoothaanaam", "Isaavaasyam idam sarvam" "Vaasudevassarvam"* (The Divine dwells in all beings, All this is dwelt in by the Lord, Everything is Divine). Men are forgetting these profound, sacred declarations and are wasting their lives in the pursuit of petty mundane pleasures.

Spirituality exists in every aspect of life

It is supreme folly to consider that the spiritual is divorced from the physical and that the material world has no connection with spirituality. Spirituality runs like an undercurrent through

every aspect of life social, political, economic and moral. This basic truth has been forgotten today. People have faith in the transient, the ephemeral and the illusory.

Everything is constantly changing in the world. This ever-changing world is based upon the unchanging Divine. It is only when the *Aadhaara* (Divine base) is understood can one derive bliss from the experience of what is based on it. In whatever action men do and whatever paths they pursue, they should be conscious of the Divine. Men today seek power, position and pelf, but not virtues. Power and position, bereft of good qualities, are of no value. The foremost need of man is virtue. It is in this spirit that man should remember God.

Prakriti (Nature) is not to be despised. When Nature is viewed from the egoistic point of view, it assumes a distorted form. When it is regarded from the spiritual point of view, it presents a sacred aspect. The differences in the role of Nature arise out of men's attitudes.

Everything has emerged from Truth. Truth is the form of the Divine. Everything is based on Truth. *"Sathyaanaasthi Paro Dharmah"* (There is no greater *Dharma* than Truth).

Everything has been created out of Truth

And all creation is embedded in Truth.

There is no place where Truth does not shine.

Realise that this is the Supreme Truth.

Bharatiyas have forgotten their Divine heritage

Goodness is the most important thing for anyone. Whatever be one's wealth, his knowledge or position, the most essential quality is character. Even if one possesses many good qualities, it is only devotion to the Divine that makes them blossom forth. Bharatiyas in the past have had the reputation of having recognised this truth. What greater misfortune can there be than that Bharatiyas should forget their Divine cultural heritage?

In the supremely sacred land of Bharat,

forbearance is the highest wealth.

Of all forms of rituals, the most severe one is

adherence to truth and integrity.

What can be prized greater than the feeling

that 'This is my Motherland?'

Discarding the belief that honour is greater than life itself, men are going after exotic practices, hugging strange concepts of freedom and are forgetting the real source of their strength even like the elephant that is not aware of its massive strength.

Not relying on one's own strength, to depend on the strength of others is precarious. The entire culture of Bharat has been based on reliance on one's own inherent strength and confidence in one's self. Self-confidence is at the root of all achievement. It is because it has lost its self-confidence that India is a prey to all kinds of troubles.

Embodiments of the Divine Spirit! When you are embodiments of the Divine, it is a sign of weakness for you to lose confidence in yourselves. Recognise your true nature. Then your

powers and talents will manifest themselves and be a source of joy to you. Self-confidence is essential because it is the source of all prosperity and accomplishment.

Bharatiyas' duty is to serve others

The world today is plunged in strife, disorder and discontent. What is your duty at this juncture? Have you the power to banish this disorder? Do not give room for the idea that one man by himself is powerless to combat this situation. If every Indian goes forward with self-confidence to face this crisis, the country can be rescued from disorder in no time. Because of lack of self-confidence, men are unable to go forward.

Above all, everyone must take a pledge to serve others. Everyone is of Divine origin. If one cannot be loving towards others, he ceases to be human. Everyone should act on this basis, display love towards all and lead an ideal life. Man should not regard himself as a weak and imbecile creature.

What, then, is our duty today? The Government is seeking to provide various amenities in the villages. But, it is one thing to proclaim one's intentions and quite another to fulfil them. Speaking is easy, acting is difficult. Neither the authorities nor the leaders appear to be concerned about the state of the villages. The villagers are also apathetic. Bharat is not lacking in resources. It is well endowed in every respect. Had it not been so, it would not have attracted so many invaders from outside.

Today Bharatiyas themselves are considering the country as poor and belittling its status: This by itself is not a great danger. The greater danger is the development of *Avisvaasam* (a mood of cynicism). It is only when the pessimism among the people is transformed to a robust optimism will the country go forward. The retrograde movement has to be reversed. Material prosperity, which is transient, is not very important. Real and lasting wealth lies in good qualities and morality. It is this form of wealth that should be acquired.

New hospital at Puttaparthi for poor villagers

With a view to setting an example to the authorities, to the community and to every individual, Swami is undertaking activities, small and big, in various spheres. This hamlet of Puttaparthi had a population of barely 800. To conceive of a University for such a village was a fantastic dream. Another amazing phenomenon is the construction of an aerodrome near such a village, when there are no aerodromes even at district headquarters. Puttaparthi has become the cynosure of all eyes in the world. Above all, you should enquire why a highly sophisticated and most modern hospital, which should be located in a well-developed metropolis, has been set up in this rural area. The wealthy can go anywhere and get medical relief with their abundant resources. But the rural poor cannot go far from their villages for treatment. It is for the sake of such poor folk that. this Hospital has been established. I told our doctors to examine the heart ailments of the villagers around here. Today an auspicious announcement has to be made. Within fifteen minutes of the inauguration of the Hospital by our Prime Minister, the first operation was begun in the Hospital. Within three hours four operations were performed. One was a very complicated case. There was a hole in the heart of the patient. All the operations were performed successfully and all the patients are doing well.

The hospital will provide relief to villagers

You should know how this Hospital came up. The firm of Larsen & Toubro are known for their big constructions in India and abroad. But nowhere else was such enthusiasm and zeal displayed by the workers engaged in the construction as in this Hospital. Even the smallest worker did the work of ten persons with zeal and joy. All workers performed their jobs with enthusiasm and devotion.

Work on the Hospital began in May after my return from Kodaikanal. Within five months from May to November, work has been done which would have taken five years. This is a gigantic project. It is intended to benefit people for a thousand years. Our purpose is to provide for cardiac cases in the first phase. Then, it will be the lungs. The third wing will be concerned with kidneys. The fourth will be the neurology wing.

This hospital has been set up to provide relief to villagers suffering from these four kinds of ailments. No distinction is made, however, between villages and cities. Diseases do not afflict only villagers. They make no territorial distinctions. Likewise, there will be no differentiation in providing relief. Our intention is to provide relief to all comers.

For achieving anything in the world, a sound body is essential. The body is the primary requisite for the pursuit of *Dharma* (righteousness). The body has to be in good health. Even for the realisation of the four goals of human *life--Dharma, Artha, Kama* and *Moksha--sound* health is essential. Having regard to the basic importance of health for all purposes, Swami had launched such medical institutions.

But what is the purpose of having a healthy body? It should be utilised for healthy activities. Unfortunately, all over the world people are forgetting *Dharma and Moksha* and are immersed only in the pursuit of *Artha* and *Kama.* This is totally wrong. Men should pursue equally all the four goals and divinise their lives.

Good health is essential for utilising the body for good deeds. Of what use is a body used for evil purposes?

Divinity experienced through the elements

Embodiments of Divine Love! Esteem the whole *cosmos* as the embodiments of the Supreme. The Lord, who is the possessor of the *Ashtaiswarya* (eight forms of divine wealth), is the creator of this universe. The most vital requirement for man is water. It sustains life. Three-fourths of the earth's surface is covered by water. Water is described in the Upanishads as *Jivam* (the life-force). Hence, the foremost form of the Lord is water.

The second essential requisite for man is *Agni* (Fire). This fire is residing in every man's stomach as the *Jataraagni* (digestive fire). Without this digestive fire, man would be unable to digest the food he consumes and receive the sustaining energy from that food. All the seven secretions in the stomach are caused by the digestive fire. The blood, the muscles, the bones, etc., in the body are sustained by the *Rasa* (vital essences). Hence, the Lord is described as *Angirasa---One* who is present in every *anga* (limb) as *Rasa* (essence). Angirasa has the form of fire.

The third requisite is the earth. The process of birth, growth and dissolution is taking place on the earth. All the food that man needs comes from the earth. Because the earth is a source of joy for man, it is also an embodiment of the Divine.

Air proclaims the truth of Oneness

The fourth is air. Air is intimately associated with life. Every man utilises air in respiration. Human life is based on inhaling ("So"...) and exhaling ("Ham"...). In respiration, this process of *So-Ham* is continually going on. In Sanskrit, *Sah* ("So") means "He" and *aham* means "I". *So-Ham* demonstrates the truth, "I am He." Who is this "He"? It is God. Air thus proclaims the truth of Oneness. In breathing, every day man inhales and exhales air 21,600 times. If there is no air, life will be extinct. Therefore the fourth embodiment of God is Air.

The fifth is *Akasa* (space). It is the basis for all the five elements. Sound is its form. Sound is also the form of the *Brahmam* (Absolute). Sound is all pervading. When one is asked, "Where is *Akasa?",* people point to the firmament. But that is not so. Everything is permeated by *Akasa* (ether or space). Wherever there is sound (or sound waves), there is *Akasa.* It encompasses everything and is present everywhere. Hence it is the embodiment of God.

Sun is the Lord of intelligence

The sixth is the Sun. He is fire incarnate. How does this fire emerge? Heat is produced when hydrogen in the sun is converted into helium. This is borne out by science. In this process, eight forms of energy are noticed' *Yantra sakti* (kinetic energy), *Ushna sakti* (heat energy), *Kaanthi sakti* (light), *Ghana sakti* (magnetic energy), *Vidyut sakti* (electrical energy), *Rasa sakti* (chemical energy) and *Anu sakti* (atomic energy). Scientists have calculated that every second the sun is losing many billion units of energy. Nevertheless the Sun will continue to be a source of energy for millions of years. The Sun is the presiding deity of the *Buddhi* (intellect). He is the lord of intelligence and he illumines the intellect in man. Thus, sun is also an embodiment of the Divine.

The seventh is moon. Moon is the presiding deity of the mind. It is through the mind that sublime ideas are experienced. The world is the projection in form of the mind. Without the mind the world cannot be conceived. The speed of the mind cannot be equalled. For instance, you might have come here from Hyderabad or Delhi. But in one moment your mind can take you to any place. The speed of thought is greater than that of light.

The eighth is *Karma-sakti* (the power of action). *Karma* also is Divine in form. Man is born out of action, is sustained by action, and ends in action. Action is the life-breath of man. This *karma* was described by the ancients as *yajna. "Yajno-vai Vishnuh"* (Action or sacrifice is Vishnu). The cosmos is the embodiment of Vishnu.

If follows from this that the entire creation should be regarded as the manifestation of the Supreme Lord who is the possessor of the eight divine potencies.

Man is misusing and abusing the elements

Man today is not using properly the five elements of which the cosmos is constituted. Consequently man is afflicted with a myriad troubles. The benefits to be derived from the five elements (in the form of sound, touch, light, taste and smell) are not being rightly enjoyed. They are being misused. Because man is abusing the God-given elements and faculties he is forfeiting God's grace and is becoming a victim of Divine displeasure. The five elements have also turned against man. They are despising man for the way he is degrading them. The result is' the sounds that one hears are a cacophony of scandal and gossip. Are these the sounds that man should produce?

Man should manifest his sublime, perennial, Divine nature. Unfortunately, his entire vision today is tainted. He is filled with bad thoughts. Hence his sight has turned against him.

When you examine man's faculty of hearing, what do you find? He hears all the time scandalous gossip about all and sundry, while his ears turn away from the sweet praises of the Lord. As the ears are abused in this manner, the mind gets polluted by listening to bad things.

Even the air one breathes is polluted. The entire atmosphere is polluted. The food one consumes is also polluted.

If we try to find out what is at the root of all the troubles and worries men experience today, it will be seen that man's abuse of the five elements is the cause. Therefore, see good, hear what is good, and be good. When people behave in this manner, the five elements will shower their benefits on them. It is only when man secures the grace of the five elements that he will experience the grace of the Divine. How can we get the grace of the elements, which nourish and sustain us, if we misuse them?

Travesty of progress in education

This is the kind of progress that the world has made.

Biting the hand that feeds,

Reviling the preceptor who imparts knowledge,

This is the 'progress' in education today.

People seek a good life, position and wealth.

But they will not seek good qualities,

Right knowledge and right conduct.

Wealth has become all-important

And righteousness has receded.

This is the 'progress' in education today.

Character and morality are confined to books.

The mind is totally polluted.

All actions are based on selfishness.

This is the 'progress' in today's education.

Can this be real "progress" at all? Are these the things that should be learnt by anyone? All that is learnt today serves only to pollute the heart. Education is confined to what promotes selfishness and self-interest. What ought to be learnt is how to be helpful to others and how to realise the Self. Education should make one realise the unity of all beings. I cannot find any truly educated person wherever I turn. All appear to be uneducated. Many read books, but mere book knowledge is not education. Degrees do not make an educated person. Without wisdom and good qualities education has no meaning.

How to divinise human life

Education should be for leading a good life and not for earning a livelihood. To learn from a scientist the chemical composition of water is a kind of knowledge, which may help a man to get a job. But how to make the right use of water so that all can share its benefits is knowledge of the Spirit. This higher knowledge elevates life and makes it meaningful. When worldly knowledge and spiritual knowledge come together, human life is divinised.

There is a Kannada saying: "For water, lotus is the ornament. For a town, the home is the ornament. For the ocean, the waves are the ornament. For the sky, the moon is the ornament. For man's life, virtue is the ornament." Without good qualities, all other ornaments are worthless. The beauty created by the Divine cannot be excelled by any other ornament. It is that beauty which should be esteemed. Beauty is God. Why attempt to enhance it? When you have natural beauty, why go after artificial cosmetics? True beauty consists in good qualities.

Embodiments of Divine Love! Today we have to recognise the importance of the body. To make right use of the body, good qualities are essential. With a healthy body and good qualities, you can lead ideal lives. When this infinitely precious human life is filled with good thoughts and good actions, the nation will flourish.

Eschewing all thoughts of "mine", "my people", fill every moment of your waking life every day with thoughts of the well-being of others. When all are happy, you will also be happy. Promote the welfare of society, with which is bound up your own welfare.

"All are alike to Me"

Love even your enemy That is Sai's ideal. Indeed, in the entire world there is no one whom I do not like. Some may dislike me or be opposed to me. But I have no feelings against them. All are alike to me. Try to cultivate at least a fraction of that equal-mindedness.

Some devotees bemoan their lot saying, "God is described as an ocean of kindness, the embodiment of compassion, but He has done nothing to relieve me of my woes." The Lord is verily the embodiment of Love and Truth and is an ocean of Compassion. But, to what extent are you carrying out the injunctions of that Lord? Ask yourselves that question. You don't act properly, but seek favours. God's grace will be showered on you only when you put into practice at least a few of the Lord's injunctions.

Today the Gita is being propagated in many ways. But how many are practising even one of the teachings of the Gita? Men are heroes in aspiration and zeroes in practice. Likewise, people are eloquent about the Ramayana and the way Rama adhered to the pledge given by his father. But how many carry out the words of their parents? The Ramayana, Bhagavatha or the Gita are not to be regarded as scriptures for mere ritualistic reading. They are texts whose teachings have to be followed. This applies equally to other sacred books like the Bible, the Quran and the Granth Saheb.

There are some others who spend their entire lives in the quest for knowledge. When will they ever start practising what they have learnt?

Discourse in the Vidyagiri Stadium, on 23-11-1991, Bhagavan's Birthday.

For the consummation of human evolution, and the realisation by man of his highest goal, religion and spiritual discipline are very essential. Religion is the link between the individual and the Universe, between Jeeva and Deva. If that does not exist life becomes chaos. A cow caught on a hill wanting to go to the hill opposite, but confronted with a flooded river in between, needs a bridge between the two. That is what religion is.

BABA