

## Publisher's Note

"SATHYA SAI SPEAKS" Series is, according to late Prof. N. Kasturi, the original translator and compiler, "a fragrant bouquet of flowers that never fade or falter". These discourses were delivered by Swaami out of profound compassion towards seekers of Truth during the last few decades.

The need for revised and enlarged editions of the Series was strongly felt and expressed by devotees, especially by foreigners. An attempt has therefore been made in these volumes to meet their needs. The discourses have been presented year-wise so that there is no overlapping of the discourses delivered in a year, in more than one volume pertaining to the same calendar year. This rearrangement has resulted in an increase in the number of volumes, from the previous twelve to the present fifteen volumes, covering the years 1953 to 1982. Further new volumes will also be added in due course, to cover the discourses delivered after 1982.

The retention of Sanskrit words on page after page, in the previous volumes, without their English equivalents in most cases, was causing great confusion to readers, especially foreigners, who were not familiar with Sanskrit. In the present revised volumes, an attempt has been made to aid easy reading by replacing Sanskrit words with English equivalents wherever they do not affect Baaba's original expression. Sanskrit words have been retained wherever it was felt necessary to preserve the essence of the original expression of Baaba and where the English equivalents may not do full justice to the text in the particular context. However, in all such places the English equivalents have been given along with the Sanskrit words. Some very commonly understood Sanskrit words or Sanskrit words which are repeated too often are retained without English equivalents to retain the original flavour of Baaba's discourses. Further, in this revised volume, phonetic spellings have been adopted for all Sanskrit words uniformly to enable readers who are new to these words to pronounce them correctly and to remove any vagueness in the pronunciation of these words.

A Glossary has been added in these revised editions to provide comprehensive and detailed explanation of the more important Sanskrit words for the benefit of lay readers who may be interested in *Vedhic* religion and philosophy. It is hoped that this will be of great help to devotees to understand more clearly the topics of Baaba's discourses covering a wide spectrum of *Vedhic* philosophy.

The revised series of volumes are being brought out in a larger format, Demy Octavo size, so that they can be companion books with other publications in private libraries. Computerised typesetting using a larger size of type, a more readable type face and better line spacing have been adopted for more comfortable reading of the books, especially by elderly readers. Very long paragraphs have been split into shorter paragraphs and suitable sub-headings have been added in every page, to relieve the monotony on the eye and make reading a pleasure.

Better quality paper, improved binding, dust cover with new design and foil printing and plastic cover have been adopted for the revised volumes for better preservation and durable shelf-life of the volumes.

With these changes, it is hoped that the revised and enlarged volumes of "Sathya Sai Speaks" Series, will be of great benefit to earnest seekers in spiritual realm.

## *Sathya Sai Speaks*

"I've come," He Says, "to wake you all,  
Who sleep the sleep of ages---  
While one be on the pages  
Of account book of paltry deeds and thoughts,  
Accumulate in defiling piles...and keep you from  
The happy land,  
Above, beyond the sleep, the dream,  
Above beyond the waking stage---  
The Realm of Restful Peace."

"I've come," He Says, "to save you all  
Who stray away in silly pride,  
Hunting fantasies in bush and briar,  
With bandaged eyes, in pitch-dark gloom  
And fall into birth-and-death,  
Failure, fracture, faction, fanatic fire."  
"I've come," He Says, "to cure you all  
From petty selfish inanities!  
Trivial tinsel temporalities!  
'Your tweedledums and tweedledees,  
The little loves and hates,  
Peevish paisa rivalries,  
Across dividing line of 'mine' and 'thine'!  
Brother gouging brother's eye,  
Sister crushing sister's babe---  
For the sin of wall between!"

"I've come," He Says, "to show you all  
The Path; a Form, a Name; a Way of life,  
That cools and calms the fevered Mind,  
That stills the waves,

That fills, fulfils;  
That leads you into He (whom you forgot)  
That follows you into It, from which you came."

Here you find on every page  
The Words He spoke for You.  
A few...which I dared translate  
Into uncouth English tongue ....  
The few I gathered from His Lips  
As I sat at the Feet, to catch His voice  
So Sweet, so charged with Grace!

The solar rays, they open wide  
The buds of Lotus, Waiting for the Warmth!  
May Baaba's Words, their warming touch  
Unfurl the petals of your Lotus heart!  
N. Kasthuri

## ***1. Climb the right tree***

I KNOW that your hunger has not been fully appeased, even after listening to two excellent discourses, radiating *Aanandha* (bliss), given by these *Pandiths* (scholars). Both of them said that they had no claims to scholarship and that all that they were able to see and speak about was due to My Grace. Well, that is but a way they have cultivated, to curb conceit. Hanumaan was not aware of his vast strength; he had cultivated that much of self-effacement. Some one had to remind him of his skill and prowess and then, Hanumaan would rise to the occasion, with his powers fully awake.

It was also pleaded on your behalf that I should speak to you today, for it is a long time since I spoke to you at this place. I feel I must satisfy, that desire of yours. You eat yourselves *bhakthas* (devotees); so, I shall talk to you about the *dharma* of persons who seek to acquire *bhakthi*. No one can become a *bhaktha* by naming himself so, nor, by others calling him so.

*Bhakthi* involves dedication, with nothing held back; not even a wisp of ego should remain. His command alone counts; His Will prevails. Like a drunkard, the *bhaktha* has no sense of honour or decency, pride or conceit. He is a *mattha*, an *unmattha* (a mad person), unconcerned with all that is unrelated to his ideal. He is deaf to the call of hunger and thirst; he misses steps in logic and he calculates wrongly while dealing in the market place. Naaradha says that those full of the liquor of ignorance stumble after the shadows of the world, while those drunk with nectar of wisdom never move away from the Highest, which they have discovered as themselves.

### ***Bhakthi must soften the mind***

You saw this in the case of this Shaasthry a few days ago when he came and sat in this Hall for the first time, after 30 years of intense study of the Srimath Bhaagavatha. He felt that he had won the fruit of years of study and worshipful exposition. He lost all awareness and some of you thought he had an attack of epilepsy or something akin to it. I knew that he was in the realm of *Aanandha*. That is why I did not encourage you to take him to the hospital. Even today, you noticed how when he started to describe the depth of Divine Grace he was overcome with joy.

The Lord broke His own plighted word in order to give the *Bhaktha* the credit for making Him do so, Bheeshma had said that he would force Krishna to wield a weapon on the battlefield, contrary to His declared intention. Bheeshma would accept defeat only from the Lord! And, so Krishna strode towards Bheeshma, brandishing the *Chakra* (discus) in order to win. The Shaasthry was describing this, when he broke down. *Bhakthi* must soften the mind and keep it receptive to the higher emotions, the purifying impulses.

### ***Every being is a pilgrim to reach God***

Bheeshma was a *bhaktha* and by winning the Lord's grace, he was clothed with more majesty and splendour than any earthly emperor. What majesty have these petty sceptre-holders? They cannot claim to have inner peace, inner joy; they know not the joy of sharing love with all. Bheeshma surrendered to the Lord, when He challenged him with the *Su-dharshana*; that is to say, when He offers Su (good) dharshana (vision), one must be wise enough to surrender, give up all; that is what Bheeshma did.

Like the kitten calling the mother to where it sits, by mere mewling, the *bhaktha* has only to yearn, to mew with the pain of separation. The growing crop in the fields thirsts for rain; it sees the heavy rain-clouds sail across the sky; it cannot rise up to that altitude and drink the life-

giving rain; nor can it bring the clouds down to the ground. Humanity too sizzles in the hot Sun, the unbearable heat of ego and greed. It needs the rain of Grace; it knows it can flourish only then in peace and joy.

As the clouds form droplets and fall upon the fields which they choose to foster, the Formless Absolute individualises Itself, assumes Form and comes down in the midst of humanity to save and sustain, That is the secret of God Maadhava coming down as *maanava* (man), the cloud taking pity on the crop, parching in the Sun. Once the rains come, the Sun has its uses! So too, when the grace of the Lord is gained, then ego and greed can be put to profit by being made to flow; into useful channels.

In past ages, *Avathaars* (divine incarnations) rid the world of evil, by destroying the few fanatics and ogres who wrought it. But, now fanaticism and felony reign in every heart. The number of *asuras* (evil men) is legion; no one is free from that taint; all are wicked to some extent or other. Therefore, every one needs correction; every one has to be educated and guided into the right path. Every being is a pilgrim destined to reach Maadhava and merge in Him; but most people have forgotten the road; they wander like lost children, wasting precious time in by-paths.

### **You can win Lord's Grace only by *dharma***

*Maanava* (man) has to become *Maadhava* (God); that is his destiny, the plan and purpose of his being armed, as no other animal is, with the sword of *viveka* (discrimination) and the shield of *vairaagya* (renunciation). Man is the only animal that can picture a previous existence and existences in a series, with impressions accumulating from one to the other. What you see and feel in a dream has some basis on what you have seen and felt in the waking state; so too, what you see and feel in the present life has, as its basis, what you have seen and felt in other lives, previous lives.

You can win the Grace of the Lord only by *dharma*. *Dharma* induces the spirit of self-surrender and develops it. Without the training that the practice of *dharma* gives to your senses, your feelings and emotions, you cannot have steady faith and steady detachment. The Lord is *Dharma* conceived as a personality. Raama is known as *Vigrahavaan Dharmah* (Righteousness personified). If you step across the bounds of *Dharma* and play foul, you cannot win the game of life.

### **Pursue your task with one-pointed effort**

When Hanumaan was speeding along the sky like an arrow from Raama's bow, many temptations attempted to halt him. He did not delay or turn back. He sped on, intent only on the task his Lord has set for him. When the Mynaaka mountain rose up to offer him a little rest, he trampled it down into the depths of the sea. The mountain rose again and pleaded for the chance of serving him for a while. It had decked itself with green orchards and fragrant flower gardens for his recreation and recoupment, for when Indhra slashed off the wings of all the mountains in past ages, Mynaaka had fled with the help of Vaayu, the father of Hanumaan, and he wanted to express his gratitude by granting hospitality to the son; but, Hanumaan pleaded that his master's task brooked no delay. A few moments later, Hanumaan was confronted by a terrible monstress, Surasa by name. Hanumaan overcame her by skilful tactics and avoided further delay. You should pursue your path to liberation with one-pointed effort.

The Shaasthry said that the Lord wishes that His *bhaktha* should shine over non-believers; that he should be happier, more contented, more courageous than the rest: *Bhakthi* ought to make a

man so, But the *bhaktha* does not cultivate these traits deep enough. He lets the chance go to waste. If Shaasthry gives his sons a hundred acres each, one son may tend it well and reap golden harvests from it: another may allow it to lie fallow and himself sink into misery. The equipment each has brought from previous lives may be different: you cannot blame the father for this state of affairs. Even the blood of one son may be fatal when transfused into another son. Spiritual strength will be less in one, more in another, in proportion to the efforts of each, now and in the past.

### **Let the light within shine**

The pity is that man is not eating the most relishing, the most nourishing fruit, from this Garden of Nature. He is climbing the wrong tree and seeking to pluck the wrong fruits: so, his appetite is ruined, his taste is vulgarised, his health is destroyed. Only the Glory of the Lord can satisfy the hunger of man, for he is part of that Glory.

Only experience can reveal the sweetness, the sublimity, the purpose of that Glory. Parashuraama came across Raama and challenged him when he was returning to Ayodhya after his marriage. He had won Seetha by bending and breaking the bow of Shiva: and thereby humbled the pride of all the crowned heads that had come seeking Seetha's hand. But, Parashuraama was intoxicated with his own achievement, in defeating the *Kshathriya* rulers in twenty-one campaigns. That pride lowered the Divine status of Parashuraama and so, he could be felled in a moment by Raama who was to all appearance just a stripling!

The Lord, it was said, punishes some and favours others. Let Me tell you- the Lord does neither. He is like the current in this electric wire. It rotates the fan and makes one's life cooled; it operates the electric chair and makes one's life shorter. It has no wish to allay the warmth of the atmosphere; it has no eagerness to kill. The Lord's Grace is like the wind that blows. Roll up your sails and the boat lies limp and lame; unfurl them, it moves faster and faster. It is like light; one person does good using the illumination; another executes an evil plan, with its help. Have an "inner day," though an "outer night." Let the light within, shine. When you are unaware of the world, though in it, heedless of its call for participation, you are having an outer night and an inner day. The *Vedhas* teach you this Truth and impart the discipline needed to attain this fortune.

### **The Lord is the Father of all in the world**

The Shaasthry spoke of the value of the *Vedhic* discipline. The *Vedhas* declare that if a *karma* (act) is done in a definite way, a definite result will accrue. They give you a pen filled with ink, they teach you how to write and what to write. They are so kind. *Vedhamaatha* is so full of maternal love (*vaathsalya* as they call it). She repeats an injunction, over and over again, just as I go on reminding you of the disciplinary rules of the Nilayam, on every possible occasion. So, do not set aside the commands of the *Vedhas*: they are the authentic Voice of the Lord Himself as heard and recorded by purified intellects.

A father gives his wealth to the son, who respects his wishes and obeys his orders, not to the rebel son who flouts him. The Lord is *Loka-pitha* (the Father of All). If you are an *Aasthika* (a person who accepts that there is God and shapes his life accordingly), then you will get the *Aasthi* (wealth or property), if a person is an idiot, ignorant of his true interests, unaware of his own downfall, then he is not entrusted with his own *Aasthi*, a guardian has to take care of his affairs until he proves himself able to manage it with care.

## **Dwell always on the Glory of God**

It may take many lives for a man to prove that he knows what is best for him, that he is able to chalk out his own future without harming himself or others, that he is aware of the pitfalls on the way. So, it is best to trust to the experience of sages, who were filled with compassion and who were moved by that compassion to illumine the path of liberation. This experience is enshrined in the *Vedhas*. Faith in the *Vedhas* irrigates the heart and makes it yield the harvest of Universal Love.

The *Shaastras* warn you of false steps; they console you in times of stress; they strengthen you in distress; they give correct interpretations of moral dilemmas. They prescribe the dress, the food, the manner of speech, the methods of social conduct, the mode of mutual behaviour, the lines of onward march. They are the conscience of society.

In this Prashaanthi Nilayam, too, there are certain limits laid down, certain modes of spending time usefully, recommended by Me. All who come here, whether longtime residents or new arrivals, have to observe them. You have seen Me, and stayed here, and heard these discourses. Let Me ask what is the gain? Are you going back, unchanged, unaffected? Dogs do not chew sugar cane; they seek a bone, instead, m-fated mortals recoil, when the talk is about God, goodness, *saadhana* (spiritual effort) and *Saakshaathkaara* (vision of the divine) But, you must pull yourselves up into the purer air of *aadhyaathmik* (spiritual) life, draw yourselves away from slums and bylanes and travel on the highway to God. Dwell always on the glory of God; then, you will shine in that glory. Adhere to Truth, that is the surest means of removing fear from your heart. *Prema* can grow only in the heart watered by Truth.

## **What is *Bhakthi* and who are *Bhakthas*?**

Naagayya, even while he plays the role of Thyaagayya, is always conscious that he is Naagayya. "Thyaagayya is the role I am playing," he would say. Now, go one step further. When asked who you are, say that you are *Naaraayana-swaruupa*, playing the role of Pullayya or Thimmayya or Mallayya, or whatever your name is. So too, every other person is a role played by Naaraayana. Naaraayana washed clothes as the *dhobi*, shapes wood as the carpenter, forges iron as the blacksmith, prepares pots at the wheel as a potter. He is all this---and more. His glory is inexhaustible. The *Avathaar* (divine incarnate) is another role He takes up for another purpose.

The Lord comes as *Avathaar* when He is anxiously awaited by saints and sages. *Saadhus* (the pious) prayed---and I have come. My tasks are three, or rather two, since *Dharmarakshana* (protection of virtue) and *Vedharakshana* (protection of *vedhic* culture) are both practically the same. The two are, therefore: *Vedharakshana* and *Bhaktharakshana*---fostering of the *Vedhas* and fostering of *Bhakthas* (devotees). Now, what is *Bhakthi* (devotion)? Who are *Bhakthas*? It is faith, steadiness, virtue, fearlessness, surrender, absence of egoism. *Puuja* done however elaborately and pompously, is sheer waste of time and energy. Why pluck flowers and hasten their death? Some of you go round this Nilayam and satisfy yourselves that you have done so many *pradakshinas* (circum-ambulations), but, they can be called so, only when your mind circles this place along with your feet.

## **Talk less, talk low if you must**

I notice that while your feet are taking you round by force of habit, your tongues blabber about the faults of others, or the price of vegetables, or the dishes you propose to cook for lunch. Before you start on your rounds, which you call *pra-dakshina*, give your mind as *dakshina*

(thanksgiving offering) to the Resident of the temple, the Lord. That is the first thing to do, and perhaps, the only thing to do. *Pradakshina* is not to be taken as prescribed, for loosening the limbs or giving them some exercise.

This Nilayam should not be treated with scant reverence. Make the best use of your stay here. Do not treat this chance lightly. You come spending much money, and put yourselves to much trouble to reach here; but, you do not bloom as fragrant offerings at the Lord's feet by learning the *saadhana* path. The senses have to be curbed into obedient servants of the spirit, For example, I insist on silence. Talk less, talk low when you must talk.

Do not thrust your sorrows, your needs, your problems into the ears of those who have come here with their own bundle of such things. They are not interested in adding to their troubles. I am here to listen to you, to console you. Do not by loudness of voice disturb those who are meditating or reading or writing the name of God.

### **All ills are traceable to faulty living**

Meditate if possible, yourselves, alone; read spiritual books if you can; write the name of the Lord in the quiet of your corner; if you cannot do these, at least do not disturb others who are doing these. Encourage one another to march along the path to God.

Become entitled to the honoured title of *Bhaktha*. My glory is spread daily through those who call themselves My *bhakthas*. Your virtue, your self-control, your detachment, your faith, your steadfastness---these are the signs by which people read of My glory. Not that I want any such prop.

But, it just happens so, in this world, where men estimate others indirectly, rather than directly. Let Me tell you, such *bhakthas* are very rare. That is the reason why I do not address your gathering as, "*Bhakthulaaral*" You can lay claim to that name only when you have placed yourself in My hands, fully, completely, with no trace of ego kept back to cater to your vanity.

All ills are traceable to faulty living. And what is that traceable to? To ignorance of one's real Nature, ignorance so deeprooted that it affects thoughts, words and deeds. The drug that can cure it is patented under different names: *jnaana*, *karma*, *upaasana* (contemplation), *bhakthi*. They are all the same in potency, and curative power. The difference lies only in the method of administration either as mixture or as tablet or injection.

Be confident that you will be liberated; Know that you are saved. Go and tell all that you had gone to Puttaparthi and that you got there the secret of liberation.

*Prashanthi Nilayam, 25-1-1963*

*The mind must become the servant of the intellect, not the slave of the senses. It must discriminate and detach itself from the body. Like the ripe tamarind fruit, which becomes loose inside the shell, it must be unattached to this shell, this casement called body.*

*Strike a green tamarind fruit with a stone and you cause harm to the pulp inside; but, strike the ripe fruit and see what happens. It is the dry rind that falls off; nothing affects the pulp or the seed.*



*The ripe aspirant does not feel the blows of fate or fortune, it is the unripe man who is wounded by every blow.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*

## 2. Revealing you to yourself

DEEKSHITH just said that this is a sacred day, not only for the 35 boys who were initiated into *Brahmacharya* (religious studentship) but for *Sanaathana Dharma* (universal religion) itself, since the *Upanayanams* (investiture ceremony of sacred thread) here are an important step in the restoration of *Varnashraama dharma* (code of conduct prescribed for the four social groups of Hindu Society) itself. The study of the *Vedhas* is the highest type of learning, since it leads to the conquest of Death. All other studies deal with the means of living or the surroundings within which you have to live; they deal with earning and spending, deriving a little pleasure by this trick, escaping a little grief by that other trick. The *Vedhas* show the path to the Realm of Eternal Bliss, where there is no birth or death.

People learn details about China, Russia and America; they know about the volcanoes of the Pacific or the islands of the Arctic regions, but, they do not know an iota about the features of their own inner realms.

### ***Jnaana* must grow from within**

There are five such Realms in them; but, they are aware only of the outermost realm, the *Annamaya kosha* (the material casement), in which they are housed; even this is just an awareness, not full knowledge. There are deeper layers of which they are ignorant---the *Praanamaya* (sheath of vital energy), the *Manomaya* (mental sheath), the *Vijnaanamaya* (sheath of intelligence) and the *Aanandhamaya* (sheath of Divine Bliss). Those who are conscious only of the *Annamaya kosha*, can claim to be only just *Kaarnaswaruupa*, not *Raamaswaruupa* (embodiment of desire but not of Raama). That is to say, they will be swayed by every gust of *kaama* (desire); they will scarce be able to control desire and rise to the demands made on nobler virtues by the Divinity latent in them. They will get proper inspiration and instruction to explore and exploit the inner realms only from the *Vedhas*, and the *Shaasthras* that expound the *Vedhic* truths.

The *Karma Kaanda* is the biggest part of the *Vedhas*, because *Karma* (sanctified activity) is the means by which the tree blossoms and the fruit matures and grows; the *Upaasana Kaanda* (the contemplative portion) deals with the *Upaasana---method* by which the fruit ripens; the *Jnaana Kaanda* describes *jnaana* (spiritual knowledge), the process by which the fruit fills itself with sweetness. The first stage takes the longest time; so, it comprises the largest portion; the second and the third are quicker by comparison. So, they are shorter.

The third stage can be accomplished even apart from the tree by keeping the fruit in a warm place amidst straw or in a hot room. Man can acquire the sweetness of *jnaana* by keeping himself in *sathsang* (holy company) or even by remaining in a solitary place, all by himself in *dhyaana* (meditation), for example. But by whatever means, the sweetness (the *jnaana*) cannot be injected from outside; it must grow from within. It is a transformation of the inner nature, won by a struggle with inner foes.

### **Get rid of grief in this life itself**

Just think of this for a while. You are in this body, in this receptacle, in order to realise the God you really are. This body is the cocoon you have spun round yourselves, by means of your impulses and desires. Use it while it lasts, to grow wings so that you can escape from it! You came into this world crying, announcing your grief at being thrust into it, grief for having lost

hold on God. Having come with grief, decide not to go with it, from here. Get rid of it in this life itself.

You were told now that the Raamaayana was welling with shoka *rasa*; the main mood of that epic was, it was said, agony. Well, the first step to prayer is a touch of agony. Agony is more potent than awe, in leading you Godwards. Grieve for lost chances, lost time; move on, everyday, forward to the Goal. Amidst all these absurd loves and hates, the meaningless game of having and hoarding, losing and lamenting, building and demolishing castles in the air, you have no moment of real calm.

### **Everything in the Universe is Divine**

Peace of mind will not descend on you because your room is air-conditioned or your sofa, soft-cushioned. It does not depend on your bank-balance; or on the diplomas you have collected. It can come only when, you deny the *dhaanava* (demon) in you all chances of moving you, when you encourage the Divine in you to manifest Himself. The *dhaanava* is the prompter of the *Asuric* traits mentioned in the Geetha. Everything in the universe is Divine; it is; it shines; it is lovable. It is *asthi*, *bhaathi* and *priya*; it is *Sath*, *Chith* and *Aanandha*. For, it is the same as the Universal, Eternal, Absolute, which is also *Sath-Chith-Aanandha* (Being, awareness, bliss).

This is the *Upadhesha* (spiritual instruction) that these boys got today through the *manthra* that was taught them. *Upanayana* means, "near-leading," leading near, leading the boy to the teacher, taking him to the teacher, the *Guru*, for this *Upadhesha*, this initiation. The *Guru* who can give this *Upadhesha* must himself have transcended name and form, the relative regions of worldly ambitions and achievements; he must have experienced the Oneness of all this variety. Such men do not put up boards to announce their greatness or compete with others for status or reward.

These boys are specially lucky: good fortune, of which even they are not aware, has brought them here for this ceremony, which will transform them. They have done consciously, in previous births, meritorious deeds, the fruits of which they are now tasting, unawares. The *Guru* does not teach anything new; he reveals you to yourself. He trains you to cleanse the mirror of your heart, so that you may be reflected in it, without warp or twist. The *brahmachaari* (celibate or spiritual disciple) must obey the commands of the *Guru*, without flinching and to the full.

### **Use your fullest powers to grasp the truth**

While Aanjaneya was bringing the Sanjeevini Mountain, he had to take a course that made the citizens of Nandhigraama see him in the sky; Bharatha, who saw the strange sight of a monkey carrying a hill, brought him down with an arrow and when he learnt that the hill had the drug which could cure Lakshmana who was stricken in battle, Bharatha offered to send the hill quicker to where Raama was, by shooting an arrow which could lift it and carry it fast. But, Aanjaneya said, he could fly quicker than any arrow from the bow of the fastest marksman! Use your fullest powers to grasp the truth. Rely on your own skills, your own force; then, they too will develop to the utmost demand you make of them. That will give you the greatest joy.

Many of these boys are today joining the *Vedhashaasthra Paatashaala* (School of *Vedhic* Studies) here or have already joined it. They will be enthused by each other in their study and *saadhana*. When ten friends gather around you and shout, "Come, come, we shall go," you feel like joining them and you gladly go on the adventure. Teachers at the *paatashaala*, who are experienced men, will foster virtues and encourage at every step. I am planting the sapling in your heart; they will water it and manure it. I shall also water the sapling, off and on, especially,

when they are not with you. In order that the lotus may not go dry, the lake has to be full of water. *Prema* is the water that must fill the heart: hatred will make it a parched waste. Have faith in your own *Aathma* (true Self or Being); that is the medicine. Act always in the spirit of service and kinship with all; that is the regimen.

**Surrender must be complete without reservations**

To all of you I say, "Let mountains fall; let the sea overwhelm the land; but, do not give up your *saadhana*. And, remember, *saadhana* is a waste, unless you grow at the same time in virtue and uprightness." If you give up all and surrender to the Lord, He will guard you and guide you. When you complain, "Oh! He has not guarded me," I reply, "You have not surrendered." The Lord has come just for this very task. He is declaring that He will do so, that is the very task that has brought Him!

Of course, you only talk of *Sharanam* (surrender), of placing all at the Feet; but you withhold a great deal. Your minds are wayward like monkeys that skip and jump from bough to branch. Give them to Me; I can make them steady and harmless. When I say, sit, they will sit; when I say, stand, they stand. That is what Shankaraacharya offered to do, he told Shiva that he will hand over the monkey that was his mind to Him so that it might be tamed and used for His delight. But, it must be a complete handing over; no reservations.

*Prashanthi Nilayam, Upanayanam Day, 3-2-1963*

### 3. Ask for Me

TODAY, you had the nectar of Raamaayana from these two *Pandiths*. They spoke with genuine joy when they dilated on the incidents of the Raamaayana. One of them selected today the hospitality shown to Bharatha and his retinue by the sage Bharadhwaja and how Bharatha reacted to it. The other Shaasthry who generally talks on other topics, was persuaded this evening to select Naaradha's description of the qualities of Raama to Vaalmeeki as the theme of his talk. *Raamanaama* is so sweet that I could see all of you relishing these talks. If a man talks about Raama, without himself being inspired by the glory of the Lord it sounds hollow; it is of no benefit; it is like the image of a table heavy with edible dishes seen inside a mirror; the dishes in the mirror will fill no hungry stomach. No language can picture the actual bliss that the Name can confer; words can at best delineate only an atom of that joy.

Man comes into the world burdened with *maaya* and its instrument, the mind. The mind expresses itself through attraction and repulsion, *raaga and dhwesha* (affection and hatred), towards the external world. *Raaga* is *raajasik* (passionate) in its effect; it can be used for one's uplift, as Naaradha used it to fix attention on the Lord. *Dhwesha* is *Thaamasik* (negativistic), as Dhurvaasa expressed it in his dealings with Ambareesha and others. Without *Raaga and Dhwesha*, the mind cannot function at all. If these two are removed, there can be no mind and no *maaya*, and you get fixed in *jnaana*. Let *raaga and dhwesha* go and let Raama enter; then there will be no *manas* or *maayaa* (mind or illusion).

#### **Have aversion towards evil, pride and egoism**

The *Thaitthireeya Upanishath* analyses the mind and its behaviour very well. It gives directions to merge the mind in God; the weapons with which you can foil the tactics of *raaga and dhwesha*. Use them for positive purposes, as Naaradha and Dhurvaasa did. Have attachment to the Lord and aversion towards evil, pride, egoism. Water and fire are incompatible; fire is put out by water. But, by means of fire, you can convert water into steam and use it to haul long lines of heavy wagons.

How to overcome *raaga and dhwesha*? By discrimination, by inquiry, by reasoning. Arrive at the truth by this means. Dhuryodhana, though he stuck to falsehood, greed and envy had, according to the Mahaabhaaratha, a swell time, flags flying,

festoons swinging, banquets everyday; but, Yudhishtira, the eldest of the Paandavas, had, as reward for his high morality, exile, poverty and privation. This does not mean that Vyaasa who wrote all this is a cheat or a fool.

*Dharma* (righteousness) stood firm in spite of hardships; *shraddha* (faith) was steadied and strengthened. In the case of Dhuryodhana, prosperity did not induce caution, humility or discrimination. So you revere Yudhishtira and execrate Dhuryodhana today, centuries after they died. Vaalmeeki also pictured Raama as wandering forlorn in the forests; but, He never for a moment wavered in the path of *Dharma*. So, He is revered even today as the embodiment of *Dharma*.

#### **Ask to be examined and your progress recorded**

The *Guru-sishya* (teacher-disciple) relationship which has been established between these boys and those who initiated them into the *Gaayathri* has also a *special. Dharma* (spiritual quality) which directs the *sishya* to learn with gratitude and the *Guru* to teach with love. There are cases

when the *sishya* was made to forget all that he had learnt when the Guru was displeased with his behaviour.

India has been *Yogabhuumi*, *Thyaagabhuumi*, *Vedhabhuumi*---the land of Divine Communion of renunciation, of spiritual intuition. It spoke of *Samaa-dhee*, the wisdom that sees all as equal repositories of Divinity. *Samathwa* is just a matter of origin and essence; water in lakes, pits, wells and rivers is rain water, though the taste, colour, name and form are different, based on where the rain has fallen and how pure is the container. Divine grace is like rain, pure, pellucid, falling on all. How it is received and used depends on the heart of man.

The Lord does not test a man just for fun; He does not pile calamity on calamity because He enjoys it. Examinations are held, to measure achievement and award marks and honours. You must ask to be examined, so that your progress may be recorded.

Dheekshith spoke of Bharadhwaja setting up a Dhurbaar (regal audience) Hall, with a bejewelled throne and all other paraphernalia, for the reception of Bharatha. Bharatha mentally installed Raama therein and stood behind, framing his brother. Bharatha was applauded for this act of genuine detachment by the sage. He was glad the citizens came to know the real nature of Bharatha by this means.

### ***The Avathaar has no blemish, no trace of Guna***

Bharatha did not partake of the rich banquet that the sage had prepared; he was too grieved over the turn of events to think of food, drink and sleep. He did not even take a drop of water, before he could speak to Raama. The thought of Raama was so intense in him that people saw Raama in the form of Bharatha. Ceaseless contemplation had made him an exact replica. That is the depth of the *bhakthi* which is fruitful. But, you praise Me when all goes well and you call Me stony-hearted when grief assails you. Grief or joy, whatever the Lord hands out, you must welcome with equal calmness.

It was declared that Raama was born of the *paayasam* which was brought by the deity from out of the sacrificial fire. No *Avathaar* is born flesh and blood, including this *Avathaar*. The body of the *Avathaar* is *chith* (awarenessful) substance; it is not *jada* (inert) like other materials. The embryo of ordinary mortals is *jalodhakashaayi* (enveloped in watery stuff ; the embryo of the *Avathaar* is encased in *Ksheerodakashaayi* (the pure white milk of holiness). That is why in the make-up of the *Avathaar*, there is no blemish, there is no trace of *Guna*.

### **Raama's insistence on His vow of hermit-hood**

Dhasharatha wept, for he had no sons to offer ritual food when he moves out into the next world. When all are of the form of God and of the substance of God, who is son and who is father, who is to offer food to whom, when that high stage of wisdom is reached? *Kshamaa* (fortitude) is the father, *Shaantham* (peace) is the mother, *Vairaagya* (renunciation) is the wife, and the Lord is the son, the centre of affection. Dhasharatha desired the lower type of son, the male issue, to save him from perdition. This desire brought his 'spirit' again before Raama, when Seetha was about to enter the fire in Lanka.

Raavana was killed and Raama asked Sugreeva and Lakshmana to crown Vibheeshana as Emperor of Lanka; he pleaded that Raama Himself should bless him on that auspicious occasion, but Raama insisted that His vow of hermit-hood prevented Him from entering an inhabited city. Then, Raama sent Hanumaan to Seetha and requested him to bring Seetha to the camp in a palanquin. Vibheeshana had not thought of that; he was too immersed in other affairs Hanumaan

bowed before Seetha and got a vision of Lakshmi rising out of the waves of the ocean of milk. He felt that, that Vision was enough compensation for all the births he had to undergo. While the palanquin neared the camp, there spread everywhere a sublime splendour from it, which astonished the *vaanara* (sub-human or monkey) hordes. Raama sent word that Seetha may alight and walk the remaining distance, so that they may fill their eyes with her glory. This is not mentioned in the books.

#### Two purposes of Seetha's fire ordeal

When Seetha was about ten yards away, Raama, who is butter when He melts and steel when He hardens, said, "Stop, I can accept you only after you pass through Fire." Lakshmana swooned at this thunderbolt; the monkeys who had to bring the fuel for the Fire bent under the weight of even twigs. The Fire Ordeal served two purposes- to scorch the slanderous tongues, which haunt the tracks of *Avathaars* (Divine Incarnations) at an times; and, to retrieve from the Fire the real Seetha who had entered into it, prior to abduction by Raavana.

Dhasharatha also came there, to assure Raama that Seetha was Purity itself; and also, to satisfy his parental craving to see his son. He appreciated the steadfastness of Raama in the respect he had for his father's wish; he also saw the *vaanaras* rise again from the battlefield and gather around Raama. The *Raakshasas* (demonic persons) had already attained liberation for they had the vision of God when they drew their last breaths. "The *vaanaras* came down to be My instruments and so they have no death, neither are they born, except at My Command," said Raama.

Man too must become His instrument in order to escape death and birth. He has come, imprisoned in the ego, and he has to liberate himself. This can be done only by making him aware of the Universal (*Aadhaara*) basis, like a man sunk in poverty, dwelling in a hut that is raised over a vast underground treasure, man is suffering, with a spring of joy inside him, of which he is unaware. I have come to give you the key of that treasure, to tell you how to tap that spring, for you have forgotten the way to blessedness. If you waste this chance of saving yourselves, it is just your fate.

#### **Do not hunger for comfort or riches**

You have come, most of you, to get from Me tinsel and trash, petty little cures and promotions, joys and comforts; very few of you desire to get from Me the thing I have come to give, viz., Liberation itself; and even among these few, those who stick to the path of *saadhana* and succeed are a handful.

Many are drawn away by the outer signs of sainthood, the long gown, the beard, the rosaries, the matted hair; they keep track of many such who move about in this land and follow them into the wilderness. It is very difficult to demarcate clearly the manifestation of the Lord and so, I am announcing Myself and Myself describing My mission, the task, the characteristics, the qualities which mark out the *avathaar* from the rest. Do not hunger for comfort or riches; hunger for *Aanandha*.

If you have faith and if you keep the name of Raama as constant companion, you are in Vaikuntha or Kailash or heaven, all the time. These are not distant regions that have to be reached by tortuous travel; they are springs of tranquillity that are in your own heart. You cannot have this chance of the nearness of the greatest of all sources of joy in any other place. Here it is

so near, so easy to attain, so full of grace. If you fall back, you will seldom get the chance again. Ask and get what will save you, not what will bind you.

You ask from Me a thousand things of the world, but rarely do you ask for "Me" That is why I seldom address you as *bhakthas* (devotees); I usually address you as *Divyaathma swaruupulaara* (embodiments of the Divine), for that is your real *swaruupa*, this *Divyathwam* (Divinity). Though you do not know it, it is a fact. Therefore, I Call address you so with confidence. I can even call you *Divya-divya swaruupulaara*, but, as for *bhakthi*, since it is a quality that will make you desire the Lord and nothing else. I find you cannot lay claim to it.

### **Methods to curb Raavana tendency**

Some of you claim to be *Sat bhakthas* or *Raama bhakthas* or *Krishna bhakthas*. No, unless you are perfect instruments in His hand, you do not deserve that name. For example, Bharatha can call himself a *Raama bhaktha*. He lived with *Raama naama* in every breath; he was with Raama in the forest and on the battlefield; he suffered as much as Raama; he was as much an anchorite as his brother; so, he too became *Shyaama* (dark skinned) like Raama.

*Shravan*, *manan*, and *nidhidhyasan* (listening, Contemplating on what has been listened to and practising what is dictated by the mind so transfused), these are the methods by which *Raavanathwa* (the Raavana tendency) has to be curbed. What is that tendency? It is *kaama*---lust, greed, inordinate desire for things of the sensory world, egoism, and the rest of the fatal brood.

When the pot of milk on the hearth boils over, you pour cold water on it and it settles down in the vessel itself, is it not? Dhurvaasa is the example of the pot boiling over; and Naaradha, of the pot of milk that does not. Naaradha had the name of the Lord always on his tongue and so, the senses did not establish mastery. If you too keep your senses and your wishes in check, you will gain by listening to these talks and by this visit; and, I will be happy that you have taken to the path that will give you real strength and joy.

*Prashanthi Nilayam, 4-2-1963*

*No one can liberate you, for no one has bound you. You hold on to the nettie of worldly pleasure and you weep for pain.*

*The kite is pursued by crows so long as it carries the fish in its beak; it twists and turns in the sky trying to dodge the crows who seek to snatch the fish; tired at last, it drops the fish. That moment it is free.*

*So give up the attachment to the senses, then grief and worry can harass you no more. The kite sits on a tree, preening its wings, enjoying its happiness.*

*You too can be so happy, provided you drop the fish you have in your beak.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*



## 4. The search for Seetha

SINCE three days, the *Pandiths* who spoke here have been discoursing on the Raamaayana. This is understandable in the case of a specialist like Dheekshith but even the other *vidhwaan* has turned away from his usual topics; he too spoke on the Raamaayana. Of course, the Raamaayana is a limitless ocean, from which any number of canals can be dug and water drawn. I was wondering whether at least today some one will refer to *Krishna thathwam*! Not that one gets tired of *Raama thathwam*. The *Thathwam* (Reality) of the Lord is ever fresh.

Every life is a new chance, a fresh opportunity for realising the Truth. Yesterday is gone; today is the fresh chance, the new opportunity is now; tomorrow, you cannot be sure of Every minute is to be welcomed as unique and as valuable, precious, in fact. Do not pine over the chunks of time you have wasted; seize the moment that has come within your grasp.

Search for the Lord as Hanumaan searched for Seetha. He had not seen her; he had only heard her being described. He could also judge what she should be like, if Raama could aspire for her so deep. It was like the attachment of *Purusha* for *Prakrithi*, no less. Like Hanumaan, man too should seek the incomprehensible. *Aadhishakthi* (Primal Energy), among the multifarious counter-attractions and distractions of Lanka.

### Through dharma and karma man can attain salvation

Since the entity is not known, one has to discover it by means of the characteristics it is supposed to have. The experience of sages is the only guide, the only map, or chart. That chart is supplied by the Bhaagavatha, the Raamaayana, the *Puraanas*. Have the *Lokamaatha* (Universal Mother), the Thripura-sundhari, in your heart, Her lineaments clear and pure; then proceed bravely into the land of *raakshasas*; and you will succeed. Saturate yourself in the search; establish yourself in the faith; then, you can fill yourself with the Bliss.

Who can describe the signs of the Seetha you seek to find? Only Raama can, for He is the master. Take Him as the truest guide. The *Vedhas* are like that. Lakshmana. Sugreeva and the rest are as the *Shaasthras*, arguing by deduction, not from actual mastery. They did not describe Seetha; they could not, for they had not seen.

When Raama went to the hermitages at Chitrakoota, the sages, saints and *Vedhic* scholars, all gathered round Him and their gratitude at getting His *dharshan* was as a garland of flowers on His breast, flowers of many hues but, all strung on a strand of deep devotion. They knew that Raama was both the Seen and the Unseen; that He had come to establish *dharma* and *karma*, for through *dharma*, and *karma* done along the lines of *dharma*, man is certain to attain peace and salvation. The *avatharas* insist on dharma it is declared that the purpose of the *avathaara* is *Dharma sthaapana* (establishment of virtue); but, what is dharma for, if not for liberation from the bondage of ignorance?

### Every step of the Avathaara is pre-determined

The aeroplane has to land at certain places in order to take in those who have won the right to fly, by the tickets they have purchased. So too, the Lord has to come down so that those who have won the right to be liberated may be saved incidently, others too will know of the Lord, of His grace and ways of winning it, of the joy of liberation. There are some who deny even today the possibility of air travel; they curse the contrivance; they cavil at it. Similarly, there are many who cavil at the *Avathaara* that has come to save.

Dheekshith spoke of Kabandha who swore at Raama and wanted to eat Him up alive; but, Raama liberated him from his curse and restored him to previous glory. If you condemn the Brahmin and the *Vedhas* then, you drift afar from Me, if you desist then, you are drawn near Parashuraama, the inveterate foe of the *Kshathriyas* appeared before Raama, when He was returning to Ayodhya, after the marriage. He was blazing like fire, terrible to behold, for he had heard the twang of the bow of Shiva, when Raama broke it in twain. He challenged him to draw the bow of his father and to meet him in single combat. But, Raama said, "You are worthy of respect; you are a Brahmin and you are related to Vishwaamithra."

Every step in the career of the *avathaara* is pre-determined. Raama knew that the coming of Suurpanakha was the prelude to the coming of Raavana; He had asked Seetha to enter the fire and remain in it as just as an outer manifestation. Even before the human manifestation, the Lord had decided that the *Shakthi* (Energy) must also accompany Him, because Raavana's *thapas* (penance) was so strong that only some major sin could make the blessings he had won from the gods null and void. The ordeal of fire through which Seetha was asked to prove herself was not an ordeal at all; it was got up only to recover Seetha from the fire in which she had taken shelter, in preparation for the Lanka episode. That is the way of the *avathaara*; it will not go about announcing its nature; it will announce itself by deeds.

Do you yearn for the Lord's mercy and grace?

Jataayu recognised the divinity of Raama; he said, "Raama! I am content; this body has realised the acme of joy; I have seen you, have been touched by you; I have spoken to you and imbibed your voice." Only Raama knows the significance of each step of His and the character of the next step; He carves His own career.

You were told that Raama showed man how to bear suffering while Krishna taught him how to overcome it. No, Raama was all Aanandha inside, though he was lamenting outwardly for Seetha. *Raama thathwa* (Divine Reality) is known only to Raama. What can the rest know?. At best, they can have but a glimpse of Raama's grace. And, even that only if they are immersed in intense inner prayer for God. Think of Him, call out for Him; He melts. Whatever form He may be shining in, that intensity will make you recognise Him. He may be a cowherd boy, standing under a tree, with a flute at his lips. You will see him and adore Him and place Him in your heart. You extol the Lord as Love, Mercy, Grace; but do you yearn to earn them? Do you believe you can win them? Do you strive to treasure them?

### **Have an idea of the place of your last journey**

Take the example of Suurpanakha, the sister of Raavana. She was mutilated by Lakshmana, she was rejected by Raama, she was ridiculed by Seetha, humiliated beyond cure. She fled in terror to her brother and, what did she ask him to do? She described the heavenly charm, the Divine grace of Raama and advised him to fill his heart with the sweetness that Raama exhaled all around Him! Raama came to feed the roots of *Sathya* and *Dharma* and so, Seetha joined Him through correct orthodox rites. There was no *Seetha-apaharanam* (abduction of Seetha).

In the *Krishna avathaara*, the task was to foster *Shaanthi* and *Prema*. Now, all four are in danger of being dried up. The *dharma* that has fled to the forests has to be led back into the villages and towns. The *adharma* that has ruined the villages and towns has to be driven to the jungle. You will have no rest until this is done. For it is your problem, the problem in which each of you is vitally involved.

Now you are unaware of the problem, the problem of Liberation. There was a courtier once with a king; he was so idle and ease-loving that whenever the king ordered him to see someone, he raised flimsy objections like, "Perhaps, he is away," "If he does not greet me, what shall I do?" "What if he gets wild?" "I may not be able to return in time", etc., etc. SO, the king got the word, "Fool" embroidered on a broad tape and commanded him to wear it on his brow so that all may learn a lesson. The courtier became the laughing stock of the palace. Within a few months, the king was on his death-bed and the courtiers vied with one another in weeping over him.

When the fool came near he told him with tears in his eyes, "I am leaving on my last journey, dear Fool." The fool said, "Wait, I shall bring the royal elephant;" but, the king shook his head and said, "Elephants will not take me there." The Fool pleaded that the king might use the chariot, but, when told that chariots too would be of no avail, he suggested the royal steed as the alternative. Even that was of no help, he was told. Then, the Fool innocently asked the king. "What is this strange place to which you are journeying?." The king replied. "I do not know." At this, the Fool untied the tape from his brow, and tied it on the brow of the dying king. "You deserve this more; you know you are going, but, you do not know whither! You know that elephants, horses, and chariots do not proceed there; but, you do not know where it is or how it looks!" he said. But, you can have some idea of that place if you evaluate your deeds and thoughts now in this life.

*Prashanthi Nilayam, 5-2-1963*

## 5. Sweeten and lighten life

PERHAPS, this *Raamanaama* Feast is cloying to some tastes; but, it is something that is ever fresh, that gives undying sweetness to the heart that is filled with the love of God. One single Name will yield fresh sweetness, fresh joy, every time it is rolled on the tongue. I have to tell you the things I have told you often before; for, until digestion is well established, medicine has to be taken. The face has to be washed day after day. One meal is not the end of the story; you have to eat, again and again.

To get angry is but the effort of a moment but, to get peace, to become unaffected by the ups and downs of life, is the result of years of training in *Vedhaantha*. It can be well established only on the basis of the belief that all material things which fall

within the range of sensuous experience are fundamentally non-existent. They are *maaya*, products of illusion, of the tendency to see many where only One exists. You see corpses proceeding one after the other to the graveyard; but you move about unconcerned. You feel you are eternal.

In fact, you are. That is the real you, I mean. Just as the water you drink is eliminated as perspiration, the *karma* that you accumulate is eliminated through *karma*, gladly borne. So, bear both 'mirth and moan' with equal calm. Like the *aakaasha* (space) in the pot merging with the *aakaasha* outside the pot, silently, fully, with no trace of separation or distinctness, merge with the Universal. That is real *sharanaagathi* (surrender, salvation, liberation).

### **Today is the fastest friend, hold fast to it**

Raama is extolled as the ideal son, who acted according to his father's wish, regardless of his own happiness. But, Bheeshma is a better example in this respect. He acceded to a whim Of his father and in so doing made even a greater sacrifice than Raama. Dhasaratha made Raama an exile in the forest for fourteen years to satisfy the claims of Truth while Shanthanu made his son give up the throne as well as a wedded life to satisfy a sensual desire of his senile body. As a matter of fact, it is not the obedience to the father's whim ;that is important; it is the adherence to *sathya* and *dharma*, which is Raama's forte.

Dheekshith said that kings, because they have to compromise with justice and truth sometime or other, usually go to the nether regions. His kingdom is, really speaking, his body. He must evince as much interest in the proper upkeep of the most distant part of his kingdom, as he does in the upkeep of his toe or scalp. Pain anywhere must be felt and remedied as quickly as pain in any part of his body. Such a king never goes to the nether regions. He is indeed thrice blessed. Janaka, for example, felt that all was His, not his. Though he had a body and all the commitments of kingship, he felt as if he was an *A-shareeri* (without a body) and *A-samsaari* (without a family).

It requires all the strength one can collect to carry a load up-hill. The gear, the accelerator, have both to operate to haul a car up a steep. The *Guru* who taught you cannot do anything to haul it; he can only guide. The control of the senses, changing the mode of life, the habits of thought, have to be done by you. The senses say, "Why struggle? Eat, drink and be merry, while you can," but, the *Guru* says, "Death lands on you without notice; overcome its fear now, before he calls." "Now is the true friend; yesterday has deceived you and gone; tomorrow is a doubtful visitor. Today is the fastest friend; hold fast to it."

### **Be tranquil amidst the storms**

Once when his eldest brother, Dharmaraaja, promised to a mendicant *yogi* some help for a *yajna* (ritual sacrifice) and asked him to call the next day, Bheema ordered all drums to beat and all flags to fly, for, "My brother is certain to live until tomorrow! At least, that is what he believes will happen."

Death stalks your footsteps like a tiger in the bush. So without further waste of time, endeavour to give up sloth and anger; be tranquil amidst the storms; mix in tranquil company. Let the flagrant smoke of divine thoughts, full of love to all, rise around you; why try to scatter fragrance from scent-sticks available in the market? The flame of *jnaana* (experiential knowledge of Supreme Reality) can reduce to cinders the impulses inherited through many births and many experiences. In the heat of that crucible, dross is burnt and precious metal is isolated.

### **The Lord is sweet in every one of His actions**

*Saadhana* (spiritual effort) requires regular habits and moderation in food, sleep, and exercise. Fasting weakens the intellect and reduces the strength of discrimination. The body, the mind and the spirit, all three must be equally looked after. Unless you have "muscles of iron and nerves of steel," you cannot contain in your head the tremendously transforming idea of *Adhwaita*, of your being the Universal itself, the Eternal Reality itself! Lesser strength can only think in terms of servitude or subsidiary roles. To see the Truth as Truth, and the untruth as untruth, clarity of vision and courage of vision are both needed.

The seven-walled *fort---mamaakaara* (feeling of mind and one's own) and the six evil tendencies, *kaama* (lust), *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (greed), *moha* (infatuation), *madha* (arrogance) and *maathsarya* (jealousy)---has a garden in the centre and a lake, where the *hamsa* (divine bird) plays. It is the image of your own true self; become aware of it and you are saved. You have come into this *lokha* (world) to enter the presence of the *Lokesha* (Lord of the world). So do not tarry in wayside inns, mistaking them to be the goal. The Lord too will be longing for the arrival of the lost. He is like a cow yearning for its calf.

Once Krishna was in a fix; it was the birthday of Rukmini and it was also the anniversary of his marriage with Sathyabhama! Both queens were awaiting His arrival in their palaces, but, Krishna, to the great mortification of the proud Sathyabhaamaa, went to *Rukmini* and after sharing the feast with her, entered the palace of Sathyabhaama. She was in an inconsolable mood of resentment, but, though she did not offer anything to Krishna out of pique, Krishna Himself picked up a few jambu fruits from the garden and ate them, appreciating all the while the care with which the queen was looking after the garden and the extraordinarily fine taste of every fruit that grew in it! Sathyabhaama was thus encouraged to forget the sense of injury. The Lord is sweet in every one of His actions, movements, words, gestures. He is sweetness itself.

### **This life is a dream you have taken to be true**

Take the instance of Raama. Bairaagi Shaasthry recited a poem about the lotus feet of Raama, treading the stony, thorny jungle regions. But Kaikeyi had not realised this, when she asked that Raama should go into exile. She learnt about it and was horrified at what she had done only when she saw Raama, Seetha and Lakshmana in the hermitage as she watched her son plead with Raama to return to His throne. Raama never felt the thorn or the stone for He had devised the jungle Himself, in order to infuse faith in the sages and nip their fears. .

As a matter of fact; what other functions have those feet than warding off the hurdles on the path of *bhakthas*? The bearer alone knows the Weight of the load on his shoulder. The tiniest suffering in you causes the same suffering here also. There is an old woman from Salem here, since a week; her son, a young man of twenty-five years, is insane and cannot attend to his needs. She does not know how much I was affected, but, I was inquiring, "Did he take his morning coffee?" And telling her, "Carry food to him and feed him, he is hungry." Her anxiety was just one-sixtyfourth of Mine! You think that I pay attention only to those who sit in front, but, I see all and I am with all, wherever they may be. Only those who have been blessed will know, not the rest.

No fuel, no fire. No *saadhana*, no *sankalpa* (sub-consciousness desire). Pour oil and light the wick. You are on a pilgrimage to the beyond, so, you cannot long dwell in this beneath. Some time or other, sooner or later, this birth or the next, you have to realise that this is but a dream you took to be true; you have to pack up and march. This is *asath* (non-Being); go towards the *Sath* (Being). This is *thamas* (darkness): this is the realm of death. Proceed towards the *jyothi* (effulgent Light); proceed towards the realm where immortality reigns.

### **Let the desire to be saved sprout in you**

The tree might appear to be dry; but, it will bloom, it will bear fruit; do not despair. I shall make it sprout, provided the sap of repentance is still running. Come just one step forward, I shall take a hundred towards you. Shed just one tear, I shall wipe a hundred from your eyes. I bless only thus! May your *Aanandha* (Bliss) grow.

When the night grows chill, you draw the rug tighter around you, is it not? So too when grief assails you, draw the warmth of the name of the Lord closer round your mind, Out of all the crores of Indians, you alone have gained this contact, through your good luck. Let at least the desire to be saved sprout in you; I shall see that it grows and gives fruit, provided you yearn and try. To pour the nectar of grace, the vessel must be cleansed. Clean it and demand the nectar; do not grieve later that you missed the chance, when it had come within reach. You will not know Me in a trice, or even in days. It is something that has to be realised by stages, in due course, through *viveka*, *vairaagya* and *vichakshana* (discrimination, non-attachment, clear-sightedness).

You have been squatting for four hours and some of you might be squirming and feeling an ache in the back. But it is no ache. pray that you may get this feeling all through life, for you have been receiving the teaching that will sweeten and lighten life itself.

*Prashanthi Nilayam, 6-2-1963*

*Each has his allotted task, according to the status, taste, tendency and earned merit. Do it, with the fear of God and of sin, deep in your heart. Welcome pain and grief so that you take both success and failure as hammer strokes to shape you into a sturdy saadhaka. Inner content is more important than outer prosperity.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*

## 6. Griha or guha?

THE Deekshith spoke about the glory of the Lord and the other *Pandiths* gave you detailed accounts of the experiences of ideal men who struggled to arrive at the Truth. Every one must be interested in knowing about these, for, all should have an ideal to strive for, a goal to be reached. Otherwise, life is reduced to aimless wandering. For saplings to grow, soil is essential; for ideals to get implanted, knowledge of the struggles and successes of saints and sages is essential. These experiences are not uniform; each *saadhaka* has a different story to tell, depending upon his equipment and enthusiasm. So, the vision and the glory are different, though all are divine. The mansion of India's glory is built of charming stones, each block being the hardy *thapas* of some sage or other. No one sage can be neglected, for if his attainment is ignored, the wall of the mansion would be so much the weaker.

Take the case of Agasthya, for example. I mention him because some one gave out his name, while addressing you. He is called "potborn," but, remember, he and Vashishtha were both children of *Mithra-Varuna* and were both born from the same pot! He put an end to the evil deeds of the ferocious giants, Ilvala and Vaathaapi, by just three words, "*Vaathaapi jeerno bhava.*" He made the high- peaked Vindhya bow his head and become low; that is why he is known by the name, Agasthya! That is to say, he taught humility to the proudest in the land.

### **The home must resound to the name of God**

Agasthya is also reported to have drunk off the ocean all in one sip. That is to say, he dried up the ocean of *samsaara*, with its waves of grief and joy, prosperity and adversity, success and failure. It is not any *sidhi*, this feat; it is a parable explaining that though he was a *grihastha* (a married man) with a son who recited the *Vedhas* as soon as he saw light, he had conquered all attachments of the world. Be attached only to the ideal---that is the sign of the sage.

Kabeer was weaving a *peethaambara* (yellow silk garment) for the Lord, for his Raama. He had to work the loom alone, by hand. He recited Raama Raama Raama and went on weaving ceaselessly. The cloth had become twenty yards long, but, Kabeer did not stop; his *thapas* continued unabated the *peethaambara* was becoming longer. The *aanandha* of the craft, devotion to his Lord, was enough food and drink for his sustenance. When he gave it to the temple priest for clothing the idol of Raama, the *peethaambara* was just the length and breadth, not a finger breadth more! Such men are the mainsprings of the joy that spiritual persons fill themselves with in India.

The *griha* (home) must resound to the name of Govindha; otherwise, it is just a *guha* (a cave), where wild animals dwell. The body needs a house but, the body is itself a house; in that house too, the name of Govindha must be heard. Or else, it is a *ghata* (a mud pot), not a man's body.

### **Offer God the fragrant leaf of *bhakthi***

An insidious disease is now rampant among most people, namely, unbelief. It sets fire to the tiny shoots of faith and reduces life into cinders and ashes. You have no criterion to judge, yet you pretend to judge. Doubt, anger, poison and illness---all these have to be scotched before they grow. Repeat the *Raamanaama*, whether you have faith or not; that will itself induce faith; that will itself create the evidence on which faith can be built.

There was a fisherman once, who spread his net over a lake and sat watching, for robbers might drag away his catch. He sat on a tree; and for getting clearer vision all round, he plucked leaves

and pulled off branches It was a *bilva* tree! The day was *Magha Krishna Chathurdhasi*, *Shivaraathri* day. *Mahaashivaraathri* (Great Night of Emergence of Shiva's Radiant Form), in fact. And, right under the tree, where *bilva* leaves fell, there was a *Shivalinga*! For want of food, he starved the night and so, he got the merit of a vigil and of a fast!

His wife too ardently waited for him in his hut; just when she was about to eat her supper a dog peeped in; she felt it was very hungry and so she followed it with the plate of food and fed it, in a spirit of *puuja*. She too kept vigil. In the morning, he went to the temple and prayed that he may merge in God; his wife prayed that he may be spared for her sake; but God had both of them merged in Him.

You attach importance to quantity; but, the Lord considers only quality. He does not calculate how many measures of "sweet rice" you offered, but, how many sweet words you uttered, how much sweetness you added in your thoughts. Offer Him the fragrant leaf of *bhakthi*, the flowers of your emotions and impulses, freed from the pests of lust, anger, etc.; give him fruits grown in the orchard of your mind, sour or sweet, juicy or dry, bitter or sugary.

Your homes must be immersed in highest *shaanthi* Once you decide that the orchard in your mind is His, all fruits will be sweet; that *sharanaagathi* (seeking refuge for protection) will render all fruits acceptable to the Lord and so, they cannot be bitter. And, for water, what can be purer and more precious than your tears, shed, not in grief mind you, but, in rapture at the chance to serve the Lord and to walk along the path that leads to Him!

All who aspire to be *bhakthas* must eschew *raaga* and *dhwesha* (attachment and aversion). You need not be proud when you are able to sing better or if your *puuja* room is better decorated. There must be a steady improvement in your habits and attitudes; otherwise, *saadhana* is a vain pastime.

This place as well as your homes when you return must be *prashaantha*---immersed in the highest *shaanthi* (peace)---undisturbed by any streak of hatred or malice, pride or envy. No *puuja*, *thapas*, no *vratha* can equal the efficacy of obedience, obedience to *aajna* (the command), given for your liberation.

*Prashaanthi Nilayam, 8-2-1963*

*Individual reconstruction is much more important than the construction of temples.*

*Multiply virtues, not buildings; practise what you preach, that is the real pilgrimage; cleanse your minds of envy and malice, that is the real bath in holy waters. Of what avail is the name of the Lord on the tongue, if the heart within is impure?*

*Injustice and discontent are spreading everywhere due to this one fault in man: saying one thing and doing the opposite, the tongue and the hand going in different directions.*

*Man has to set himself right and correct his food, his recreation, his method of spending his leisure as well as his habits of thought.*

*Sathya Sai Baba*



## 7. Bend before Prema and Sathya

DO not grieve that the Lord is testing you and putting you to the ordeal of undergoing them For, it is only when you are tested that you can assure yourself of success or become aware of your limitations. You can then concentrate on the subjects in which you are deficient and pay more intensive? attention, so that you can pass in them too, when you are tested again, You should not study for the examination at the last moment; study well in advance and be ready with the needed knowledge and the courage and confidence born out of that knowledge and skill. What you have studied well in *advance must be rolled* over and Over in the mind, just previous to the examination; that is all that should be done, then. This is the pathway to victory.

Many grieve : "It is said that *darshanam* (getting the audience) is *paapanaashanam* (destruction of sin); well, I have had *darshan* not once but many times, but, yet, my evil fate has not left me and I am suffering even more than formerly." True, they have come and have had *darshan* and they have sowed fresh seeds secured from this place, seeds of *Prema* (Love), *Shraddha* (Faith), *Bhakthi* (Devotion), *Sathsanga* (Good company), *Sarveshwarachintha* (Godly thoughts), *Naamasmarana* (Remembering God's Name), etc., and they have learnt the art of intensive cultivation and soil-preparation. They have now sown the seeds in the well-prepared fields of the cleansed hearts. Now, until the new harvest comes in, they have to consume the grain already stored in previous harvests. The troubles and anxieties are the crop collected in previous harvests- so do not grieve, and lose heart.

\* \* \* \* \*

In this sacred land, people have forgotten the real source of sacredness, of holy life, of living in peace with oneself and others. Now, the time has come to remind them of it. With jewel in the neck, the wearer has been searching for it everywhere else. A person has to hold the mirror to the face. The *Vedhic* clarion call will soon ring in ears of humanity. The Person has come to remind man and to redirect him along the True path.

\* \* \* \* \*

If any one challenges you to show them one text where the principles of Sanaathana dharma (Eternal Religion) are succinctly stated tell them about the Bhagavath Geetha. It is the essence of the *Vedhas* (Scriptures, of Eternal Truths) and the *Shaasthras* and the *Puraanas*. It is like a bottle of fruit-juice obtained from a basket of fruit. It will not get dry or rot like the fruits, for the juice has been well extracted and preserved. Its taste and excellence will persist until the end of this Yuga (Age) and then it will merge in the *Vedhas*.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the forest of *samsaara* (worldly life), the body is a tree and the thoughts, feelings and imaginations of man are the branches, twigs and leaves. Worry, anxiety and fear are the monkeys that frisk among the branches. Grief in its various forms represents the insect pests that destroy the blooms. The blossoms are smiles; the owls and crows that infest it are anger, hatred, sloth and spite!

\* \* \* \* \*

The Sun never rises or sets; it appears to rise and appears to set, on account of the revolution of the earth! What happens when the Sun rises is that the *avyaktha* (invisible) becomes *vyaktha*

(visible), that is all. This series of *udhaya* (rising) and *asthamana* (setting) of Sun exist only for those who feel it and does not exist for those who deny it. The duality of appearance and non-appearance can be overcome by *jnaana*; so also, when *the jnaana-bhaaskara* (Sun of Knowledge) is known, it is experienced as shining always with undiminished lustre.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Lingam* means simply "the sign," "the symbol"; it is just a mark, which indicates merging (*laya*); that is to say, the passing away of the mind and all mental agitations and all mental pictures, which means, this objective world. *Shivaraathri* is the day on which the Moon, the presiding deity of the mind, is as near *laya* as possible and so, just a little extra effort that day leads to full success: the *saadhaka* can thereby achieve complete *Manonaashana* (destruction of the mind). The realisation is that everything is subsumed in the *Lingam* (the symbol of the Formless).

\* \* \* \* \*

God is a huge fire, and the sparks that fly out from it are the *jeevis* (individual souls); the *jeevis* are infinitesimal fractions of the same effulgence, having the same splendrous essence as their base; but, the wind of *vaasanas* (impressions left on the mind by past actions) sweeps upon the sparks and puts out the light and destroys the heat. But, the same wind cannot put out the fire, it can only feed it further and cause its splendour to shine forth in even greater measure, for, the *Sankalpa* (will) of the Lord can only add to His Glory.

\* \* \* \* \*

Just as the dreams you see are shaped by the experiences, cravings and disappointments of the waking stage, the experiences of the waking stage are the results of your previous lives. While dreaming, you do not relate the incidents and emotions to the waking stage, do you? You feel they are un-related, unique, genuine experiences, is it not? So too, you do not realise that your joy and grief, your actions, and reactions in the waking stage are all based on your past lives. But, they are so based.

\* \* \* \* \*

A great painter once came to a Prince and offered to do a fresco on the palace wall; behind him came another, who declared that he would paint on the wall opposite, whatever painting the first one drew, even if a curtain hid it from view and even if he was not told the subject of the fresco! Both were commissioned to the tasks they had accepted. The second man finished his work at the very moment, the first one announced that he had completed the task! The Prince arrived in the hall, where a thick curtain partitioned off the two artists and their paintings. He saw the fresco and admired it very much. Then he ordered that the curtain be removed, and lo, on the wall facing the fresco, there was an exact duplicate of the picture that the first man had so laboriously painted! Exact...because, what he had done was, polishing the wall and making it a fine big mirror! Make your hearts too clean and pure and smooth, so that the Glory of the Lord might be reflected therein, so that the Lord might see His own Image thereon.

\* \* \* \* \*

The players do not derive as much joy as the onlookers; so develop the attitude of the onlooker, the witness (the *dhrashta*). The batsmen, bowlers and fieldsmen do not get a fraction of the pleasure that the 'fans' beyond the boundary, derive. They note each fault and excellence in stroke and defence; they appreciate the finer points of the game. So too, to get the maximum joy

out of this game of living, one should cultivate the attitude of the onlooker, even when one has to get embroiled in the game.

\* \* \* \* \*

I will not bend before any one for anything. I am therefore un-afraid. I bend for *Prema*, I bend before Truth, that is all. Do not worry about worldly comforts and ask Me about those things as if they are all-in-all. Do not waste your precious life-time in distracting doubts about the existence of the Lord in human form, here and now. Cultivate *prema* towards all; that is the greatest service you can do to your self for, all others are but you yourself. You too should bend, only before *prema* and *sathya*, not before hatred and cruelty and falsehood.

*Sparks from discourses during Shivaraathri, March 1963*

*Man did not come here to sleep and eat; he has come to manifest, by disciplined processes, the divine in him. That is why he is called vyakthi (individual), he who makes vyaktha (clear) the Shakthi (power) that is in him---the Divine energy that motivates him. For this purpose he has come endowed with this body and the intelligence needed to control it and divert it to useful channels of activity. You must achieve this by Dharma-nishttha and Karma-nishttha--steady pursuit of morality and good deeds.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*

## 8. Devotion of the gopees

THE meaning of the *Krishna Avathaar* is beyond your understanding; why, all the *Avathaars* (Divine Incarnations) are inexplicable, in the language of this world, in the vocabulary of common men. To attempt it is to encase the ocean in a canal by its side. You can understand it only when you become lost to the world and its attachments through the expansion of your sympathies and the purification of your motives. The One God-head was experienced by the *gopees* as immanent in every being; they steadied their minds and installed Him therein. Veerabhadra Shaasthry said just now that the Lord will not stay in the heart unless it is maintained, fixed and unagitated. Of course, when you place a child in the cradle, it must be firm and unmoving; but, once the child is laid, the cradle can be swung, for it is only when it is swung to song that "I am glad and you are glad." Remember, the Lord too is a child, personified sath *chith aanandha*, devoid of *gunas* (qualities).

When Uddhava came to Gokula, Shaasthry said the cows were fat and full, the *gopees* were happy and joyful and the place was full of fragrance and music." But, the facts were different. The place was forlorn and the men and women, disconsolate and helpless; the cattle too were overcome with grief. Uddhava brought them all a fresh lease of life. Krishna told him, "Their hearts are merged in Mine; their minds think only of Me; they have forsaken even bodily needs and they exist only because they hope to see Me again, some day." So how could the *gopees* be as happy and gay as Shaasthry described Uddhava himself was humbled at the sight of their complete surrender and the pangs of separation which consumed them. That is the very reason why He sent Uddhava to them.

### **The simple gopees were wiser than yogis**

Every act of Krishna had a meaning and a purpose and a sweet aptness. The *gopees* were convinced that Krishna was the Lord. Many *yogis* and ascetics, many Raajas and Mahaaraajas among whom Krishna moved had not realised that truth. The unlearned simple cowherds and cowherdesses were wiser. When you too feel so, affected by those pangs, you can understand the *gopees*, not till then. For that pain, the message of Krishna is the antidote. "Your grief is caused by your limited artificial outlook; you take Me to be a limited bound entity and so you feel :I am far away, I am absent, I am by your side, etc. You are hugging a delusion, awake to the Truth and establish yourselves in joy."

The One does not, of its own Free Will, desire to become many. It has no desire. It has no likes and dislikes. It is immanent and transcendent. It is all this and more. What then is the reason for this manifold appearance? The reason lies in the mind of *bhaktha* (devotee). You declare. "Baaba appeared before me in this Form; I saw Baaba in this Form." But, what happens is you desire that vision. I do not change into that Form. The Lord is sugar, sweetness. You may drop it into tea or coffee or milk or water. Into whatever thing you put it, it will make it sweet. That is My nature, sweetness; My signature. Once It has melted, what remains is neither water nor sugar, but a third thing, *sherbeth* (syrup). But, when your tongue is bitter through envy, hatred and pride, how can you taste the sugar?

### **Seek God just as you seek food**

The Lord cares for the motive, not the object offered. The tiny leaf from the cooking vessel that Dhroupadhi gave Him satisfied His hunger and the hunger of the Universe, along with His---for,

she saturated it with her *bhakthi*. The *thulasi* leaf placed by Rukmini in the scale was able to balance the weight of Him who has all the 14 worlds in His belly, for, her intent added so much weight to it. The handful of flattened rice that Kuchela took to Krishna was worth less than a paisa but, it was suffused so heavily with the devotion and faith of his wife that it brought great good fortune. It is possible to fill in an atom of deed, a world of Feeling and the Lord will value and appreciate that.

Krishna is the causeless conditioning, you cannot discover the causes for His acts or deeds; it is sheer waste to search for them. If you go on searching for causes and then trying to tread the path, you may not get the chance at all. You have come as men in order to reach God, remember that. "Why do you go to Madhura-Brindaavan, to Thirupathi, to Puttaparthi?" people stop you on the way and ask. Nobody asks you "Why do you take food?" In fact, one has to seek God just as one seeks food. Both are necessary for happiness, man seeks happiness, for his originally and truly free; he is immortal and so he seeks to overcome death.

### **Everyone must rise to the level of the gopees**

Do not blame the Lord for your failure in *saadhana* (spiritual practice); examine yourself. You set the alarm clock at 6 a.m. and go to bed; if it rings only at 10 a.m. you infer that something is wrong with its nuts, bolts, springs, wheels, etc. So too, when the expected results do not materialise, infer that something is wrong in you yourself, your habits of food, drink, sleep or conduct or behaviour or attitude to others. Everyone, be he a *Brahmin* or Pandith or Student or Artist, has to adhere to a strict code of discipline. Without that, victory is beyond reach. You must become master of the senses and attain the *Mahaashthi* (Supreme Energy) from this basic *Maayashakthi* (Deluding Power). In short you too must rise to the level of the *gopees*.

The body is assigned to you as a boat to cross the ocean to *samsaara* (worldly life) but you use it for storing things which give worldly joy and do not launch it on the waters; misusing it like that, it comes in the way of, all activity that is really conducive to happiness; use it in the way of *Dharma* (righteousness) and success will be yours. Bheema asked Dharmaraaja whether, if Dhuryodhana invited him for another game of dice after the 12 years of forest and the one year of incognito were over, he would agree and he replied, "I can never deviate from the path of *Dharma*." Since that was his attitude, the Paandavas were helped by the continuous Grace of Krishna and the blessings of sages like Maarkandeya and Vedhavyaasa. The Kauravas, on the other hand, were debilitated by curse after curse from enraged sages and by one ill-omen after another.

### **Gopees are best examples of yearning for the Lord**

Your *saadhana* involves not reading or writing so much as actual experiencing. Raavana was a postmaster in the four *Vedhas* and the six *Shaasthras* (spiritual sciences); his ten heads were full of them. But, of what avail? He had no *shaanthi* (peace), nor could he give *shaanthi* to his kith and kin. What is the profit if you simply repeat, "Delicious food, delicious food" a thousand times? You have to eat, digest and assimilate. You have no deposits on your account in the Bank of *Bhagavaan's* Grace and yet you dare issue cheques, expecting His Grace when in distress! Have the deposits or, at least have some property on hand (like service to others, *prema* (love) towards all, *Ahimsa* (non-violence), etc. so that you can mortgage it and get help. If you have neither, why blame the Bank?

Through your daily avocations and activities you can realise the Lord, believe Me! The *gopees* are the best examples of this, the best proofs. Remember ever the Name of the Lord with agony of unfulfilled search and remember ever the beautiful Form with the agony of being forced to be away---and, you too can see Krishna in your midst. That yearning must be there: then, the result is certain.

### **The Lord wants sincerity, not imitation**

Prahlaadha was immersed in that *bhaava* (thought); when he was thrown downhill, trampled by the elephant and tortured by the minions of his father, he paid no heed, for he heeded only his Lord; he needed only his Lord. The *gopees* too when they listened to the *murali* (flute) lost all attachment to the world and to the senses and to the manifold objective phenomenal things; they yearned for the sublimest spiritual merging with the Infinite that was always calling on the finite, to realise its finiteness.

By the purification of impulses one gets into the higher stage, when the Mystery of the Divine is grasped--the *Saalokya* (realm of spirituality) stage. Then, by contemplation of the Divine, the *Saameepya* and the *Saaruupya* (proximity to the Divinity and likeness of the Form of Divinity) stages are won. Many great mystic poets attained this height. Jayadheva sang in that strain, but, if you sing that song in the same way, Krishna will not appear. He wants sincerity not imitation. The name uttered with sincere faith was the flower offering of the *gopees*; that was the bead of their rosary.

*Prashanthi Nilayam, March 1963*

## ***9. A drama within a drama***

THE two Pandiths who spoke have given you substantial food, but, one feels full only after drinking a glassful of water in the end; I shall provide the water now. Of course, the water drawn from the *Shaasthras* is not just water, it is nectar. The *Pandith* referred to some episodes in the Raamaayana which cause confusion and doubt. He asked why Dhasharatha chose an occasion when Bharatha was absent, to raise the question of the coronation of Raama, why the Ahalya incident was allowed to reveal the Divinity of Raama, when all along Raama is depicted as only human, why Vaali had to be killed by such a virtuous hero as Raama from behind a tree, why Kaikeyi who loved Raama even more than she loved Bharatha suddenly got so concerned about Bharatha. The fact is, doubt grows wild in the absence of faith. Faith can be established only when one grasps the inner significance of each incident and remark.

### **All must reach the goal some day or other**

Dhasharatha did not invite the king of the Kekayas for consultation along with the other leaders and princes who were called to give their opinion on the choice of Raama as the heir-apparent, for, in that case, subsequent events in furtherance of the Master Plan would have been rendered difficult. Why, Dhasharatha did not command Raama to go into exile in so many words; he only acknowledged to Kaikeyi that he had granted her two boons and that he was now helpless to back out of that grant. It was Kaikeyi who communicated the news to Raama. Silence was as good as approval and Raama had to accept silence as the command from His father. Kaikeyi had to intervene, so that the purpose of the *Avathaar* might be fulfilled. The sense of righteousness in Raama was so strong that when he heard of the dilemma in which Dhasharatha was caught, He helped him to come out of it unharmed; he insisted he would go into exile as his father had promised by implication.

The *Aathmaaraama* (Divinity) in every one prompts him to stick to truth and to the moral code; you have only to listen and obey and get saved. Some hear even its whisperings; some listen only when it protests loudly; some are deaf; some are determined not to hear. But, all have to be guided by it, sooner or later. Some may ascend a plane, others may travel by car or board a bus, some may prefer a train journey, others may like to trudge along---but, all must reach the goal, some day or other.

Sugreeva forgot his plighted word and indulged himself in the newly won revels of the court; he ignored the fact that *the jagath* (mundane world) is based not on *dhana* (wealth) but on *dharma* (virtue); so, Raama prodded the snake Anantha, to raise its angry hood and hiss furiously. That is to say, he reminded Lakshmana of the ingratitude of Sugreeva and made him furious. An ungrateful king is as worthless as an ungrateful subject.

### **Line of Grace must be won by *saadhana* alone**

The *Pandith* spoke of the death of Vaali, which gave Sugreeva the throne. But, remember, it was not Vaali alone that died. His *ajnaana* (Primal ignorance) also died with him. He saw Raama with all His divine glory, as filling the entire Universe, which is but a fraction of His personality. The anger of Raama at Sugreeva's dilatoriness is a drama within a drama; for, Raama knew that Sugreeva will set about the task of searching for Seetha, as soon as He gives the prompting.

The *avathaars* all play a drama, within the drama of this universe. You say that Raama 'wept' for Seetha; but, how can an ant judge the depth of the sea? Raama was the greatest hero in history;

he killed the 14,000 *raakshasas* led by Khara, Dhushaasana and Thrisiras, all by Himself! Every *raakshasa* beheld in every neighbouring *raakshasa* a Raama; and, full of fury, he slew the Raama and was killed in turn by his neighbour.

The *avathaara* behaves in a human way so that mankind can feel kinship, but, rises to super-human heights so that mankind can aspire to those heights. The *nara thathwa* (real nature of man) can be transformed into the *Naaraayana thathwa* (real nature of God), for both are basically the same. Only, you have to switch on to the particular wave-length. Know it, adjust correctly and the all-pervading will be grasped clearly with no distortion.

You may read the Geetha many times; but the *Geetha* ('line,' in Thelugu) of grace must be won by *saadhana*, The line of fortune that the palmists say will bring success is the result of grace alone. You may say that you are the master of the *Geethashaasthra*, that you have read and digested it, but when you belch, the taste and the flavour must be manifest! They are not evident at all. Trifles are sought after; temporary benefits pursued; joy and grief alternately tease and agitate. The sea of *samsaara* (worldly life) has to be crossed and all its Waves transcended, with the help of *Raamanaama*, If you seek to know the highest and secure the award of the Lord, there can be no place for doubt. The heart should be set on achieving *the* task of realising the Lord within you, as the motivator. The Lord comes in human form to show this.

*Prashaanthi Nilayam, 10-2-I 963*

*Falsehood looks easy and profitable; but, it binds you and pushes you into perdition.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*



## 10. True nature of Raama

DHARMA (virtue) is not a matter of time and space, to be modified and adjusted to the needs and pressures of the moment. It means a number of fundamental principles that should guide mankind, in its progress towards inner harmony and outer peace. When man strays away from *Dharma*, he meets with greater harm than even physical slavery. There is a dread now about invasion and bondage to the enemy if you are not alert enough and united enough. But the loss of *Dharma* is an even greater calamity, for what is life worth if man cannot live up to the talents he is endowed with?

These principles are called *Sanaathana* (Eternal), because their origins are not dated, their author is not identifiable; they are the revelations made in the clarified intellects of impartial sages.

They are basic and eternal. They do not represent temporary vagaries. India stood unshaken and undaunted against the onslaught of attitudes that were bred in other lands to suit the needs of limited societies, because she stuck to the *Dharma* that was laid down for all time and all men. Indian rulers also respected the rigours of *Dharma* and took the advice of the repositories of *Dharma* and the interpreters of *Dharma*, those who were purified in the crucible of *thapas*. They recognised the Ruler of Rulers, and sought His guidance by prayer and penance. They knew that their *Prabhu* (Master) was *Sarvaantharyaamin* (the Eternal Indweller or Onlooker). They were taught that He was in full sympathy, not only with the king but even with the lowliest of his subjects. Therefore, the rulers of this land were warned to care for the happiness and cure the misery of every single individual in the State.

### **The Divine is an indivisible entity**

*Dharma* is the code of conduct which will promote the ideals of each stage of man---learner, householder, earner, master, servant, *saadhaka*, *sanyaasi*, etc. When the code is distorted and man undermines his earthly career, forgetting the high purpose for which he has come, the Lord incarnates and leads him along the correct path. That is to say, He comes as Man, to restore the principles and re-establish the practice of *Dharma*. This is what is referred to as *Dharmasamsthaapana* in the Geetha. Among these Forms assumed by the Lord, there is no higher or lower, though *Pandiths* may argue who is better or greater among, say, Raama or Krishna! That is but a type of intellectual gymnastics, which gives the *Pandiths* the keen joy of a pugilistic encounter! Veerabhadhra Shaasthry has posed a similar problem now. Let me tell you at the outset that the Divine is an indivisible entity, whatever Form it may assume, here or elsewhere.

### **Raama never deviated from *Dharma***

Raama appeared as *Maayaa-maanusha-ruupa* (illusory human form); He stuck to *Dharma* in daily practice, even from His infancy. He is the personification of *Dharma*. There is no trace of *adharma* (vice) in him. His Divine Nature is revealed in *shaantha guna* (calm temperament) and *karunaa rasa* (feeling of love and affection); meditate on Him and you are filled with *Prema* for all beings; dwell on His story and you find all the agitations of your minds quietening in perfect calm. When Thaataki, the female demon, had to be killed, He argued, hesitated and desisted, until Sage Vishwaamithra convinced Him that she had to be liberated from a curse by His own arrow. That is a sign of His *Karuna Rasa*.

Raama never provoked another in order to create a convenient excuse to destroy him; on the other hand, He gave the adversary every chance to be saved, He carried the message of *Dharma* to the *Vaanaraas* and the *Raakshasas*, as well as [o sages like Jaabaali. He accepted the homage of Vibheeshana without demur and He announced that He was prepared to accept even Raavana, if only he repented his iniquity. "*Sathyam vadha*" (speak the truth), says the *Shruthi*; Raama stuck to truth, in spite of all temptations. "*Dharmam chara*" (Practise virtue), says the *Shruthi*. He never deviated from the path. For example, He had, as you know, to live 14 years in the forest, to fulfil His father's behest. So during that period, He did not enter an inhabited town or village. He avoided Kishkindha and Lanka, even when the Coronations of Sugreeva and Vibheeshana took place. Vibheeshana pleaded with Him very plaintively, saying that only a few days remained out of the 14 years, but Raama sent Lakshmana instead. He did not waver or overstep. That was the strictness with which He kept the vow.

### **Make Raama your *Aathma Raama***

Raama is *Dharmaswaruupam* (Embodiment of Virtue}; Krishna is *Premaswaruupam* (Embodiment of Love). Raama was ever aware of the obligations of *Dharma* When Dhasharatha, running after His chariot in mortal anguish, cried out, "Stop, stop" and called on Sumanthra to stop, Raama told him not to. He said, "If he chides you, tell him you did not hear him." Sumanthra was in a fix. How could He say something not true? But, Raama explained, "This order to stop the chariot comes from a grief-stricken father, whereas the order to take Me to the forest came from the King, whose minister you are. You should not hear the ravings of a man who has lost his reason through sorrow; you must listen only to the commands of the King."

Even before the advent of the *Avathaar*, the stage is set to the minutest detail; Kaikeyi is ready with her two indefinite boons, Dhasharatha is ready with the curse of the ascetic on his head, entailing upon him a death due to anguish at the separation of his son, the *Vaanaras* are ready to help the Divine Purpose. Seetha is ready risen from the earth, to provide the cause for the downfall of Evil. Just as a garland is made of flowers gathered from many plants, flowers of many hues and fragrances, so too the Garland of the Divine Story is made up of a variety of incidents, a boon, a blessing, a curse to provide the wonderful plot of His Story.

There are some who say that Raama shows man how to suffer! Well, if a king arranges a play in the palace and takes delight in enacting the role of a beggar, and acts it very realistically, do you therefore declare that he is suffering the miseries of beggary? Raama is *Aanandha* (Bliss). *Aanandha* is Raama. If it is not sweet, how can it be sugar? If Raama is suffering, He cannot be Raama. A ball of iron cannot burn the skin; but, make it red-hot; it does. That is but an assumed role. When the heat subsides it is as cool as ever.

Raama *Naama* (name) will save you, if you have at least the *Pithru Bhakthi* and *Maathru Bhakthi* (devotion to father and to mother) that Raama had. If not, *Raama Naama* is merely a movement of the lips. Meditate on the *Raama swaruupa* (Form of Raama) and the *Raama swabhaava* (the true nature of Raama), when you recite or write *Raama Naama*. That will give exercise to the mind and it will be made healthy and strong, in the spiritual sense. Make this *Dharmaswaruupa* your *Aathmaa Raama*, on this *Janmadhina* (birthday) of Raama. That is My advice anti My blessing.

*Rajahmundhry, 1-4-1963*

## 11. The Fifth Vedha

GULLAPALLI Buuchiraamayya Shaasthry spoke about the Mahaabhaaratha so well and with so much scholarship, as he has been specialising in its exposition for years. The Mahaabhaaratha is considered by many as not so conducive to *Bhakthi* as the Bhaagavatha for instance, or as the Raamaayana; but, if once you know the taste, no one will give it up or consider it as of lower value. It is called the Fifth *Vedha*, not without reason. The *Vedhas* reveal things that are beyond the reach of the intellect. The truths declared by the *Vedhas* are made practicable and simple, interesting and instructive, by means of stories and homilies in the Mahaabhaaratha.

The *Puurva Meemaamsa* (analysis of *Vedhic* statements concerning rituals) deals with the *Pravritthi maarga* (path of worldly desire) and the *Utthara Meemaamsa* with the *Nivritthi maarga* (path of renunciation). *Puurva Meemaamsa* deals with the *kaarana* (reason) and the *Utthara Meemaamsa*, with the *kaaryam* (duty), which is *jnaanam*. In the Mahaabhaaratha, both the paths are fully explained. So, it is called the Fifth *Vedha*. It is the *Vedhasaara* (essence of *Vedha*) itself. In Telugu there is a proverb, "If it is a question of listening, listen to *Bhaaritham*; if it is a question of eating, eat *gaarlu*." That is because the *Bhaaritham* gives in sweet simple style all the inspiration that a man needs for this world and for the next.

### Where there is *Dharma*, victory is assured

The *Vedha saadhana* has four pillars on which it *stands*---*Sathya*, *Dharma*, *Shaanthi* and *Prema*. They have to be practised, experienced and their combined result, namely, *Aanandha* has to be enjoyed. Krishna told the Paandavas that He did not know anything about the fateful dice game, which started the succession of calamities. "I was in Dwaaraka at the time," He said. Dwaaraka means the citadel with the nine gates or *dwaaras*, the Body itself. Krishna is the witness of everything; anything done without His approval or without being dedicated to Him will be a failure.

The five Paandava brothers are the Five *Praanas* (vital energies), symbolised in story, and with the help of the Lord, they won the battle against the forces of evil. Where there is *Dharma*, victory is assured. The Mahaabhaaratha teaches that truth. The Paandavas had many temptations placed before them to slide back into *A-dharma*;

but, they held on to the difficult path of *Dharma* and won. The status of manhood has been won after aeons of arduous struggle and to waste it in vain pursuits forgetting the *Dhivyathvam* (Divinity) which has to be manifested is indeed pitiable.

### God weighs only the feelings behind prayer

Dhroupadhi praying in distress from the Assembly Hall of the Kauravas is an instance in point. The Mahaabhaaratha proves times out of number that the Lord answers prayers that come out of faith and agony in yearning. There was a cowherd called Maaladhaasa who was determined to see the Lord, as He was described in the sacred texts he had heard expounded in the village temple by a *Pandith*. So he prayed and prayed to the "black Lord riding on the white bird" all the time his cows were pasturing in the fields. Eleven days passed; but, there was no sign of the "black Lord riding the white bird," He had forgotten to take food and drink during all those days and so, had become weak, too weak to walk or talk. At last, the Lord melted at his entreaties and presented Himself before him as an old Brahmin; but the Brahmin was not riding a white bird, nor was he black, beautifully black, as the *Pandith* had described. So, he asked the Brahmin to

come the next day at seven in the morning, so that he may bring the *Pandith* and verify whether He was the Lord Himself. The *Pandith* laughed at the whole affair and refused to take part in it; but Maaladhaasa was so importunate that he agreed.

The entire village turned out on the river bank the next day, long before seven o'clock. The Brahmin was there, exactly as he had promised and Maaladhaasa showed Him to all. But, they could not see him! They began to laugh at the cowherd's antics and threatened him with a severe beating for bringing them along as butts for his joke. Maaladhaasa could see the Brahmin clearly but no one else could. At last, he got so enraged that he walked up to the old Brahmin and gave him a whacking blow on the cheek, saying, "Why don't you show yourself to all?"

That blow changed the entire scene. Krishna appeared in resplendent robes, smiling face, captivating form and the white bird. As the astounded villagers were recovering from the amazement, the *Vimaana* (heavenly chariot), floated down from the sky and Krishna asked Maaladhaasa to sit inside it. Then, with the Lord by his side Maaladhaasa rose up and soon was out of sight.

### **Mahaabharaatha is an inspiration for all time**

The Lord always weighs only the feeling behind the prayer to satisfy and please; the Saguna form visible to the eye and cognisable by the senses, but something unapproachable by the senses (*In-dhriya-atheetha*), has to be offered. In this way, *karma* itself becomes *Upaasana*, by the addition to saturation point, of dedication. *Rathi* (attachment) is the seed; *Bhaava* (feeling) is the sapling; *Prema* (love) is the tree; *Sath-Chith-Aanandha* (Being, Awareness, Bliss) is the fruit. The *Vedhas* have *Karma*, *Upaasana* and *Jnaana* (action, devotion and knowledge) sections. The Mahaabhaaraatha teaches all three and so, for the *Vedhavriksha* (*Vedha* tree), the Bhaaraatha can be said to be the fruit.

You have heard that the Lord comes down when *Dharmaglaani* (the decline of *Dharma*) happens; well, *Vedhaglaani* (the decline of the *Vedhas*) is equivalent to the decline of *Dharma*, for *Vedha* is the very root of *Dharma*. There are five treasures which the good always try to guard, and which you should endeavour to foster---the Cow, the Brahmin, the *Vedhas*, the *Shaasthras*, and Chastity. If these are lost, then, life is lost; everything that adds value to life is lost.

### **You are your own foe and friend**

Where there is *Dharma*, there Krishna is; so, think for yourself, each one of you! How far have you deserved the Grace of the Lord? You draw Him near; you keep Him far. You entangle yourself, bind yourself, and get caught in the trap. No one is your foe except yourself. No one else is your friend; you are your only friend. The *Guru* shows you the road; you have to trudge alone, without fear or hesitation.

The Mahaabhaaraatha clearly explains the bunds which *Sanaathana Dharma* has constructed to direct the wild flocks of the senses and the emotions, into the sea, without harming the banks. *Brahmacharya* (student celibate), *Grihastha* (householder). *Vaanaprastha* (recluse in the forest), *Sanyaasa* (ascetic)---these stages of life with the restrictions and regulations prescribed for each are such bunds to guard the individual and society from the upsurge of the beast in man. Even today, the Mahaabhaaraatha can be of great help; it is an inspiration for all time, for all humanity. The battle between *Dharmakshethra* (the camp of virtue-bound noble Paandavas) and

*Kurukshethra* (the camp of the egoistic wicked Kauravas) is ever on and however strong the *Kurukshethra* might appear to be, even if it has the

*Yaadhavas* on its side, so long as the Lord is the charioteer, victory is certain for the champions of *Dharma*. Even now, when the Chinese are pressing on the frontier, the best armour for the country is *Dharma*, which will win the Grace of God. What is not possible for a people who have won that?

*Prashanthi Nilayam, 23-4-1963*

*If only men knew the path to permanent joy and peace, they will not wander distracted among the bye-lanes of sensual pleasure.*

*Just as the joy felt in dreams disappears when you wake, the joy felt in the waking stages disappears when you wake into the higher awareness, called jnaana. Use the moment while it is available, for the best of uses, the awareness of the Divine in all.*

*When you die, you must die not like a tree or a beast or a worm, but, like a Man who has realised that he is Maadhava (God). That is the consummation of all the years you spend in the human frame.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*

## 12. Shankara's Adhwaitha

*THE Ari-shadvargas* (the six enemies of Man), get a foothold in his mind, because it is filled with the darkness of *Ajnaana*. They are nocturnal birds like bats and owls that cannot tolerate light. Darkness will not flee if you throw stones at it; nor will it disappear if you lay about it with a sword, or shoot it with a gun. It will be destroyed only when a lamp is lit. Shankara taught this simple truth to many who were ignorant of this simple fact. The people of this country were lost in the pursuit of many goals, because their vision was blurred by darkness. Shankara taught them that the *Vedhas*, *Upanishaths* and *Shaasthras* had but One in view, the One-without-a-second, *Adhwaitha*.

Shankara, when quite a young boy, was one day offering *puuja* to Dhevi, the household Deity, because his father was away and he had asked him to perform worship in his absence. He placed milk before the image and prayed pathetically that She should sip the milk, as he imagined She was wont to do, when his father did the *Puuja*. He wept so sincerely that Mother melted at his walling and drank the entire quantity) Shankara had seen his father distribute the milk that was offered to the Mother, a tiny spoonful, to every member of the family; but, since the cup was emptied in one quaff by Her, nothing remained; the boy feared that he would be blamed for drinking what was the share of the others. So, he wailed again. Dhevi felt great pity at the plight of Shankara, who had taken the Image to be alive, and who had compelled Her already to manifest Herself from it. But, she did not pour milk out of Her palm, as I do; she pressed Her Maternal Breasts and filled the cup. Shankara's *Avedhana*, his anguished yearning, had succeeded in matting Dhevi respond!

### **Beginners only need image worship**

Similarly, the other day, Shri Raamamurthy, who is sitting among you here, shouted, "Swamee" in sincere faith and agony. His wife was writhing in pain, because her clothes had caught fire. She was too panic-stricken to call out My Name. But, this cry was heard by Me. I hurried to the spot, which is, as you say, 400 miles away; I crumpled the fire out, before it was too late.

Shankara worshipped images in childhood and he knew the value of *Saguna swaruupa* (God as endowed with qualities). He advised *Saguna Aaraadhana* (worship of Form) to the large majority of people, even later in his life. Little children must be taught with the help of slates and boards, on which illustrations are drawn. Temples, images and pictures are the slates and boards for the children in spiritual progress. But, if you play with a toy elephant, you cannot derive the experience of contacting the real one. The Formless can be conceived only when you have transcended Form.

### **Shankara's Adhwaitha is the Ultimate Truth**

When Shankara thought of renouncing the world (in order to get the authority to educate it), he felt that his mother's consent had to be taken for the step. So, while bathing in the Poorna river near his house, he cried out one day that a crocodile had caught his leg. It was true, for the crocodile was, as in the Gajendhramoksha story, only *Samsaara* (wordly life) called by that name, Sensual Desire, to put it in other words. When the mother came rushing to the bank of the river, he told her that the crocodile would let him off, only if he took *Sanyaasa*, became a monk! This was also true, for, renunciation, detachment, giving up worldly ties, is the means of saving

oneself from bondage. The bewildered mother agreed and the boy left home to seek his *Guru*, and through him the secret of liberation.

Shankara lived only for thirty-two years, but, during that time, he purified and consolidated the various schools of worship and brought them under the over-all care of one philosophical principle, *Adhwaitha* (non-dualism).

The *Mahaavaakyas* (the great statements on Supreme Reality) of the *Vedhas* once again began ringing in the hearts of all, with their true meaning. *Aham Brahmaasmi; Thath-thwam-asi; Prajnaanam* Brahma (I am *Brahman*, Thou art That; consciousness is *Brahman*)--all were explained in simple, convincing logic, in sweet captivating poetry. Shankara's *Adhwaitha* is the ultimate Truth and so, it is only confirmed, not shaken, by the discoveries of science or the flights of intellect. It speaks of the unity of matter and energy; of time and space, of the Universe being but *Brahman* Seen through the veil of *Maayaa*, which too is but an activity of the Primordial.

Shankara knew that *Adhwaitha* requires intense *saadhana* (spiritual effort) which will remove all trace of ego, all idea of duality, from the mind of man. So, as a preparatory discipline to the dawn of the awareness of one's real unity with the substance of the Universe, he taught the rules of *yoga* and *bhakthi* and *karma*; these, according to him, will brighten the intellect, cleanse the emotions and purify the heart. *Adhwaitha* is the awareness of the Divine, in everything, everywhere, in full measure.

Shankara suggested *sath-sanga* (good company) as the very first step in *saadhana*; the company of the wise and the good will develop into detachment and love of silence and solitude. That will promote the disappearance of *moha* (delusion), which according to Arjuna, was the fruit of listening to the Geetha. When that happens, one is established steadily in the *Thath-thwam*, the reality of this and that, the identity of this with that. Well, the recognition of that identity is the attainment of *Mukthi* (liberation).

*Prashaanthi Nilayam, Shankara Jayanthi, 28-4-1963*

### ***13. Shivam, not shavam***

GHANDIKOTA Subrahmanya Shaasthry read and offered what he called a *Navarathna Haaram*---a Garland of Nine Poetic Gems; but though I do not accept garlands, I certainly accept the devotion that gives fragrance to the garland. He said that the *Vedhas* are for the glorification of the Gods (*Dhevaanaam sthuthyartham*), that in the *Kali Yuga*, one is asked to rely more on *Naamasmarana* (repeated remembrance of God) for liberation. Why is it considered enough for the people of this Age? For, other *Saadhanas* are fraught with difficulties. They need rigorous discipline and much preliminary effort. Again, there is another advantage in *Naamasmarana*: as soon as the Name is uttered, the owner of the Name comes into view. When you think of the Form, the Name may not always accompany; you may not be able to identify. There may be more than one Name and you may be confused. But take the Name, and the Form automatically appears before the mental eye.

In Bhaarith, the discipline, to remove that attachment to the senses and to curb the mind from running after fleeting pleasures, is clearly laid down since ages; and we have the experience of many saints, recorded in the sacred literature of this land. All the activities of thought, word and deed are sublimated to this higher purpose. Man is *Shivam* (auspicious), not *shavam* (corpse); he has three eyes, which are derived from the Sun and the Moon, and from Agni.

#### **Where the Lord's Name is sung, there He sits**

The Agni eye is the internal eye, which can be opened by the discipline of the *Yoga*. The three-eyed Shiva can see the past, the present and the future. A boy of ten whom you have seen, you can recall his picture as he was when you saw him; but you can't see him as he is now or as he will be ten years hence. But, if you earn the *Thrinethra* (three eyes), capable of seeing the past, present and future, you can see all three. You become master of time and space.

The Name is enough to give you all the results of every type of *saadhana* (spiritual effort). This is accepted by all the *Shaasthras* and all the *saadhakas* (spiritual aspirants) who have left accounts of their struggle and success. Moreover, the Name is capable of being recited and meditated upon by all, equally. Of course, the Name is a limitation of the Universal; it identifies the un-identifiable, through one of its aspects. Take the *Upaadhi* (disguise) as a means of saving yourself; take it as a boat that will take you across the sea of birth and death.

When you repeat the Name, all the sweetness of the Form and its associated glory must come to memory and just as your mouth waters when you remember some sweet dish you relish, your mind must "water" when you contemplate it. Choose the Name that captivates your heart. Why run after riches when all the pleasure and satisfaction that riches can offer and even a hundred-fold, can be got by dwelling on the Name? The Lord has said that where His Name is sung, "*thathra thish-tthaami*," ("there I sit"). He establishes Himself there! He will not move from the place. So, the tongue is enough to win Him, the tongue that speaks the language of the pure mind.

The Lord is a *Kalpavriksha* (Wish-fulfilling Tree); you have to approach Him and develop attachment to Him. You must win His Grace and be ever near Him keeping back all the forces that draw you away from Him. Even if you commit some technical faults in singing about Him or in worshipping Him, it does not matter. *Bhakthi* (intense devotion) makes every error



excusable. Nectar, though poured into a brass cup, will not lose its savour or taste. Poison, even if it is poured into a cup of gold set with gems, will not lose its death-dealing property.

### **The Name persuades the Form to bend and bless**

*Bhakthi* will force the Lord to give you Himself as the gift. The Coronation Ceremony of Sree Raamachandhra and the celebrations were all over; the presentation of gifts to all important people was over. Then, Seetha remembered that Maaruthi had been forgotten. There was no one in the hall except Raama. Seetha and Maaruthi. Raama wondered what to give him: He suggested to Seetha that the gemset ring that Janaka gave him on the occasion of the marriage would be the best gift, because as He said. "Your father gave this to me. on the day he gave *you* to me; this Maaruthi gave you to me. a second time. So. I shall give him this." Maaruthi did not seem quite happy when the ring was placed in his hand. Evidently he did not appreciate the gift because it was not given in full sight of all; when all were given, he was neglected! But Maaruthi placed it near his ear as if he sought to know what sound emanated from it: he bit it with his teeth; tried to peer into its structure.

Raama asked him why, and Seetha was also anxious to know. Maaruthi said, "I am finding out whether it has the Raamanaama which I want to the exclusion of everything else." Then. Raama embraced him and said, "Maaruthi! what other gift can I give you? I shall give you Myself as the gift. Accept Me!" So, that is why he was neglected, at the time every, one else was awarded gifts! That is why wherever Maaruthi is. there Raama is bound to be-wherever Raama is, there Maaruthi is invariably present. The Name is so valuable for the *Bhaktha* (devotee). It persuades the Form to bend and bless.

### **The Name that pleases you is best for you**

Just consider this- the form changes from age to age, from one appearance to another. Raama and Krishna were different in form; even their deeds were distinct. But still, people agree when you say that both are identical. Well; tell them that Raama held aloft the Govardhanagiri, they will not accept it.

The Name has the association of all the special fragrance of the *Leela* (Divine play) and the *Mahima* (Power) and the *Upadhesha* (spiritual instruction). Each one has a special attachment to one Name out of many, suited to the temperament and the *Samskaara*, the inherited instincts and tendencies shaped in previous births.

Meera loved the Name *Giridhaari* (mountain-holder). To her, that *leela* appealed as the most significant, as the most symbolic of the Lord's glory. The name that pleases you, that arouses the sweetest and the purest love, is best for you. *Raamayathi* is Raama (the thing that pleases is Raama); *Harathi* is *Hara* (the thing that destroys *Maayaa*, is Hara or Hari).

### **Keep the Name lit on the tongue**

Suurdhaas was overwhelmed with grief, when the lovely little body who held his stick and led him along the road to Brindhaavan suddenly left him with the announcement that his name was Krishna! He ran about with both hands extended to catch Him and keep Him in his embrace, but Krishna had disappeared; then, Suurdhaas shouted, "You may run away from my clasp; but I have you in my heart. You can never run away from there." Prahlada was also like that; he had no other thought; he saw nothing else; elephant, snake, poison, fire---all were for him *Naaraayana-thathwa* (divine principle) itself. How then could they harm him?

The *Naama* is the Narasimha for the Hiranyaakshas of the mind; *the Raajasik (passionate)* and *Thaamasik (ignorant)* forces, besieging your heart are bent on your downfall. Just as they give Calcium and Vitamin tablets to cure anaemia, etc., take *Naamam* tablets to get rid of mental anaemia and other illnesses. There are some throat pastilles, which you have to carry to your mouth and whose taste you have to slowly swallow, in order to relieve cough; have the *Naamam* on your tongue and imbibe its taste slowly to get rid of the troublesome upsurge of passions and emotions. Keep the Name lit on the tongue; it will illumine your interior and also the exterior. It will cleanse your mind, as well as minds of those who hear the Name when you recite it. Keeping it on the tongue is like keeping a lamp lit on the door-step at the entrance to your house.

*Naamasmarana* is the best *saadhana*; it is the most beneficial *sath-pravarthana*. That is the *highest japam*, the most profitable *thapas*. Kuchela won the Grace of the Lord through the same means. Fill the Name with your Love, whenever you repeat it; saturate it with devotion. That is the easiest path for all of you.

*Prashaanthi Nilayam, 29-4-1963*

*A mere Five-minute inquiry will convince you that you are not the body, or the senses, the mind or the intelligence, the name or the form, but that you are the Aathma Itself, the same Aathma that appears as all this variety.*

*Once you get a glimpse of this truth, hold on to it; do not allow it to slip. Make it your permanent possession.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*

## 14. Sathyam, Shivam, Sundharam

TO EARN the Grace of God, you have to pray to the Personified Power with Name and Form; it is your yearning that decides in what form the Lord appears. You call and He answers. If you are not earnest, if you feel indifferent, and say, "Let Him come when He wills, in the Form He likes and with the Name He prefers," He will not come at all. Call on Him with anguish; He will respond.

In Raajasthan, there was a priest who worshipped the image of Baalakrishna installed in the temple, attached to the palace of Udhaipur. His name was Dhevesha. His story may not be found anywhere but since he was intimately connected with Me, I know him very well. Every night he used to "put Baalakrishna to sleep," with appropriate ritual and close the door of the shrine; but, before he came out, he would take from the head of the image, the *mallika* (jasmine) garland he had placed there in the evening and wear it himself, before proceeding home. Of course, on those days on which the Mahaaraana visited the temple, the garland had to be given to him, for wear.

One day, however, the Mahaaraana came immediately after he had worn it inside his tuft 'of hair; so, when the Ruler demanded the flower, he had to get inside the shrine and, slyly removing it from his tuft, hand it reverentially back to him. The Mahaaraana was happy that he had not missed the gift; but, was shocked to find in it a strand of gray hair! Suspecting some tricks he shouted angrily. "What! has our Balakrishna grown old and grey?" The priest, to save his skin, said "Yes, Yes." The Mahaaraana replied, "Well, I shall not disturb now; but, early tomorrow, I shall come and see if His hair has really gone grey."

Devesha had no food or sleep that night. He wept his eyes out in agony, for, he had in his fear, imposed old age and greyness on the ever-youthful Lord. Morning came and the Mahaaraana hurried to the temple to open the shrine. They both looked in and, lo, the hair was grey. The King suspected that the hair was false, planted by the priest. So he pulled and tugged at it, only to find drops of blood at the roots. God had responded to the anguished cry, the call of the agony. The Formless will assume any Form and undergo any transformation to satisfy the yearning of the devoted aspirant. The over-riding purpose is to make all *karma-jeevis* (action-oriented beings), *Brahma-jeevis* (God-filled beings).

Man must crave for the vision of God, then only is he entitled to the status of human-ness. *Maanava* (the human) must reach *Maadhava* (the Divine). He must conquer the mind. Man is the ruler of *Manas* (the mind), not its slave. Who takes the role of educator from the beginning of your life? The Mother, is it not? *Prakrithi* (Nature) is the Mother, the Feminine principle, the *Maayaa* (illusory energy). She is the great teacher. If you do not learn the lessons well, Nature punishes you, boxes you in the ear, hits you on the head. She is a stern merciless instructress; but, if you learn well, she will lead you proudly to the Presence of *Purushoththama* (the Supreme Person). Obey *Prakrithi* and be well trained by her: then, you can inherit the Glory of *Purushoththama*. If you disregard Her teaching, the Mother gets disgusted with you and the Father too will disregard your entreaties. The commands of *Prakrithi* given for your good are called, *dharma*. Have that *dharma* as the witness of all your thoughts, words and deeds. Be guided every instant by the dictates of that *Dharma*, and success will be yours.

Little children must be taught with the help of big letters scrawled on boards and slates. Temples, images and *Saligrams* (crystal stones) are the slates and boards, for children in spiritual progress. But, even if you play with a toy elephant you cannot get the experience of contacting a live

elephant, can you? The Formless God-head can be understood by you only when you have rendered yourself Formless! When you are in the world of *gunas* (qualities), you have to attach yourself only to a *Saguna* Lord (God with attributes).

Even a thief does not like being called "thief" He gets either ashamed or angry when he is called. Why? Truth is his real nature and his true nature revolts against the appellation. The *Aathma* is always *Shivam* (auspicious and holy). So it protests vehemently when the vehicle where it resides is called *amangalam* (inauspicious), *Shayam* (dead). The *Aathma* is also *Sundharam* (beauty). A U M is the *Ahamkaaram* {egoism} of *Paramaathma*; it has no *vikaaraam* (ugliness) in it. So it is always *Sundharam* (beautiful, charming, lovely). That is why when it is described as ugly, deformed, disgusting, etc., he lowers his head in shame, for something revolting to his true nature is being imputed. *Sathyam*, *Shivam*, *Sundharam* is yourself; you have not realised it because of delusion, ignorance and false inference. Get rid of these and merge in your real self.

*Excerpts from Discourses during May 1963*

*Enter from now on into a discipline of Naamasmarana, the incessant remembrance of God through the Name of the Lord. It does not need any special time or extra allotment of time; it can be done always, in the waking stage, whether you are bathing or eating, walking or sitting. All the hours now spend in gossip, in watching sports or films, in hollow conversation, can best be used for silent contemplation of the Name and Form, and splendour of the Lord.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*

## 15. Shiva Shakthi

*(Baaba was brought down the winding stairs into the Private Room on the ground floor, because He insisted on giving Darshan to the thousands of devotees who had come on that auspicious day. He had an attack of cerebral thrombosis (or tubercular meningitis?) and was in bed for eight days from the morning of Saturday, 29th June to the evening of 6th July. His left hand, leg and eye were affected; His right hand had also slight palsy; the tongue was indistinct and the face was twitching. He was placed on the Silver Chair in the Prayer Hall and His hand and leg were adjusted in proper position. As soon as He was seated, He communicated the following message which was interpreted and announced).*

THIS is not Swaami's illness; this is an illness which Swaami has taken on, in order to save some one. Swaami has no illness, nor will He get ill at any time. You must all be happy; that alone will make Swaami happy. If you grieve, Swaami will not be happy. Your joy is Swaami's food.

Then, Baaba signed to Kasturi to speak, and after his short speech was over, Baaba wanted the mike to be held before Him. He asked through it, "*Vinipisthundhaa?*" (Do you hear Me?) But, though He asked again and again, the voice was so indistinct that no one could make out what it meant. He then signed for water and when it was brought, He sprinkled a little with His shaking right hand on the stricken left hand and on His left leg. He stroked His left hand with the right. Immediately, He used *both* hands to stroke His left leg; that touch was enough to cure it. He doffed the disease in a thrice! He started to speak! It was the same musical voice.).

God is the refuge for those who have no refuge *Dhikkulenivaariki dhevude gathi*---"*For those who have no refuge, God is the refuge.*" That is exactly the reason why I had to take on the disease that one helpless *Bhaktha* was to get. He had to suffer this dire illness, as well as the four heart attacks that accompanied it; and he would not have survived it. So, according to My *Dharma* of *Bhakthasamrakshana* (protection of devotees), I had to rescue him. Of course, this is not the first time that I have taken on the illness of persons whom I wanted to save. Even in the previous *sareeram* at Shirdi, I had this responsibility The suffering that you saw was too much for this particular devotee and so, I had to save him, by Myself going through it. This is My *Leela*: My nature. It is part of the task for which I have Come: *Sishyarakshana* (protection Of disciples).

Persons who were near Me during the last week were asking Me to give them the name of the person whom I had saved. I told them that it will make them angry against that person, for Swaami they would say, "had to undergo so much of pain in order to save that one person." Then, they replied, that they would honour the person, because of the extraordinary *Bhakthi* that persuaded Swaami to run to his rescue, on Saturday morning.

### **Baaba's Identity, Mission and Advent revealed**

Some people even asked Me whether it was this person or that, giving names of those who had attacks of paralysis, especially on the left side! This is even more ludicrous, because when I save a person, I save him completely. I do not wait until he gets the disease and I do not leave in him a fraction of the disease, so that he may be identified later. It all looks so funny to Me, the guesses and surmises that you make.

Even in Shirdi, Dhadha Saheb, Nandharaam, Balawanth, all were saved by these means. Balawanth was destined to get plague, but, the bubo was taken over and the boy saved.

This is perhaps the longest period when I kept the devotees wondering and worried. That was because of the heart attacks which had to come later on the *Bhaktha*, from Which also he had to be saved. Then, there is another reason too, why the 8-day period had to be observed. Well, I shall tell you why. That means I must tell you about Myself, about something I have not disclosed so far, something which I was keeping within Myself, for the last 37 years. The time has come to announce it. This is a sacred day, and I shall tell you.

You know I declared on the very day when I decided to disclose My Identity, My Mission and My Advent, that I belonged to the *Aapasthamba Suuthra* (Code of conduct) and the *Bharadhwaaja Gothra* (lineage). This Bharadhwaaja was a great sage, who studied the *Vedhas* for full one hundred years; but, finding that the *Vedhas* were *anantha* (endless) he did *thapas* for prolonging life, and from Indhra he got two extensions of a century each. Even then, the *Vedhas* could not be completed, so, he asked Indhra again for another hundred years. Indhra showed him 3 huge mountain ranges and said, "What you have learned in 3 centuries form only 3 handfulls from out of the 3 ranges, which the *Vedhas are*. So, give up the attempt to exhaust the *Vedhas*. Do a *Yaaga* (ritual sacrifice), instead, which I shall teach you: that will give you the fruit of *Vedhic* study, full and complete."

### **The *yaaga* performed by sage Bharadhwaaja**

Bharadhwaaja decided on performing the *yaaga*; Indhra taught him how to do it; all preparations were completed. The sage wanted that Shakthi must preside and bless the *yaaga*. So he went to Kailaasa but, the time was not opportune for presenting his petition. Shiva and Shakthi were engaged in a competitive dance, trying to find out who could dance longer. Eight days passed thus, before Shakthi noticed Bharadhwaaja standing in the cold. She just cast a smile at him and danced along as before! The sage mistook the smile as a cynical refusal to notice him; so he turned his back on Kailaasa and started to descend. To his dismay, he found his left leg, hand and eye put out of action by a stroke. Shiva saw him fall; He came up to him and consoled him; Bharadhwaaja was told that Shakthi had indeed blessed him and his *yaaga*. Then, Shiva revived him and cured him, sprinkling water from the *Kamandalu*. Both Shiva and Shakthi granted the *Rishi* (sage) boons: They would both attend the *yaaga*, they said.

### **All past assurances accomplished by one incident**

After the *yaaga* was over, They were so pleased that They conferred even more boons on the sage. Shiva said that They would take human form and be born in the Bharadhwaaja *Gothra* (lineage) thrice: Shiva alone as Shirdi Sai Baaba, Shiva and Shakthi together at Puttaparthi as Sathya Sai Baaba and Shakthi alone as Prema Sai, later. Then Shiva remembered the illness that had suddenly come upon Bharadhwaaja at Kailaasa on the eighth day of the waiting in the cold on the ice. He gave another assurance. "As expiation for the neglect which Shakthi showed you at Kailaasa for 8 days, this Shakthi will suffer the stroke for 8 days, when We both take birth as Sathya Sai and, on the 8th day, I shall relieve her from all signs of the disease by sprinkling water, just as I did at Kailaasa to cure your illness."

It was the working out of this assurance that you witnessed today, just now. This had to happen, this stroke and the cure. The assurance given in the *Threthaa Yuga* had to be honoured. I may tell you now that the poor forlorn *bhaktha* who had to get the stroke which I took over, was a convenient excuse, which was utilised. You see, a railway engine is not made available to haul just one bogey; they wait until a number of bogeys are to be taken along and then, they put the engine into action. So too, the disease had to be gone through, the *Bhaktha* had to be saved, the

assurance to be carried out, the mystery had to be cleared, the Divinity had to be more clearly announced by the manifestation of this Grand Miracle. All these were accomplished by this one incident.

Let Me tell you one more thing: Nothing can impede or halt the work of this *Avathaara*. When I was upstairs all these days, some people foolishly went about saying. "It is all over with Sai Baaba" and they turned back many who were coming to Puttaparthi! Some said I was in *Samaadhi*, as if I am a *Saadhaka*! Some feared I was the victim of black magic, as if anything can affect Me! The splendour of this *Avathaara* will go increasing, day by day. Formerly when the Govardhanagiri was raised aloft by the little boy, the *gopees* and *gopaalas* realised that Krishna was the Lord. Now, it is not one Govardhanagiri, a whole range will be lifted, you will see! Have patience, have faith. Tomorrow morning, I shall give every one of you the *Namaskaaram* blessing that you missed today.

*Gurupournami Day, 6-7-1963*

*To discover one's reality and to dwell in that Divine peace, one need not give up the world and take to asceticism.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*

## ***16. Protection of the devotees***

YESTERDAY, when I came into the Hall, I could see the agony you all felt. That was because you identified Me with this body, that was having the illness. If you had known My truth, you would not have been sad; in fact, if you had known your Truth, that would be enough. The illness came and went; I was its master, throughout. One day, when it reached its climax, I was watching its behaviour and directing it to finish its *Dharma*. For I had taken it on Myself and so, I must allow it to do its *Dharma*! All kinds of silly stories were circulated when I was ill! Some people feared that when I went to the South recently, some black magic was inflicted upon Me and that the stroke was the consequence. Let Me tell you that nothing evil can affect Me. Nothing can harm Me. I am the Master, the *Shakthi* (Power) that overpowers everything else.

I knew that short explanation: some people were saying that I was in *Mounam* or *Samaadhi* (silence or a state of concentration in *Yoga*). Now why should I keep the vow of silence? If I am silent, how can I carry out My Task of reforming you and making you all realise the aim of life? And, why should I seek *Samaadhi*, I who am the *Aanandhaswaruupa*, the *Premaswaruupa* (Embodiment of Bliss and of Love) Myself. It is the wavering doubter, the ignorance dabbler, who will lend his ear to such talk. The true *bhaktha* will discard all such news. For the *bhakthas* here, the 8 days were days of intense *thapas*; they had no other thought than of Swaami.

### **To think low or mean is also egoism**

Once, Krishna too pretended to be suffering from headache, intense, unbearable headache! He acted that role quite as realistically, as I did last week. He wound warm clothes around His head, rolled restlessly in bed. His eyes were red and He was in evident distress. The face too appeared swollen and pale. Rukmini, Sathyabhaama and the other queens rushed about with all kinds of remedies and palliatives. But they were ineffective. At last, they consulted Naaradha and he went into the sick room to consult Krishna Himself and find out which drug would cure Him.

Krishna directed him to bring---What do you think the drug was?---the dust of the feet of a true *Bhaktha*! In a trice, Naaradha manifested himself in the presence of some celebrated *bhakthas* of the Lord; but, they were too humble to offer the dust of their feet to be used by their Lord as a drug!

That Is also a kind of egoism. "I am low, mean, small, useless, poor, sinful, inferior"---such feelings also are egoistic; when the ego goes, you do not feel either superior or inferior. No one would give the dust wanted by the Lord; they were too worthless, they declared. Naaradha came back disappointed to the sickbed. Then, Krishna asked him, "Did you try Brindhaavana where the *Gopees* live?" The Queens laughed at the suggestion and even Naaradha asked in dismay, "What do they know of *bhakthi* (devotion)?" Still, the sage had to hurry thither.

### **Do *karma* which is approved by higher wisdom**

When the *gopees* heard Krishna was ill and that the dust of their feet might cure Him, without a second thought they shook the dust off their feet and filled his hands with the same. By the time Naaradha reached Dhwaaraka, the head-ache had gone. It was just a five-day drama, to teach that self-condemnation is also egoism and that the Lord's command must be obeyed without demur, by all *Bhakthas*.

When I said that I had taken on the illness that was destined for some one who could not have suffered it or survived it, many of you felt, "Why should Swami, for the sake of a single person,



plunge so many of us in grief?." Well! Did not Raama proceed to the forest though all Ayodhya wept? My *Dharma* of *Bhaktharakshana* (protection of devotees) must be carried out; the *Dharma* of the disease must also be worked out. Krishna could have stopped the rains, however powerful Indhra was; but, Indhra had to do his *Dharma* and by lifting Govardhanagiri to protect the cows and cowherds, Krishna manifested His Divinity!

In this case also, it is the same *Leela* (Divine sportive act). Using the chance to demonstrate to a doubting world the Divinity inherent in this Human Form. I told you yesterday that even this lucky *bhaktha* was just an instrument to work out the promise made in the past to the Sage Bharadhwaaja; it served to announce My real Nature to you all. You are indeed fortunate that you could witness on the sacred Guru *Pournami Day* this magnificent proof of My Divinity.

### ***Karma of a higher order leads to jnaana***

There is no *Sathyam* (Truth), without *Shivam* (Goodness); there is no *Shivam*, without *Sundharam* (Beauty). Truth alone can confer *Mangalam* (Auspiciousness) and *Mangalam* alone is the real beauty. Truth is beauty; Joy is beauty; falsehood and grief are ugly, because they are unnatural. *Buddhi, chittham and hrudhayam* (intellect, sub-conscious mind: !and heart)---these are the three centres in the individual where reside *jnaana, karma* and *bhakthi*). The effulgence of *Sathyam* will reveal *Shivam*; do *karma* (action) which is approved by the higher wisdom, not *karma* which is born of ignorance. Then, all *karma* will be *Shivam* (auspicious, beneficial, blessed). The experience of *that Shivam* is what is called *Sundharam*; for it confers real *Aanandha*. That is my Reality. That is why My Life is named "Sathyam Shivam Sundharam."

Do *karma* based on *jnaana*, the *jnaana* that all is One. Let the *karma* be suffused with *bhakthi*; that is to say, humility, *prema, karuna* and *ahimsa* (love, compassion, non-violence). Let *bhakthi* be filled with *jnaana*; otherwise, it will be as light as a balloon, which drifts along any current of air, or gust of wind. Mere *jnaana* will make the heart dry; *bhakthi* makes it soft with sympathy and *karma* gives the hands something to do, something which will sanctify every one of the minutes that have fallen to your lot to live here.

This is why *bhakthi* is referred to as *upaasana*, dwelling near, feeling the Presence, sharing the sweetness of Divinity. The yearning for *upaasana* prompts you to go on pilgrimages, to construct and renovate temples, to consecrate images. The sixteen items of *Upachaara* (honouring) with which the Lord is worshipped satisfy the mind which craves for personal contact with the Supreme. All this is *karma* of a high order; they lead to *jnaana*. First, you start with the idea, "I am in the Light;" then the feeling "the light is in me" becomes established. This leads to the conviction, "I am the Light." That is the supreme wisdom.

See yourself in all; love all as yourself. A dog caught in a room whose walls are mirrors sees in all the myriad reflections, not itself but rivals, competitors, other dogs which must be barked at. So, it tires itself out by jumping on this reflection and that, and when the images also jump, it becomes mad with fury. The wise man, however, sees himself everywhere and is at peace: he is happy that there are so many reflections of himself all around him. That is the attitude you must learn to possess, that will save you from needles bother.

*Prashanthi Nilayam, 7-7-1963*

## ***17. Lakshya puuja***

THOUGH there is no particular reason for this evening's gathering, Kompella Subbaraaya Shaasthry tried to discover one and he concluded his speech with a reference to the *Varalakshmi Puuja* that is generally done in Hindu homes today! This search for 'causes' is another of the delusions that pester man; he is out to seek the cause of every thing and in that confusion, he forgets to derive the full benefit of the result which is before him.

Shaasthry quoted from the *Soundharyalahari* to explain the meaning of *Shiva-Shakthi*, probably moved by the incidents of the last *Guru Pournami* Day. *Shiva-Shakthi* is the conjunction of *jada* (insentient or inert) and *chith* (awareness), the conjunction of the wire with the current, which activates all the instruments---fan, stove, bulb and radio. *Shiva-Shakthi* is in all, not only in Me; there is only the difference in power and capacity to manifest. The fire-fly has some power of illumination; it also emits light. We have oil lamp, the electric bulb, the petromax lamp, the Moon, the Sun--all emanate light; that is the common quality.

Like that, both good and evil have the right to exist. The evil has to be used for the purpose for which it is suited. The skin of the orange is not sweet; but it helps to protect the sweetness within. The bitter green skin of the unripe orange protects the fruits during the ripening period. The skin too gradually takes on some of the sweetness and flavour of the ripening orange; so too, evil has to be slowly transformed into good by the subtle influence of association.

### **Purpose and rationale of Nature around us**

The *indhriyas* may be used for the purpose of increasing spiritual *Aanandham* (bliss). When fruit-juice is poured into a cup, the cup does not know its taste; if you hold it in the palm, you do not get the taste. You have to drink it with the straw, the senses; then *buddhi* (intellect); then the tongue experiences the sweetness. The fruit juice is *prakrithi* (the Nature) around us. Taste its sweetness, namely, the Divinity that is immanent in it; that is the purpose and rationale. *Prakrithi* is just the *leela* of the Lord, set before you so that you may become aware of his Glory, His splendour.

If the mind obeys the dictates of *buddhi*, then, the individual gains. If the orders from Delhi are obeyed by every State, then the country gains in strength and unity. But, if the mind becomes the slave of the senses, then woe be to the individual. When the mind thus follows the outwardbound senses and forgets the Reality, when the individual revels in the dream-world of false fantasy, this *Shivathaayi* (Divine mother) pats the child and wakes it. There is then no more need to tell them anything else. When awake, the truth will stand revealed.

Your right is to realize *Vishwaswaruupa* (cosmic nature); so, don't play about forever in the *dehabhaava* (thought of the body), the consciousness that you are just this five-foot body; transcend the attachment to the family, the home, the village, the community, the district, the state, the nation. You must acquire not the independence denoted by the political fact of *Swaraajya*, but the freedom of the spirit called *Swaraajya* (dominion over oneself).

### **All different conceptions of God are valid**

The cry of equality now being used as a slogan is a vain and meaningless cry; for, how can men, inheriting a multiplicity of impulses, skills, quail-ties, tendencies, attitudes, and even diseases from their ancestors and from their past be all of the same stamp? And in spite of all this advertisement for the supposed equality, you find more misunderstandings and factions now than

at any previous period of history. Those who promote inequality are those who most loudly proclaim this modern doctrine of equality.

Each person has a different conception of God and of goodness, according to his upbringing and the state of purification of his impulses. All such conceptions are valid; when water is let into the fields, you will find sheets of different shapes---circular, rectangular, oval, square, according to the shape of the fields. The fertility or the quantity of the crops harvested do not vary according to the geometrical correctness of the shapes. How far, how fast you have established attachment to the Lord, that is the test. The rest does not matter.

*Bhagavath prema* (steady Love of the Lord) is like a mosquito curtain; it will keep out the disease-carrying *moha* and *madha* (delusion and pride), *kaama* and *krodha* (lust and anger), *lobha* and *maathsarya* (greed and jealousy). Develop faith, so that you may love without doubt. The "illness" that ended on *Guru Pournami* first shook the faith of many, but, later, confirmed the shaken faith. That is not as good as keeping faith unshaken, whatever may happen. How can the nose that falls down when you merely cough, be firm when you sneeze?

Shankara harmonised the various schools and sects I had to do My *Dharma* (divine duty), and every act of Mine has its significance, which you cannot understand. You are in the dark and so, you fear more. You cannot notice the heaps of earth and the pits on the road. You cannot even know that the road is smooth and fine. There is no fault or partiality in creation-be confirmed in that. Then you will no more waver in your faith. If God's Creation itself was faulty, all would have suffered equally! Now, each person has a different version to give, if you ask him whether he is happy and why. The same person speaks differently at different times about the acts of the Lord. So, the fault lies in you, the excellence that you praise is in you. You see yourself in the outside world; what you like or dislike is your own self!.

### **Wealth accrues by fair means as well as foul**

Shankaraachaarya declared, "*Brahma Sathyam; Jagath mithya*"---*Brahman* alone is Real; the world is false. But he did not therefore discard the world as beneath notice. He continued the work of Kumarila Bhatta, harmonised the various schools and sects of those days, established *Mutts* (Missions) for the propagation of the *Adhwaita* (non-dual) doctrine in the four corners of India, Bhadrinath, Sringeri, Puri and Dwaaraka and then left. "*Brahma Sathyam, Jagath mithya*" is the essence of the *Shruthis* (holy scriptures). That truth can be cognised by minds trained through *Dwaithic* (dualistic) worship of the personal God, and *Visishtadhwaithik* emphasis of the *jeevi* as the limb of the Absolute. One batch of students after while should be passing out of a college while batch after batch is joining the first year class. So too more and more people must take up *Bhakthi-Karma* (devotional activity) and slowly ascend to the stage of full *Jnaana* (knowledge of the Supreme); then only can humanity achieve the Goal. With this idea Shankara established the *Mutts*.

A man lost in the jungle was asked to move on in a certain direction; then, after some time, he saw a village; now, that village did not emerge for his sake, just then. He saw what was already there, that is all. So also, *Adhwaita* shows you the way to something that is already there, but which you did not recognise so far---namely, your being the unlimited, illimitable *Brahman*.

Well; just a word about the *Varalakshmi Vratam*, which Subbaraaya Shaasthry mentioned. Let Me tell you frankly, I do not like this *Lakshmi Puuja*, which people do, expecting to grow rich and accumulate wealth. They even speak of *Dhanalakshmi* and have special *Sthothrams* (sacred

prayers) to propitiate Her. *Lakshmi* (wealth) accrues by fair means as well as foul; money is earned by gambling, by various forms of deceit, by highway robbery itself, by high and low, by all and sundry. Worship *Lakshya*, I shall appreciate you! Keep the *lakshya* (the Goal) of expanding your love till it embraces all beings, till it sees every being as your own self---keep it ever steady before your mind's eye; then, *Lakshmi* will, of her own accord, favour you to the extent necessary for realising the Goal. Never doubt that. Never falter.

*Prashaanthi Nilayam, 2-8-1963*

*Life is a battlefield, a Dharmak-sethra, where duties and desires are always in conflict. Smother the fiery fumes of desire, of hatred and anger that rise up in your hearts, it is sheer cowardice to yield to these enemies that turn you into beasts. When obstacles come, meet them with courage. They harden you, make you tough.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*

## ***18. The love of the gopees***

KOMPELLA Subbaraaya Shaasthry spoke about the coming on earth of the incarnation of Krishna and read extracts from the Bhaagavatha describing the antecedents of the birth. All of you enjoyed listening to him, though many of you are listening to the story for the hundredth time; the story of the Lord does not lose its sweetness when repeated, *Jnaana*, *yoga* and *karma* (knowledge of Supreme Self, meditation and selfless action) are, each one of them, hard to go through, but like chutney, which is salt, chilly and tamarind in the right proportion ground to a paste, *bhakthi* which is *jnaana*, *yoga* and *karma* in the correct proportion, is bound to be appetising to all tongues.

The Grace of the Lord is a subject dear to every one. It is a subject that is within the grasp of all. The Lord also can be addressed by any Name that tastes sweet to your tongue or pictured in any form that appeals to your sense of wonder and awe. You can sing of Him as Muruga, Ganapathi, Shaaradha, Jesus, Maithreyi, Shakthi, or you can call on Allah or the Formless, or the Master of all Forms. It makes no difference at all. He is *Sarvanaama* and *Sarvaswaruupa* (all names and all forms). He is the beginning, the middle and the end; the basis, the substance and the source. So, any story that brings into your consciousness, His Glory, His Grace and His Beauty must perform appeal to you.

### **Every thought sets up a function, agitating all around**

Believe Me, all *Vriththis* (mental modes or functions) are *A-nithya* (impermanent). A *vriththi* is a circle, like the circle that emanates from the place where a stone falls into the still water of a lake. The water gets agitated and the circle affects the water up to the farthest end. Every thought acts like the stone on the stillness of the mind; it Sets up a *Vriththi*. It agitates all round. The *Pravritthi maarga* (path of attachment) multiplies these circular waves and seeks to create further and wider agitations. But, the *Nivritthi maarga* (path of detachment) aims at Stilling the waters. No agitation at all. Preserve the calmness, even the level. Keep the agitating thoughts away.

Concentration on the Name and Form of Krishna tends to calm the waves of *Vriththi*. When E.M. Forster came to India, he was for some time with the Thakore of Rajkot and when he found the Thakore-engaged in *dhyaanam* (meditation) before the image of *Raadha-Shyaam*, he wondered at first what it was all for! The Thakore had no wants to fulfil. What could he pray for? One day, he asked the Thakore, "Why?" He replied that Krishna was for him the embodiment of *Prema*, *Soundharya* and *Aanandham* (Love, Beauty and Bliss), and so, when he meditated on that Form he was filled with love, beauty and joy. The senses, intellect and emotions, all get purified and clarified by dwelling on the pure and the splendid. Forster was induced to try the first steps and though he found it rather difficult at first, the thrill engendered by the strange calm egged him on to persist. He found *dhyaanam*, good and useful.

### **Krishna's pranks reveal His divine essence**

Krishna was only a few weeks old, when a certain ascetic came into the house of Nandha; Yasodha was having the baby in her lap. Of course this is an incident not found in any book- I have Myself to tell you this. The maids ran in, for, they were afraid the child might start weeping at the sight of the uncouth individual. He walked in nevertheless, and Yasodha found that when he was sent away, the baby raised a cry; not when he was approaching! The Muni also

announced himself as having come to see *Krishna Paramaathma* (Krishna, the Supreme Self), a name that was new to the entire family. No wonder, the baby cried when that distinguished visitor was asked to go! Devaki had been given the vision of Krishna being the Lord Himself, but, this Muni had discovered the arrival of the *Avathaar*, by the Grace of the Almighty. It was Baaba who. had invited the Muni for His *dharshan*.

The replies that Krishna gave when the *Gopees* complained to His mother about His mischievous pranks and thefts of milk, butter, etc., also reveal, by the inner meaning they convey, the divine essence that He was.

"Why did you drink the milk from the pot she was carrying?."

"She was taking it to be offered to God, perhaps, God might have drunk it up."

"Where had you run away?"

"I was always with you, is it not?"

"Why do you hold that butter pot in your clasp?"

"So that others may not eat it!"

"Why do you put your hand into that butter pot?"

"I am looking for a lost calf."

These were the types of answers He taught them with. He was the Ancient One, in the new garb. His words came from the beginning of Time.

### **Raadha's *prema* was pure without egoism**

The *Raadha-thathwam* (principle) is also a deep, inscrutable one. She was ever in the contemplation of the Lord and His Glory. She too saw the child Krishna as the Divine manifestation, separate from the human form. Yasodha one day was searching for Krishna who had strayed away; she sought almost everywhere and at last, she went to the house of Raadha. Raadha just closed her eyes and meditated on Krishna for a while and when she called "Krishna," Krishna was there. Then, Yasodha shed tears of joy. She said, "I love Krishna as a mother; I have a sense of egoism in me that He is my son and that I must save Him from harm and seek to give Him guidance and protection. Your *prema* is pure; it has no egoism prompting it."

The *gopees* had that one-pointed *prema* (love), unwavering, clear and pure. The relationship between the *gopees* and Krishna as depicted in the Bhaagavatha has been unfortunately judged by persons who have not regulated and controlled their *Vriththis*. This subject is beyond the comprehension of such people. Only *Brahmachaarins* (celibates) of the most ardent and ascetic type like Shukha Maharishi who described it to King Pareekshith and in recent years, Raamakrishna Paramahansa, can appreciate that relationship and pronounce upon its uniqueness. All the rest are apt to see in it only the reflection of their own failings and their own feelings. The language of *samsaara* (worldly life) is the only language they know; the regions of *Thuriya*---beyond the regions of wakefulness, dream and deep sleep---to which those experiences relate, are not within their reach. So, they drag the subject down to their own level and claim that they have mastered their mystery.

### **Every Godward step makes you shed all attachment**

As a matter of fact, the Inner Eye, the Inner Senses are needed to grasp the meaning of this relationship. Oruganti has shown that it has eluded the grasp of most interpreters, for it is closely allied to the *Adhwaithik* experience of *Nirvikalpa Samaadhi* (the superconscious state where there is no mind) itself. The mind has to be the master, not the slave, of the senses, if the interpretation has to be just. Thoughts, wishes, deeds and feelings---all have to be purified of the desire for gain. *Ahamkaara* (egoism) itself must lose all its hold on the interpreter, as it did on the *gopees*. *Prema* towards the Lord such as the *gopees* had, should make a man strong, not weak. In fact, the *gopees* were not weakened by their Love; they were rendered tough. Raamakrishna too exhorted his disciples, like Narendhranaath, to grow strong, with the cultivation of *prema* towards the Lord.

Every step taken towards the Lord makes you shed bit by bit all attachment to the world. How then could the *gopees* retain their physical awareness? Dhruva went into the forest to get from the Lord the boon of sitting on the lap of his father, a very ordinary wish of a plainly earthly type. But as he advanced in *thapas*, that wish disappeared from his mind and his mind was elevated to great spiritual heights. How can one who has tasted *amritha* (nectar) be eager to taste water? Or, crave for tamarind fruits after tasting *kharjur* (dates) and having it in his possession? Every craving will be sublimated into the higher realms of pure consciousness, the moment one enters the spiritual field.

### **The gods came to the world as gopees**

And then who are these *gopees*, according to the Bhaagavatha itself?. They are the demi-gods who wanted to share in the glory of the *Avathaar* and who came down to the world as witnesses and sharers in the Divine *leela* (cosmic sport). They came for a purpose; they are not ordinary village folk, who could be dismissed as a crowd of voluptuous women. They saw in every gesture and gait, every word and phrase of Krishna the Divine, not the human at all. They had no occasion or chance to be agitated by a secular *vriththi* (thought wave); all *vriththis* were awakened by Divine promptings and urges. Like the magnifying glass which catches the rays of the Sun and directs them all to one spot, thus concentrating the heat on one point and helping it to ignite, the hearts of the *gopees* collected all the *vriththis* and concentrated them and caused the illumination and the flame. The flame burnt all dross; the illumination revealed the Truth. All other interpretations are to be laid at the door of either ignorance or scholasticism, the pompous pride of mere book learning, which scorns the exercise of discipline.

### **Meaning of Krishna's theft of butter**

Krishna is condemned as a thief who stole butter from the cowherd maidens; but, the butter represents the *bhakthi* of the heart that is got after the process of churning. It is a question of a symbol being taken as literally true. He is *Chiththachor* (the stealer of hearts). The thief steals at night, in the darkness, without awakening the master; but, when this thief steals, the master awakens; He wakes him and tells him that He has come. The victim is left supremely happy and satisfied.

Every *gopee* had the highest type of *bhakthi* in her heart. They saw only Krishna wherever they turned; they wore on their foreheads blue *kumkum*, in order to remind themselves of Krishna. There were many husbands who protested against the colour of the *kumkum*, but they dared not wipe it off, lest harm should befall them and the sacrilege recoil on them alone. [Here Baaba

who had filled his hand with petals of *Mallika* (jasmine) flowers pulled apart by Him from garlands given to Him, showered the petals from one palm to another and they fell in a cascade of blue gems. Even the gems they preferred were of this type, blue, like Krishna. He showed the astounded gathering the gems He was referring to. Each gem had Krishna's form in it, beautifully clear. ]

### **Do not have pride in your attachment to God**

There was a *gopee* named Suguna. One day, when Krishna was with Sathyabhaama, He pretended to have severe stomach ache and in spite of all the remedies that she tried she could not afford relief. Of course, it was all acting, superb acting such as the paralytic stroke I had for a week previous to *Guru Pournami* recently! Even Rukmini was not admitted into the house by her to inquire about Krishna's health. But, Rukmini found Suguna pining outside the door in great agony at the illness of the Lord. She gave her the articles and asked her to go in. Krishna welcomed Suguna and made her sit at His Feet and ate the fruits she had picked up from Sathyabhaama's own garden and suddenly, the ache had gone. It was her agony at the Lord's condition, her simple sincere devotion that was so effective.

There should be no artificiality in your attachment to the Lord, no affectation, no pride, no egoism left, to soil the freshness of the flower you offer. Sathyabhaama protested when Krishna accepted the fruits, for, Krishna had brushed them aside as tasteless when she had herself offered them as the precious product of her assiduous gardening effort. They were tasteless, since her pride had entered into them now. When the simple rustic *gopee* picked them from the ground and saturated them with her devotion, they became tasty and attractive for the Lord, who cares for the *bhaava* (inner feeling), not the *baahya* (outer show)!

The only *prema* that will not allow pride and envy to interfere with its purity is *prema* towards God. I know that many of you, who know that I have been taking only a cup of buttermilk daily for the last two months, are genuinely grief-stricken, though I have been talking to you that no work of Mine has been stopped or delayed as a result of what they call My "reduced intake of food;" that is a sign of their *prema* but really, I live on your *Aanandham*, not on this material food at all. I wish that you realised this and stopped worrying or weeping.

*Prashanthi Nilayam, Krishna Janmaashtami,*

*12-8-1963*

*Remember always that it is easy to do what is pleasant; but it is difficult to be engaged in what is beneficial. Not all that is pleasant is profitable.*

*Success comes to those who give up the path strewn with roses, and brave the hammer-blows and sword-thrusts of the path fraught with danger.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*



## ***19. Vamsi Kunj***

HERE was an occasion when Krishna laid His flute aside and declared that He would not play on it again. It is a long story, not found in books; I alone must tell you about it, for it is only the Person who has experienced it that can describe it, A bride called Neeraja came to Gokulam as the daughter-in-law of a *Gopa* family. Her husband and parents-in-law warned her against Krishna and His pranks and threatened her, on pain of dire punishment, to keep away from Him and to avoid Him by every possible means.

It was Govardhana *puuja* (worship) day and all the *gopas* and *gopikas* had to go beyond the village limits to circumambulate and worship the Govardhan Hill, a festival they celebrated every year. Neeraja too went with the others and in spite of the severest warning, she peeped into a crowd of enthusiastic *gopees* watching the dance of Raadha with Krishna, in a flower bower near the Hill. She was so captivated by the Divine Presence that she was no longer the same person.

Another day, while on the Yamuna bank, she saw Krishna fashioning a Flute from a reed taken out of *vamsi kunj* (bamboo bower) and she heard Him play!: Oh, it was overwhelmingly ecstatic! It was a call to transcend the material bonds to free oneself from the trammels of earthly endeavours. Neeraja did not care for any one now. She became God-mad. In fact, she was the first to hold the reins of Akrura's chariot when he was taking Krishna to Mathura away from Gokulam, and try to push the vehicle back!

### **Krishna responds to the call of yearning**

Well; she was driven out of her house by the mother-in-law for that. She was an outcast. The whole village rose up against her; she spent her days in the *vamsi kunj*, her whole mind fixed on the Lord whom she had installed there. Years passed. Nandha, Yasodha and Raadha left the world. She was now 52 years old. One day, she prayed desperately to Krishna: I can no longer bear this forlorn life. My eyes have gone dry, they have no more tears to keep this Love, green. My heart too is fast turning a wasteland. Come, O Lord, come and save me, take me unto yourself. Krishna heard the prayer.

He responded to her yearning and called her by name, so sweetly that the very Voice filled her with new life. The *vamsi kunj* was flagrant with Divine glory. Krishna came near and took Neeraja's palm In His Hand. "What do you desire?" asked He. She asked "What is the purpose of life?" "To merge In God." "Well let me merge in You...but, before that, before my *Prema* merges in yours, let me hear you play on that flute for a short while." Krishna smiled and gave the excuse that He had not brought His flute. But, seeing Neeraja's yearning, He plucked a reed from the *vamsi kunj* and broke it right and in a trice converted it into a flute. With Neeraja on his lap, Krishna played so melodiously on the Flute that the entire Gokula and even the whole world, was bathed in ecstatic joy. When He stopped, Neeraja had attained final beatitude and was no longer a limited individual *gopee* separate from Him.

Krishna laid aside His flute and said, He will not play on it again. That is the story of one *gopee*; the story of every *gopee* will be interesting, each in its own way, for they were all so transmuted by the *Bhakthi* they bore towards the Lord. The *gopees* were declared by Naaradha in the *Bhakthi Suuthras* (aphorisms on devotion) to be the greatest among the *bhakthas* (devotees).

*Gokulaashtami day, 12-8-1963*

*In your daily affairs, do not create factions, or revel in hatred. See the good in others and the faults in yourselves. Revere others as having God installed in them; revere yourself also as the seat of God. Make your heart pure so He can reside therein.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*

## 20. *Su-dharshana*

LAST evening, when you heard about the *Krishnaavathaara* (Incarnation as Krishna), your hearts were filled with joy, which overflowed through the eyes, as I could see. Your minds too were purified by that experience. The Avathaara had, come in order to guard the world and to strengthen dharma (righteousness) as the means of guarding it. Books that contain the Lord's words and great men who know them declare that the Lord assume HumanForm in order to carry out these purposes. The story of Kuchela tells how one has to meditate on Him to worship Him and to honour Him. Kuchela knew what exactly had to be given to the Lord; the Lord cares for the feeling that accompanies the gift, the attitude with which the offering is made; He is not moved by the quantity or the cost. Dhroupadhi offered a tiny piece of leaf sticking to the side of the vessel in which she had cooked the meal and the Lord was so fully fed that He said. He was freed from all hunger. Rukmini placed just, a Single *Thulasi* (basil) leaf on the scale, but, since she had saturated it 'with her devotion, it weighed as much as Krishna Himself. Kuchela took a little "beaten rice" and the Lord ate it with relish and was highly pleased at the offering so full of *bhakthi*.

### **Have the goal of *Saayujya* always in View**

A piece of paper that is white tough and clean, is not as valuable as another piece of equal size, which though Soiled and dirty, has upon it the imprint of the Reserve Bank making it a hundred-rupee note. The imprint of *bhakthi* makes the "beaten rice" precious. Give the Lord the fruit, *prema*, that grows on the tree of life. Develop the illumination of *prema* and the bats of grief, envy and egoism will fly away into the darkness.

You must have the goal of *Saayujya* (merging in the Absolute) always in view; do not give it up or forget it. Be like the river that flows slowly to tile sea. A person who has purchased a ticket to Calcutta from Madras, because that is the place he wants to reach, Will not halt at any other place on the journey; lie has the destination always in view. Of course, he may be interested in the sights and scenes on the way; he might get down here and there for refreshments but, he will not seek a home anywhere, in between *Saalokyo*, *Saameepya*, *Saaruupya* (being in the same place, nearness to the master and likeness of the Form of Master) may come in between; in fact, they do. But, you should not be satisfied with those stages. They are intermediate stations, remember. You have to reach each and travel beyond.

In this Kuchela episode, the wife of Kuchela plays a more important role than Kuchela himself. She has much more *bhakthi*; in fact, women are more devotional than men. They can master their minds better. It was her maternal love that prompted her to send Kuchela to the Lord so that her children might get a full meal. She had faith in the Lord. Kuchela hesitated and argued that Krishna might not recognise him or remember him or invite him in or accept his homage.

### **Fear of God should be absent in a genuine *bhaktha***

Kuchela is described in the Bhaagavatha as constantly engaged in the meditation on God. But, then, how can his doubt be explained? She urged him to give up all doubt and proceed at least as far as the gate of the Palace of Krishna. She was certain that Krishna would call him in, if he took at least that little trouble. Of course, fire warms all, but one has to go near it, is it not? Staying away, you cannot complain that the fire is not warming you. Kuchela was so nervous that he could be persuaded to go only up to tile gate.

Once it was decided that Kuchela would go, she took from the place where she had hidden it for a rainy day, a quantity of paddy, just a handful; she put it in boiling water, took it out and dried it and, then, frying it over the fire, she pounded it with a pestle to prepare the "beaten rice" that Kuchela said was Krishna's favourite food, while at school. Thai was tied to a corner of the cloth worn over the body and he moved on, his fear increasing at every step. Such fear should be absent in the genuine *bhaktha*. He must approach the Lord as of right and earn the Grace that is his clue.

Of course, the Lord showers his mercy on the *Aartha* (distressed person) and the *Artharthi* (one who longs for wealth), as well as on the *jijnaasu* (seeker of spiritual knowledge) and the *jnaani* (liberated person). The *aartha* is the person who is ill and suffering; the *artharthi* is the poverty-stricken who seeks prosperity and fortune. So, Krishna called him in, with overwhelming joy, and reminded him of the happy days at school which they had spent together at the *Guru's* Feet, and even while Kuchela was squirming to hide the common-place offering tied to the corner of his tattered cloth, Krishna sought out the stuff and began eating it with great relish. *Bhakthi* had made it very tasty to the Lord.

### **The Lord can transform poverty to wealth**

It is related that Rukmini Devi held His hand when He took the third handful and the reason given usually by commentators is that she was afraid all the riches of the Lord would go over to Kuchela if a few more handfuls were taken in by the Lord! What a silly idea! As if the riches of the Lord are exhaustible, as if He would care if *bhakthas* carried all of it away, as if the Mother of the Universe is stingy in Her Gifts. This can never be true! The real cause for Her holding the hand of Krishna was- She claimed Her share of the offering of the devoted heart; She wanted a portion for Herself; it was Her right to have a share.

Kuchela left Dhwaaraka rather disappointed because he was not given any donation or promise of a donation. He was sad when he remembered his family and the starving children. He was lost in grief and so, he passed his own house without noticing that: it had undergone a great change and had become overnight a huge big mansion. His wife, who saw him, called him back and related how suddenly, happiness had been showered, upon them by Krishna's Grace.

### **Sweeten your speech, sanctify your deeds**

Kuchela's *saadhana* Started that day! Until then, he was just a ritualist, going through the outward forms of the rites prescribed in the *Shaasthras*. When he realised how the Lord can, through His *Mahima* (miracle power), transform poverty to wealth, He decided to win the Grace of God for securing perpetual, undiminished Joy, that is to say, win *Saayujya*. He got *sudharshana*, the vision of what is Good for him, And, in the midst of the treasures that now filled his residence, he lived that life of an ascetic, without any attachment. He knew that it was all a dream, the riches now and the poverty then.

The emperor dreamt he was a beggar and wept when he was refused alms at one door and was overjoyed when at another door, he got a stomachful. He woke up and he was no longer poor; he was an Emperor. Even that is a dream, an illusion.

*Brahman* alone is *Sath* (real); *Prakrithi* is *A-sath* (unreal). Be in this awareness always, that is the highest *saadhana*. Seek *Sudharshanam* (vision of the Divine). Make your speech *madhuram* (sweet), and your good deeds an *arpanam* (offering). This is the three-fold path. Become a child, lose your conceit and pride. When you are still in the region of the *gunas*, motivated by desire

(whether for the good or for the grand or the mean), you have yourself to seek the mother; when you are free from the bonds of the *gunas* (the enticements of desire), the Mother Herself will hasten towards you and fondle you in her lap. Purify your vision, sweeten your speech, sanctify your deeds---that way lies liberation.

*Prashanthi Nilayam, 2-9-1963*

*I do not accept from you flowers that fade, fruits that rot, coins that have no value beyond the national boundary. Give Me the lotus that blooms in your Maanasasarovara--the clear pellucid water of the lake---of Your inner consciousness; give Me the fruits of holiness and steady discipline.*

*I am above all this worldly etiquette, which enjoins you to see elders with some fruit or flower in your hand. My world is the world of the spirit; there values are different.*

*If you are happy with faith in God and fear of sin, that is enough "service," enough kankaryam for Me. It pleases Me so.*

*Sathya Sai Baba*

## 21. *Vishaya, the visha*

KALLURI Veerabhadhra Shaasthry has made *Aanandha* well up in every one of you by his clear and moving description of the incidents of the Bhaagavatha. His words were apt and sweet; his comments revealed the inner significance of the events; he made all partake personally in the life at Brindhaavan of the families of the cowherds during the time that Krishna was among them. Some persons feel intoxicated by the emotions or they get near mad, on account of the devotion they have. But such overpowering emotions have to be mastered. One has to transform *bhakthi* into *jnaana* and become stronger thereby.

Man's life is meaningful only because he can use it to see God. The goal of life is the final merging in the sea, God. You should not fill life with the world; that will make it a vanity fair, an insanity fair. Listen to all such things as will draw you towards the principle of Godhead; then, think it over in the silence; make it part of your consciousness. This process of *manana* (reflection) makes you a man; that is the test of man.

### **Sensory object is man's most deadly poison**

Veerabhadhra Shaasthry described the scene of *Kaaliya mardhana* (Krishna's dance on the head of the serpent). Well, Kaaliya is a huge big serpent, full of poison, rolling in death and destruction. He is the representative of man, rolling in sensory objects, poison so far as its effect on life is concerned. *Vishaya* (sensory object) is the most deadly *visha* (poison). When Krishna danced on the head of Kaaliya, (incidentally I might add, you should make your hearts as smooth and soft as the hood of the snake), the poison was all vomitted! And the serpent was subdued. When God is revered, the world and all its poisonous fumes recede and you are restored to original health. Make the Name and Form of the Lord dance upon the hood of your heart. Krishna had no *vishaya-vaasana* (attachment to sense objects) and so, He could plunge into the pool and call out to Kaaliya and jump on to his hood and trample on it and squeeze the poison out. If you are deep in the mire, you cannot pull out another who has fallen into it. Be on the bank; do not get caught. You are now struggling in the mire of *samsaara* (worldly life), the slithery mud of attachment. So, how can you trample on the snake? You can save yourself only by calling on God, who is free from *vishaya* and who is on the bank. Hold His hand and He will pull you on to hard ground.

Krishna never parted in those days from Balaraama; but, that day, He came alone, without him. He was wearing a necklace of green beads a nose-ring of pearl and in his right ear, a ring of pearls. He wore no shirt or coat just yellow silk round his waist and a kerchief wound round the head, or rather thrown carelessly round one end this way and another end that way! The peacock feather which is described by poets and sages, was not always worn. It was struck up only off and on. Of course, peacocks abounded in Brindhaavan then and they are found in plenty even today. On his bare chest, there was a mole which could be clearly seen, an inevitable mark of all *Avathaars*, including the Sais.

### **Krishna had no objective desires**

Krishna saw the carcasses of animals which had died. When they inhaled the poisoned air, near the Kaaliya pool; birds had fallen dead on the ground. Nothing green could survive in the neighbourhood. As soon as Krishna jumped into the pool to save the region from the serpent's havoc, his companions ran home to bring the parents, so that they could intercede and stop the

foolish pranks of their mischievous son. They were in great panic; only Raadha was calm and collected. She knew that for Him, it was a minute's fun, a moment's *sankalpa* (resolve). He had no *vishaya* (objective desires) and so *visha* (poison) could not affect Him.

Even objective desires will be transmuted into higher spheres of purity when one approaches the Lord. Nothing against *Dharma* can stand the Presence of the Lord. That fire will consume all impurities; and people forget that Krishna was just eleven years old, when He finally left Brindhaavan, the Scene of the *Raasaleela*, towards Madhura and from thence to Dhwaarakaa. The Bhaagavatha itself explicitly says that. But, it is ignored, because the minds of the people and the poets who want to see sensuality in the *Raasaleela* are vitiated by *vishayavaasana* (attachment to sense objects).

The boy, Dhruva, went to the forest to do *thapas* and get from the Lord a boon, so that his father might treat him as lovingly as he did his half-brother. But, as he progressed in *saadhana*, that wish was forgotten and more lofty ones came to occupy its place. The Lord once He enters the mind will rid it of all evil. *Raam* (God) and *kaam* (desire) cannot coexist, Lord and lust cannot be together. How then could the *gopees* have any body-consciousness, when they adored Krishna?

The Lord never does anything without purpose

Krishna had already announced His Glory to the cowherd maidens by such divine miracles, as the uplifting of the mountain Govardhanagiri. He had proved Himself superior to Indhra, Brahma and Varuna. He had manifested the Universe in His mouth and showed that He had come on a Divine Mission to destroy the wicked and save the good. There is no *loukikam* (worldliness) in their behaviour; it is all *aloukikam* (other worldly).

The Lord never speaks a word without relevance or significance; never does anything without appropriateness or purpose. Garuda is the symbol of *karma* with the two wings of *shraddha* (faith) and *bhakthi* (devotion), the bird on which the Lord will take His seat, the *hridaya vihangam* (the heart as the bird). Raadha is *Prakrithi* (Nature), known as *dharaa* (Universe), which helps you to think about the *aadhaara* (support), in a regular *dhaara* (continuous flow).

The incident of the rope is another instance. Krishna felt that it was time to reveal His Truth and so, just as He showed all Creation in His mouth when His mother asked Him to show her His tongue, when she suspected He had eaten sand, He made even the longest rope too short to bind Him. It became the talk of the place and every one felt he had all the 14 worlds in Him!

### **Know the secret passage to the heart of the Lord**

*Avataars* choose the time and the mode of announcement of their advent and their Glory. Even in this *avathaara*, such miracles had to be done when I decided that the time was opportune for taking the people into My secret.

Let your mind ever dwell on Krishna of such stature. Sanctify every word and deed by filling it with *prema* of Krishna or whatever Name and Form you give to the Lord you love. The gold of which an anklet was made, can become the gold for a crown on the head of a temple image; only it has to be melted in the crucible and beaten into shape. The waters of the river might be dirty; but, the *bhaktha* who sips it with a *manthra* or a *sthothra* (sacred sound or prayer) on his lips, transmutes it into a sacred *theertha* (sanctified water). The body becomes healthy by exercise and work; the mind becomes healthy by *Upaasana* (devout contemplation) and *Naamasmarana* (remembrance of the Divine), by regular, well-planned discipline, joyfully accepted and joyfully carried out.

*Ahimsa* (non-injury) is the rice; *Arpitha* (dedication) is the gram; *praayaschittham* (expiation) the raisins; *paschaaththaapam* (repentance) is the jaggery. Mix all these well with the ghee, *sadhgunam* (virtue). That is the offering you should make to your *Ishtadevatha* (chosen deity), not the paltry stuff you make out of articles got for a paisa in the shops! The *gopees* knew this secret passage to the heart of the Lord and they realised Him quick and fast.

### **The Lord has no hatred in Him**

You have heard that Krishna is *Murali-Maadhava*, and what exactly is the murali? You must be the *murali* (the flute). Let the breath of Krishna pass through you, making delightful music that melts the hearts. Surrender yourself to Him; become hollow, *Vaasana-less*, egoless, desireless; then, He will Himself come and pick you up caressingly and apply you---the flute---to His Lips and blow His sweet breath through you. Allow Him to play whatever song He likes.

The Lord is all *prema*. He has no *dhwesha* (hatred) in Him. Once at Shirdhi, a certain Dr. Pillai came with much suffering, and he prayed that he might be given ten births with the chance of dividing the pain into ten parts, so that he could suffer a little each time and pay off his *kaarmic* debt, without being hard put to it having to pay it all off in one! He was informed through Kaaka Saheb that he should fall at the feet of Baaba and as he did so, Baaba got the pain transferred to himself. For ten minutes, Baaba suffered, at the rate of one minute for *each janma* (birth), and thus he rid Dr. Pillai of his obligation. Baaba was quite normal, as soon as the 10 minutes were over.

Prema must be many-stranded in order to be strong and tough. A single strand, is too weak.. Have it many-stranded, one towards the mother, another towards the father, others strands towards husband, wife,, friend, son, daughter, etc. of course *Prema*. is all-embracing, it cannot be confined to one item and denied to, another. It is a current that flows over all Meditation on the Lord and His Prema will help you to tap it from the depths of your heart.

*Prashanthi Nilayam, 6-9-1963*

*There is no living being without the spark of love; even a mad man loves something or somebody intensely. But, you must-recognise this love as but a reflection of the Premaswaruupa (the embodiment of Love), that is your reality, of the God who is residing in your heart. Without that spring of Love that bubbles in your heart, you will not be prompted to love at all.*

*Recognise that spring, rely on it more and more, develop, its possibilities, try to irrigate the whole world with it, discard all touch of self from it, do not seek anything in return for it, from those to whom you extend it.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*



## 22. *Thamo gunam, thapo gunam*

ORUGANTI Narasimha Yogi has been explaining the *Krishna-thathwam* (principle) to you during the last three days. *Pandiths* (scholars) are the instruments through whom you can gather the key to the understanding of the mystery of God; they give you the gist of the *Shaaasthras* in easy, simple style and interpret them in the light of whatever experience they have earned. You have to listen to them with *shraddha* and *bhakthi* (faith and devotion), in a mood of humility.

Arjuna told Krishna, "I came into this battlefield a *dheera* (brave person). I have now become, a *dheena* (a man in distress) for I am but an instrument in your hands." Arjuna was a *Chinmaya muurthi* (embodiment of divine consciousness), not as he imagined, a *Mrinmaya muurthi* (mud filed body). He was suffused with Divine Consciousness, not earthly inertia. Only, he was not aware of It. A man gets into the company he deserves, is it not? From the company, you can judge him. Well; Arjuna had the Lord Himself for company! Arjuna had the *shraddha* (faith) to concentrate on the Geetha teaching, even in the midst of the battlefield, on the eve of the fight that was to decide the fate of his family. He had *bhakthi* enough to compel Krishna to show him the *Vishwaruupa*, the *Viraatswaruupa* (Universal Cosmic) itself! He had the humility to declare that he would much rather beg than kill his kith and kin; also to fall at the feet of Krishna when he could no longer see how he should proceed.

### ***Ajnaana* is the disease afflicting the mankind**

Develop these qualities and you too can get the company of the Lord. Krishna aroused the *raajasik* (passionate) qualities again in Arjuna, by prodding him and laughing at him for his cowardice and un-*kshathriya* (warrior) attitude of renunciation; thus, the *Thaamasik* qualities of sloth and ignorance were removed. Later, He transformed him into a *saathwik* (noble, pious) hero, fit for the *dharma yuddha* (war of righteousness) that he was to wage.

*Ishaavaasya Upanishath* mentions that *ajnaana* (ignorance), is the greatest sin. The *Kaarpanyadhosha* that the Geetha mentions is another name for the same *ajnaana*. Geetha is the specific for this fell disease, which afflicts the majority of mankind. You must all study the Geetha daily. Read a few *slokas* and meditate on the meaning yourself; it will dawn on you in the silence of your heart. You need not read elaborate commentaries. Each word in the Geetha is a gem. No more do you need gemstones for the ear, the nose, and the neck; have the gem of the Geetha *slokas* in your heart, let them activate your intellect and your hands.

### **Essential purpose of all Divine play is Bliss**

So long as you are entangled in the sensual world you cannot distinguish the real from the unreal. But, you have to discover the real, through discrimination; there is no avoiding that responsibility; you have to do it, now or later. Power, status, wealth, authority---these are useless in this adventure. Alexander, during his campaigns in the Punjab, was anxious to see a celebrated sage; he went to the cave where the sage was, and expected that he would be received most thankfully and with demonstrations of welcome. But the sage simply asked him to move aside and go. He was not interested in the famous world-shaker, the Greek conqueror. Alexander was very angry; he threatened to kill the sage and drew his sword. But the sage said calmly, with a laugh "I do not die; I cannot die." That put some sense in Alexander and he put his sword back into the scabbard.

Narasimha Yogi spoke of the *leela* (divine play) where Brahma (One of the Trinity) takes away the entire population of Brindhaavan including the cattle; Krishna creates out of His *maayaashakthi* (miracle power) identical men, women and children and identical cattle and they carry on undiscovered, quite normally, for one year! Now Brahma is not different from Vishnu or Krishna; they do not work contrary to each other; they both work out the same plan. This *ruupa* (form) is that *ruupa*; this *upaadhi* (disguise) and that *upaadhi* are both of the same *Mahaa Shakthi* (Divine Energy). The essential purpose of all this *leela* (divine play) is *Aanandham* (Divine Bliss). So, the One carries away when in one *upaadhi* called Brahma, and creates substitutes, when in *another upaadhi* called Krishna---all for the sake of the *Aanandham* it gives to the participants as well as to the onlookers and those who listen to the story later. This is one way of announcing the Divinity of the *Avathaara*, Which has to be done so that men may listen and obey. The common man will sit up in wonder and his awe will ripen into faith; later, even if he salts discriminating and arguing pro and con, the *Avathaar* will only be glad, for the faith will thus be confirmed.

### **Remove the feeling of inferiority that dwarfs you**

The mind is ever unsteady; it has to be educated; its quicksilver quality has to be curbed; it is really *Chaithanya-swaruupam* (embodiment of Consciousness) and it will become steady only when it is merged in *Chaithanya*, that is, the Divine. There may be ice on a lake; the ice is *jada* (inert); but, move it all to one side, press it aside and the *sahaja swaruupam* (natural form) of water, the *Chaithanya* reveals itself, That *Chaithanya* has no joy or sorrow. It is ever in perfect equilibrium "I am *That*" I am not affected by either. Mine is *Samaadhi*---*intelligence* which is *sama* (steady), unaffected, unchanging Wisdom.

Remove the cataract and the vision becomes clear. So too, remove the feeling of inferiority that dwarfs you now; feel that you are *Aathma-swaruupa*, *Nithya-swaruupa*, *Aanandha-swaruupa* (Absolute, Eternal and Blissful); then, every act of yours becomes a *yajna* (sacrifice), a *puuja* (ritual worship). The ear, the eye, the tongue, the feet all become tools for your uplift, not traps for your destruction. Transform *thamogunam* (quality of inertia) into *thapogunam* (quality of austerity) and save yourself.

### **Know the best way of showing your gratitude**

You are indeed lucky that such learned and experienced *Pandiths* share with you their scholarship and their joy. Practise *mananam* (contemplation) of what you hear; that is the best way of showing your gratitude. You have another advantage too. With your experience, you can understand the *Bhaagavatham* better. Swaami's nature is *Vishwaprema* (all-pervading Love), you have known, and *Bhaagavatham* is the story of *Vishwaprema*.

I declare that I am in every one, in every being. So do not hate any one, or cavil at any one. Spread *prema* always, everywhere. That is the best way of revering Me. Do not seek to measure Me or evaluate Me. I am beyond your understanding. Pray or worship for your own satisfaction and contentment. But to say that I will respond only if I am called or that I will save only if I am thought of is wrong. Have you not heard the declaration. "*Sarvathaah paani paadham?*" You can hear My Footsteps, for, I walk with you, behind you, beside you. When you cry out in agony, "Don't you hear my heart's plaint? Have you become so stony-hearted?" My ear will be there to listen. Ask that I should protect you like the apple of the eye, My eye will be there to watch over you and guard you. Have *dhoopam* (incense) and scent-sticks for the *puuja*, and I smell them. I

answer to whatever Name you use; I respond to whatever request you make with a pure heart and a sanctified motive.

*Prashanthi Nilayam, 7-9-1963*

## 23. You and I

AS Subbaraaya Shaasthry said, the *deha* (body) has to be used to ascend the ladder of the three gunas, from thamas (inertia) to rajas (activism) and from rajas to *sathwa* (goodness), so that finny, you may get beyond the ladder into the heights above. The *deha* is the root of all the grief and all the disquiet which is now the lot of man Why? The *deha* was acquired by means of the good and bad that was done in the previous birth. They are called collectively, karma. *Karma* is caused by attachment and hatred, affection and disaffection. They are the products of sheer ignorance, ignorance of the unity of all creation including oneself. This *ajnaana* (ignorance) can be removed only by *Su-jnaana* (good knowledge). When a man suffers from stomach-ache, the best treatment will be salts or a hot water bag applied to the stomach, and not medicated collyrium for the eye!

*Ajnaana* can be removed by acknowledging the universality of God and the merging of your individuality in the Universal. First practise the attitude of "*Nenu neevaadu*" ("I am yours," in Telugu). Let the wave discover and acknowledge that it belongs to the sea. This first step is not as easy as it looks. The wave takes a long time to recognise that vast sea beneath it that gives it its existence. Its ego is so powerful that it will not permit it to be so humble, as to bend before the sea.

### The three steps to reach Non-duality

"I am yours. You are the *Prabhu* (Master). I am a *dhaasa* (servant). You are sovereign, I am bound." This mental attitude will tame the ego. make every activity worth-while. This is the religious outlook named *Maarjaala-kishora*---the attitude of the kitten to its mother, mewling plaintively for succour and sustenance, removing all trace of the ego.

The next step is "*neevu naavaadu*" ("You are mine" in Telugu)where the wave de]hands /he support of the sea as of right. The Lord has to take the responsibility of guarding and guiding the individual. The individual is important, worthy to be saved, the Lord is bound to fulfil the need of the *bhaktha*. Suurdaas said, "You are mine; I will not leave you; I shall imprison you in my heart; you shall not escape."

The next stage is. "*Neevu nenu*---("You are I" in Telugu )- --I am but the image, You are the Reality. I have no separate individuality; there is no duality. all is One. Duality is but delusion.

The first sign of spiritual life is *vairaagyam* (detachment). If you have no *vairaagyam*, you are illiterate so far as spiritual scholarship is concerned. *Vairaagyam* is the ABC of *saadhana*. (spiritual effort). *Vairaagyam* must become strong enough to make you discard the bondage of the senses. Just a few minutes of thought will convince any one of the hollowness of earthly riches or fame or happiness. When you are affluent, every one praises you; when the tank is full, hundreds of frogs croak all round. When the tank is dry, not a single one is there to address the tank.

### Seek the difficult road of God-realisation

If a corpse had a few jewels on it, the proverb says, many will claim kinship with the dead person; if it has no valuables on it, not a single person will come forward to weep for it! Consider when you are adding to your bank account further and further sums of money whether you are not accumulating troubles for yourselves and your children, making it harder for your children to lead clean, comfortable and honourable lives. When you struggle to achieve paltry fame by

devious means, remember who among crores of your countrymen are honoured today and for what? Don't you see that only those who gave up, renounced, sought the more difficult road of God-realisation, instead of the easier path of world-realisation, are honoured everywhere?

Welcome all the blows of fate, all the misfortunes and miseries, as gold welcomes the crucible, the hammer and the anvil, in order to get shaped into a jewel; or as the cane welcomes the chopper, the crusher, the boiler, the pan, the sprayer, the dryer, so that its sweetness may be preserved and used as sugar by all. The Paandavas never demurred when disasters fell thick upon them. They were happy that they helped them to remember Krishna and call upon Him.

### **Submit to the Will of God in a resigned way**

Bheeshma was in tears on the arrow-bed, when he was about to pass away. Arjuna asked him why and he replied, "I am shedding tears because the miseries undergone by the Paandavas pass through my mind." Then he said, "This is done in order to teach the *Kaliyuga* a lesson, never to seek power, position or pelf, but to submit to the Will of God, in a completely resigned way, so that you may be ever happy and unmoved."

The Lord rushes towards the *bhaktha* (devotee) faster than the *bhaktha* rushes towards Him. If you take one step towards Him, He takes a hundred steps towards you! He will be more than a mother or father. He will foster you from within you, as He has saved and fostered so many saints who have placed faith in Him.

*Prashanthi Nilayam, 8-9-1963*

*Anger and hatred can be used to ward off the evil that stalks the spiritual aspirant; be angry at tilings that hamper you, hate the habits the brutalise you. Cultivate jnaana (supreme knowledge) and visualise the Lord in all things and activities. That makes this human birth worth-while.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*

## 24. *Be Mahaaraanis !*

PRINCIPAL Parvathamma has been yearning long for this day, when I could come to your College and speak to you. This College, as she said just now, has been in existence for eighty-five years and it has educated and sent into various fields of life thousands of women. Bhaarath is the land where *Bha or Brahavidhya* (knowledge of Brahman) has attracted the *rathi* (attachment) of its people, where the people have a natural attraction towards spiritual *saadhana*, where the call of tile Infinite is listened to with keenness. This keenness has now declined; it is a great misfortune; you must see that it is not lost. You should decide that it must be revived, at least in your own hearts.

An intellect that is moved only by Truth and a Consciousness that will not tolerate the impurity of meanness or vice---these two are the pre-requisites for the fulfilment of that ideal. This is the *aasthi* (wealth) that will make a person an *Aasthika* (believer in God)! The intellect must investigate, as far as it can, the fundamental problem, why this birth, whither this life, whence this adventure, what the effect of human actions is on this life and on future lives, etc. Consciousness must dive deep into the Divinity that underlies it.

### **Have faith in your own essential Divinity**

The education that does not confer *vinaya* and *viveka* (modesty and wisdom) is sheer waste of precious time; whatever else you learn or do not learn, equip yourself with the strength that is necessary to be virtuous, to resist temptation and the lures of the objective world. *Viveka* is not the cleverness that is given inordinate value today, but, the capacity to see things in their proper proportion, to evaluate the temporary and the lasting, the particular and the universal, the shallow and the deep. You must also have the attitude of reverence towards the past, the elders who are the repositories of the saintly spiritual wisdom anti experience which you have to acquire.

Have also Faith---faith in your own essential Divinity, faith in the higher values attainable by earnest practice and the exercise of *vairaagyam* (detachment). Life becomes sweeter, with a little dose of denial too; if you get all your desires, it begins to cloy. Deny yourselves many of the things your mind runs after and you will find that you become tough enough to bear both good fortune and bad.

Now, people are apt to go by the appearance, rather, than the reality of things There was a man once, who was such an ardent devotee of Ganesha that he used up all his riches to make golden images of that God as well as of the Mouse which is His vehicle, besides an umbrella, a seat, and other appurtenances, all of gold. Later he fell on evil days and so he had to sell all these loved things. The merchant who offered to purchase them started weighing each item and declaring the price it would fetch. When he said that the Ganesha would fetch as much as the mouse, for both were of equal weight, the man got enraged and complained that he was being let down. Ganesha must fetch more than the mouse! That was because he forgot the reality and attached value to the appearance, Form and the Name, and not to the substance.

### **Education is not for mere living**

If value is given to the office that a man holds, which is but temporary, as soon as he retires and starts sitting on a bench in the Laal Bagh, people will stop recognising and saluting him! The schooling that gives only the outer polish is just a waste of opportunity.

Education is not for mere living; it is for life, a fuller life, a more meaningful, a more worthwhile life. There is no harm if it is also for a gainful employment; but, the educated must be aware that existence is not all, that gainful employment is not all. Again, education is not for developing the faculty of argument, criticism, or winning a polemic victory over your opponents or exhibiting your mastery over language or logic. That study is the best which teaches you to conquer this cycle of birth and death, which gives you the mental equipoise that will not be affected by the prospect of death, that will not be disturbed by the blessings or blows of fate. That study begins where this study of yours ends.

When this material world is studied and analysed, you realise that it is just a conglomeration of good and bad and you aspire for something beyond this duality. The light will dawn on you, only after you have acquired *Sathya*, *Dharma*, *Shaanthi* and *Prema*. The root cause is that the basic thing is not known or experienced. How then can lasting peace be got?

### **Joy and grief are not brought about by others**

When the doctor said, apply this ointment at the place where the scorpion stung your son, the fond father asked the son, "Where did the scorpion sting?" The boy replied. "in that corner" and the father applied the ointment to that spot on the floor! How can the pain disappear? Take the lamp to the place where the darkness is. Joy and grief are not brought about by others, they are emanations from within you. So, cure yourself, do not try to put the blame on others and start plans to cure them.

You carry piles of books up and down, from your rooms to college and back; you know more about questions than about the answers. You can learn more by observation and meditation than by conning over the pages of books. The really valuable things, you can learn from the *Vedhas* and the *Upanishads* and religious scriptures.

A *Pandith* engaged a boat to take him across the flooded Godhaavari. When the journey over the river started, he began a lively conversation with the boatman. He asked the boatman whether he had any schooling and when the reply came that he had none he said sadly, "Alas! A quarter of your life has gone to waste. It is as if you have drowned those years in the Godhaavari."

The *Pandith* asked the boatman whether he could tell him the time from his watch; the boatman confessed he did not have a watch nor cared to have one. The *Pandith* deplored and said, "Half your life has gone into the Godhaavari." His next question was about newspapers, did the boatman read any, what was his favourite paper? The boatman replied that he did not read any nor did he care to know the news. He had enough to worry about already. The *Pandith* declared forthright that three-quarters of the boatman's life had been liquidated.

### **Be prepared for both joy and grief**

dust then the sky darkened with storm clouds and there was an imminent threat of rain. The boatman turned to the *Pandith*, it was his turn to put a question. He asked, "Can you swim?" and when the frightened passenger confessed he could not, the boatman said, "In that case, your entire life is now going to merge in the Godhaavari." This is the case of the educated in India today. They do not have the training that will help them in distress, or in dire need, to win back their mental poise.

You are being carried along the flood of material pleasures and lures; how long can you drift like

that? When you live in the world of desire, you must be prepared for both joy and grief. If you invite the Minister *Bhoga* (material enjoyment), you must be prepared for the visit along with him, of his Private Secretary *Roga* (illness)! Invite, on the other hand, the Minister *Thyaaga* (sacrifice), or his colleague *Yoga* (meditation) and you will be happy to receive their Private Secretary *Bhoga* (enjoyment), who plays a minor role in the presence of his master.

### **Develop a pure and strong character**

Real education is not the command over a number of languages. I remember an incident that happened some time ago. The wife of an educated gentleman used to get letters from a certain Lakshminaraayana, whom the husband suspected to be a boy friend of her college days and when a telegram came one day asking the wife to meet Lakshminaraayana at the railway station, he hid the message and waited for developments, full of anger at the stranger as well as at his own wife. Tragedy was averted when Lakshmi, the college friend rushed in, disappointed that she did not meet her at the station according to the telegram. It seems she had come to that very town, because her husband, Naaraayana, had been transferred to that place! Mere literacy is the source of such silly suspicions!

What is the worth of education if *sheelam* (virtuous conduct), is not found in those who claim to have been educated? Develop a pure and strong character. Remember most of you will get married and you will have the great responsibility of rearing up families, that is a Very valuable opportunity. Learn to adjust your likes and dislikes to those of others, learn the gentle art of sacrifice and service-keep in mind, when you react angrily against your mother-in-law, that a day will come When you too will have daughters-in-law! Try to appreciate their points of view; they may have greater forethought, greater experience, greater sense of responsibility; they may know more about people and things than you, who are fresh entrants in their household.

The family of the husband which you enter with marriage is a good training ground; it is a *saadhana-kshethra* (field of spiritual practice). When you are found fault with, do not fly into a rage; examine your Own conduct and discover the faults in yourselves; self-examination is the first step to self-improvement and peace. Do not exaggerate the faults of others, but give them a wide margin and see them as small; exaggerate yours, see them big and strive to remove them fast. Take all faultfinders as your friends and well-wishers for they give you warning-signals in time.

### **Cultivate a sweet temper and sweet speech**

I find that now-a-days, the art of cynical argumentativeness has spread everywhere. This is a dangerous sign. On account of this, reverence has disappeared; respect for the teacher has also gone. Of course there are teachers who undermine their own dignity by such acts as begging cigarettes from their own students! There was a murderer who was sentenced in court, but, while arguing his defense, he pleaded, "I am the *Aathma* (Pure Self), as the Geetha declares. How can I kill or the deceased be killed?" The judge answered, "Do not worry. You will not die when you are hanged, nor can I get you executed. It is all *Aathma*, undying, unkillable, everywhere, in all." *Dharma* (Law) is applied by such people only when it suits them; otherwise, they do not care for its commands.

Cultivate a sweet temper and sweet speech which is its natural consequence. Speak without anger or spite, without any artificiality or formality, straight from the heart. Then, you will be spreading joy and love among all. When your parents plead that they cannot afford to clothe you



as you wish or give the various frills of finery that you crave for, do not get wild and quarrel with them. Be bold enough to resist temptation of yielding to the pressure of the crowd. *Guna-poshana* (nourishing the good qualities) is as important as *deha-poshana* (nourishing the body), remember.

### **Be silent partners, inspirers and teachers**

You go about filling every bus, in attractive dresses, and carrying heaps of books, but, let Me tell you, the greatest beauty aid for women is *sheelam* (virtue). Attach importance to *nishttha* (discipline), and not to *naashtha* (breakfast). You can miss *naashtha* but not *nishttha*. Live a regulated disciplined life from now on; make it a habit, an armour that will protect you from harm.

Pray to God and recite His Name or meditate on His Glory for some fixed period of time everyday; you will find it amply rewarding. Don't say, "Let me have a taste of the reward and then, I shall start the *saadhana*." Practise, and the experience will follow, must follow.

This College is known as the Mahaaraani's Women's College. I want each of you to be a *Mahaaraani* (Queen) of your household. *Mahaaraanis* watch the world from the inner apartments of the palace, through interstices in the wall or enclosures; they can see, but they are safe from other eyes. That is the highest *sthree-dharma* (Women's duty), as laid down in the *Shaasthras*; you should not be seen or talked about; you must be away from public gaze; you must be silent invisible partners, inspirers and teachers.

If you desire that others should honour you, you should honour them too. If others must serve you, serve them first; love begets love; trust engenders trust. Self-aggrandizement and selfishness bring disaster in their train. As a matter of fact, no joy can equal the joy of serving others. Be like this timepiece; show the correct time to all who desire to know, irrespective of the person who comes for the information. It has no likes and dislikes.

### **A prayerful life will be a source of strength**

People call you weak. Do not believe it. Having all these strong points in your favour, intelligence, discipline, spiritual capacity, consciousness of other's excellences, awareness of one's faults, eagerness to improve yourself, how can you be called "weak"?

I was asked by your Principal to plant a *champaka* tree in the garden of this college and I did it gladly; but the thing which will give me greater pleasure is to plant the sapling of prayer in your hearts. A prayerful life will not yield to the fury of passion; it will be a source of strength and Co-operation.

Decline in the discipline of *Naamasmarana* (constant thought of the Lord) has been the cause of the decline of this country. A single household now has ten factions and parties; those who cannot reform their own homes have started reforming the country and advising co-operation and harmonious living to others.

The knowledge of the *Aathma* as the very basis of all beings is now forgotten and that is the cause of *Ashaanthi*---all the unrest, the confusion and the moral crisis of today. It is to awaken the sleeping, and communicate to them this Message that I have come. I bless that all of you may have lives full of joy and peace; I bless that this College may have many many more years of useful life, useful in helping the women of this land to realise themselves and help others to do so.

*Mahaaraani's Women's College, Mysore,*

*12-9-1963*

*The journey of every man is towards the cemetery; every day brings you nearer to the moment of death. So, do not delay the duty you must carry out for your own lasting good.*

*Recognise that you are Shiva (God), before you become a shava (corpse); that will save you from further deaths.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*

## 25. *A-naatha and Sa-naatha*

KANNADA is a sweet and soft language; but, I do not propose to speak in it now; I feel that you can follow Me even if I speak in Thelugu. I am happy to lay the Foundation Stone of this Home for Retarded Children and the Hostel and Workshops of the *Mahila Makkala Koota*, for service is the best form of worship. I know this is an institution that does real service. It is a light house in the sea of mere worldly-mindedness.

For all the higher forms of service, *bhakthi* is the very life-breath. Of the two, *Preyas* (worldly gain) and *Shreyas* (spiritual merit), Sunandhamma has chosen *Shreyas*; so, even when she is ridiculed, she carries on; even when she is praised, she does not accept the praise. If she must succeed in this venture, she must strengthen her faith in the Lord. That is enough.

When the election season is on, you find people suddenly going round and round and falling at the feet of all and sundry, praying for votes. They could have fallen at the feet of the Lord, and He would have showered His Grace. If he is a godly person, full of humility and the spirit of service, he would have got the votes he needed, even without this humiliation of door-to-door soliciting.

### **Faith is the very breath of victory**

Be good, be serviceable, be useful, be kind, be God-fearing---the confidence of the people will be yours. I am sure Minister Kaanthi who is here will agree with Me when I say, that such a man has no need to beg for votes, people will themselves come forward and offer the votes at his feet. Faith, faith---that is the very breath of victory---faith in oneself, faith in the good work one has set upon; faith in its success, in spite of signs of failure.

Attachment and hatred---these are the greatest enemies of progress in any scheme of social service, why, in any scheme of work. If the individual is deluded into believing that he is saving others, then woe be to him, for, there is no other at all. All are One, one man's sorrow is every one's sorrow. The fundamental flaw is the ignorance of man. If only he was wise, he would have known that all individuals are waves on the surface of the self-same ocean.

*Nishkaama karma* (selfless action) is the ideal to be aimed at; now everything is measured by the result, the gain that accrues. Study too is for the salary one can get on the basis of the degree which is its goal. If you fan a person out of love, when you leave of, he cannot blame you but, when the paid servant who is the *pankaahwaallah* stops, the master takes him to task. In the first case, the act is done in the *nishkaama* way; there is no aim to seek gain, The desire for gain is like the poison fangs; when they are pulled out, the snake of *karma* is rendered harmless.

### **Faith becomes steady through *Saadhana***

The correct discipline to acquire *the nishkaama* (without selfish desire) attitude is dedication; and dedication is possible only when you have intense faith in God. That faith becomes steady through *saadhana*. Now, *saadhana* (spiritual effort) is like the snacks one eats; the main dishes are all of the world, from the world. The spiritual must be the major portion of the food.

You must be aware of the danger of a fall, in time. Do not behave like the master of a house, who when his wife said, "I hear some noise; it is perhaps a thief" replied: "I know; do not interrupt my sleep." In a few minutes, she said, "He has entered the house," but, the man said, "I know." Later, she said, "He is opening the box"; still, the man said "I know" and kept quiet. After some time,

she said, "He is running away" and the master said, as formerly, "I know." He did not pay any attention to the warnings of the theft; so, too, you do not heed the warning, but move forward to the calamity, with eyes open.

Once you feel that all are waves on the self-same sea you will no longer use the word, *A-naatha* (helpless orphan), which I found in the report that was read. In one sense, there is no *A-naatha* at all; all are *Sa-naatha* (protected by a guardian), for the Lord takes care of all. He is the *Pashu-pathi*, *pashu* meaning individual *jeevas* (living beings). There is only one *Purusha* (Masculine) in creation; all the rest are *sthree* (feminine). There is no fool too; that is only a role played by that particular manifestation of the *jnaana swaruupa*, which is *Paramaathma*. Nagayya might play the role of Thyaagayya, in the film on Thyaagaraaja, but, all the while his Nagayya is the truth, the reality. The Thyaagayya is a temporary role in the drama of life.

### **Journey to God is to be through good *karma***

Remember this and do not tarry on your journey to God. You fill up the petrol tank with fuel for the journey that lies ahead, is it not! When you propose to keep the car in the garage for long, you do not fill the tank. Well, the body too is fed with fuel so that it may go on a journey; journey to God. That journey is through *karma*, good *karma*, *Nishkaama karma*. Such *karma* is called *kaayaka* (relating to the body), the exertion of the *kaaya* (body) for the liberation of the soul imprisoned therein.

Not all the raindrops that fall from the sky manage to reach the sea. It is only those that flow into a flowing river that attain the goal of all the drops; for, they come from the sea and they yearn to reach their source.

I find that the Sun has invaded this side of the *pandhal*; the hall is not big enough to provide shade for all of you. I cannot bear to see you suffering. I find one man has fainted there. Here, take this *Vibhuuthi* (sacred ash) to him, let him drink it in a glass of water. {He waved His right Hand once and created a quantity of *Vibhuuthi* as a token of His Grace). When I am leaving do not crowd around and fall at My Feet. Do the *Namaskaaram* (obeisance) in your hearts; that is better than crushing everybody and pushing forward. There are many old men, sick persons and children; so, be calm and patient. Why do a thing, which does not give you full satisfaction, nor gives Me satisfaction? Make Sai the resident of your heart; that gives you *hai* (happiness) and Me, joy!

*Mysore City, Vaanivilaasapuram, 15-9-1963*

*You must tread the spiritual path with an uncontrollable urge to reach the Goal; you must cultivate the yearning for liberation from all this encumbrance.*

*Remember that you have to dwell in a house built on four stout pillars: dharma, artha, kaama, and moksha (righteousness, wealth, desire and liberation); Dharma supporting artha, and moksha being the only kaama or desire.*

*However much you may earn either wealth or strength, unless you tap the springs of aanandha (Supreme bliss) within you, you cannot have peace and lasting content.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*

## ***26. Building or begging?***

I MYSELF asked Sunandamma to call you all here this evening, so that I can talk to you about the great piece of social work you are engaged in. I laid the Foundation Stone for your Institution this morning; I blessed the endeavour, because you are serving women and children, especially children who are mentally defective and physically handicapped. I understand you have the help of experts in psychology, who can understand the special problems of the underdeveloped children. So far so good.

As Trustees who have undertaken to help Sunandamma in this Mission of Mercy, I would advise you to start the construction of the rooms for the inmates and for the classes, first. The Prayer Hall can wait; the atmosphere of the place where such work is being done cannot be anything but a prayerful one. This is *thapas* (penance) that you are doing and the children and adults who watch you and your efforts do not require something more inspiring than that.

### **Discover a *via media* between ancient and modern**

Sunandamma was telling Me that some of you want the buildings to be reminiscent of ancient Indian architecture, a kind of temple, in fact; while others prefer the latest style, plain utilisation and cheap, without elaborate decorative motifs. You cannot revive the *Parnashaala* (hut made of leaves, hermitage) now, in the 20th century; you have to discover a *via media* between the *Sanaathana* and the *Nuuthana* (the ancient and the modern). Moreover, I want the *Sanathana* spirit in the heart; not in brick and mortar.

When the children are all of this modern age, affected by its attraction and attitudes, how can the style of the building in which they dwell change their outlook? And what of the teachers? They are imbued with the passions and prejudices of the modern age. Change their hearts into *Parnashaalas*, full of the ideals and aspirations of the sages of this land, charged with simplicity and sincerity, moved by the urge to expand in love to all beings---then, the style of the building does not matter. It is the architecture of the mind that matters. If the needs of the modern age require a change, change the non-essentials. Do not dilute the truth so much that it loses its genuineness.

If some one favours drinks of a blue colour or red, do not pour blue dye or red dye into the bottle; pour the drink into a blue or red glass, and offer it to him. That would be enough. So too, if one style of building is to be preferred, by all means, put up the structure; but do not change the essentials of the work to be done therein, or the outlook of the workers.

### **Patience and strenuous effort will be rewarded**

*Hitha* and *Mitha* (pleasant and moderate), these are the directions. Let it not be too garish, too ramshackle, too costly, too fragile. Take the middle course; that will yield maximum benefits. The craving for sense objects cannot be given up fully, so transform it into an instrument for worship. Dedicate all your efforts to the Lord; accept all achievements and failures, as proofs of the Grace of the Lord. His Will decreed that they should so happen. Transform all the six passions into instruments for spiritual uplift.

I know also that you are worried about funds for the completion of your plans. Sunandamma even asked Me to show the way! Well, He who showed the way so long, will do so hereafter also. This *will* be completed; otherwise, I would not have laid the Foundation Stone. Good works never languish for want of funds; the Lord will come to their rescue. Only it may take some time;

do not lose heart. The orange is quite bitter when it is green; but, time gradually sweetens it into a delicious fruit. Patience and strenuous effort will get rewarded.

I must tell you, however, that for such good causes as this, you should not collect money in devious ways. Help should come from pious hearts, from well-earned money, from persons who know and appreciate the purpose for which they give. That is why I oppose all benefit shows, where you tempt people with a dance, or a drama or a film and collect money for your pet plan. I am also against lotteries, where the lure of getting a big prize, for which one does not do anything, a prize collected out of other people's earning, is used for the collection of funds.

Let each one give, out of the fullness of his heart, on his own initiative, whatever he can give gladly, after studying well the present work and the future possibilities of the institution. Your duty is only to inform; do not try even to persuade; begging for the sake of work which is inherently good is an insult to human nature; the man who asks and the man who is asked, both are demeaned.

I want to give you this courage and this confidence. Carry on in a spirit of humility and fortitude and you will succeed.

*Meeting of the Trustees, Mysore City, 15-9-1963*

*All the joy you crave for, is in you; but, like a man who has vast riches in the iron chest, but, who has no idea where the key is, you suffer. With proper directions, dwelling upon them in the silence of meditation, it is possible to secure the key, open the chest and be rich in joy.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*

## 27. Human and Divine actions

Many people consider all acts of worship, *puuja*, etc., as "His" and all acts of earning and spending as "Mine." But, this is a mistake. All acts are "His." There is no such distinction as *Maanavakarma* and *Maadhavakarma* (actions of man and God); all *karma* leads you towards *Maadhava* or away from Him. For example, you say that you fall ill, that you are in good health, etc. That is because you feel that the body is "you," whereas you are really only the *Aathma*, with the five sheaths which you have super-imposed on it. This is the result of the system of education now prevalent which teaches that the *Aanandha* one derives from the senses is all the *Aanandha* that one can get. It does not disclose to the individual the eternal source of *Aanandha* that he has within himself.

There is no training in the art of acquiring mental peace. No one is told the secret of attaining the state of equanimity, amidst the confusion of modern civilisation. Everyone is induced to float with the current that drags humanity down to fear, anxiety and despair. Life today is similar to the situation when the master of the house is restricted to a tasteless regimen, while the members of the family revel in a banquet. The senses revel without limit but the *Aathma* is ignored.

### Modern education does not produce wise men

Modern education produces only "learned fools;" it does not produce wise men who can meet life calmly and bravely. Its products know how to fill themselves with information, device tools or handle them for the destruction of fellowmen or cater to the whims of the senses---but, they are helpless to meet the crisis of death, a crisis that is inevitable.

Hanumantha Rao of the I.A.S., who is the President of this Meeting said that, during the last 14 years, when he had not visited this place, many great developments have taken place, including this Hospital.

Some of you may ask why there should be a Hospital at all, here! Why should not Baaba cure diseases by an exercise of His Will? That is the question. Well, for one thing, this Hospital is not My only Hospital. Hanumantha Rao has a Hospital in Madras where disabled children are treated and trained to be useful and self-respecting individuals. That too is My Hospital. In fact, all hospitals everywhere are Mine. I visit them all. Why, all those who call out from their hearts for succour, in whatever language, from whatever clime, whether from hospitals or homes, are Mine. Do not confine Me to these few acres round the Prashaanthi Nilayam. Wherever a person craving for *Prashaanthi* (perfect peace) lives and prays, there a Prashaanthi Nilayam exists.

### Faith in Grace is not yet strong

You should remember another point. The Hospital serves to increase faith, to demonstrate Divinity and to remove doubt. That is also necessary, Besides, you have to mark time, in consonance with the song that is sung. There are many who are hungry for medical treatment and they are satisfied only if drugs are given and injections administered. Their faith in Grace is not yet strong. So, a Hospital is required for such *anugraha* (grace), that is the crucial gain. The hospitals can be closed, especially if the spiritual *saadhana* used for gaining the *Anugraha* results in simple lives, spent in contentment and undisturbed calm.

The King of Death does not bring a noose when he comes to drag people to his abode; the noose is made by the victim himself and he has it ready round his neck, awaiting the arrival of the end. It is the *Karma-paasa* (noose resulting from action) which each manufactures and winds round

himself that ultimately drags him away. Become aware of your reality and you will lose the sense of identification with the body. That will make you disease-free. You will have perfect ease. This is quite easy, understanding that you are not the body. For, you are practising this truth every day for at least six hours, ever since birth! If that cannot teach you, I wonder which can.

Every day, when you sleep, where are you? Who are you? Your senses are in-operative, your intelligence is in abeyance: your mind creates a world of its own and after playing in it for sometime, it lapses into inactivity. That is sleep, the nearest you reach in your journey to *Samaadhi* (super-conscious state).

**Each one of you can become *Bhagavaan***

Live in the *Aathma thathwam* (true nature of Self); that will ensure *Shaanthi*. With the poison of *raaga and dhwesa* (attachment and hatred) inside you, how can you be pronounced healthy?. If you experience the *Aathma thathwam*, you become Bhagavaan (Divinity) Himself. That is why I do not address you as *Bhakthulaaraa*! You are not *Bhaktaas* (devotees); you are more than that--you ought to become Bhagavaan; each one of you can become Bhagavaan by merging your separate individual *jeevas* (souls), in the Ocean of the Universal *Aathma*.

Death comes swooping like the falcon on chicken feeding on the ground. The man who dies, prays to Me to receive him; the persons who weep at his departure, pray to Me to keep him alive. I know both sides of the picture, the past and the present, the crime and the punishment, the achievement and the reward and so, I carry out what is just, though modified by Grace. I am not affected one way or the other, by the arrival into the world of some or the departure from it of some others. My nature is *Nithya-aanandham* (eternal Bliss). You can share in that *Aanandham* by following My instructions and practising what I say.

*Shri Sathya Sai Hospital, Seventh Anniversary Festival, 18-10-1963*



## ***28. The day they got the light***

I AM surprised that you read out a Welcome Address to Me and extolled Me as *jnaana swaruupa*, *Prema swaruupa* (embodiment of Supreme Knowledge and of Love), etc. I must tell you that I am no stranger and therefore need no welcome. I am no stranger anywhere, much less here, of all places where I took birth. I belong to you, I am very near to you. Besides, I do not like this praise, for praise places you at some distance, whereas I take delight in being with you, beside you, around you. No father likes his sons to praise him! No son approaches the father with a Welcome Address, in which his scholarship, wealth, strength, virtues are listed and extolled. Kinship evokes kindliness; there is no need or chance for formal ceremonial behaviour.

Now, you have asked Me to switch on these street lights and you have mentioned that this is a supreme moment---for, the village is to be free from darkness and full of light, hereafter! Let Me tell you, this village is not getting light, today! it got the Light, the Day this *Shakthi* took birth in this place! For, what is this little light that illumines just a few yards around each pole when compared with the Light that illumines the heart and spreads joy and peace.

### **Light from Puttaparthi is widening over the world**

From that day, when this light appeared, you have been witnessing how the Light is widening over the country, attracting the attention of the entire world to this tiny hamlet nestling among these hills away from the flow of the turbid currents of civilisation. Now, you have buses and lorries coming along the newly laid roads. Just today the decision has been made to improve the roads around this village to the standard of tarred roads; you have at the Prashaanthi Nilayam an up-to-date Hospital, you have a fine school building for your children, and this and the neighbouring villages have the benefit of this very useful electric current, which you can now direct for various purposes at home as well as in the fields.

You gave Me this garland of flowers when I came; but, I would have been glad if you, every one of you, had become a fragrant flower, free from insect pests of vice and wickedness, strung on the thread of devotion to God. That means, you must be united and of one mind, free from hatred and spite, factionalism and greed. Villagers are being ruined everywhere by elements that promote faction, and sow the thorny seeds of hatred, in fields where useful crops have to be grown.

Here, many feel that 'you are not attending *Bhajana* or frequenting the 'Nilayam as much as they do. They say among themselves that the inhabitants of Puttaparthi, the village where Sathya ' Sai Baaba was born, have no *Bhakthi*! But, I know, that you are every moment thinking about Me, watching for Me, talking about Me, pointing Me out to visitors, expecting Me to return soon when I have gone out of this place, etc. If this is not *smarana* (constant remembrance), what is it?

### **Injurious attitude is being perpetuated**

You must have seen women carrying a number of water pots one over the other on their heads; they may have babies on their hips, and children which they lead along; but, all the while, their thought will be about the hearth in their kitchens and the food that is being cooked there for they are anxious that it should not be spoiled.

The strength-giving, peace-creating culture of Bhaarith has been submerged by the flashy, glittering ideals introduced from the West during centuries of foreign rule. The attention of the

people of this land is drawn from the heights, to the lowly needs of the senses and the stomach. Even after Indians have regained the power to shape their own future, the situation has not improved, for the same injurious attitude is being perpetuated. The beliefs and practices of the past are condemned as superstitions by the inheritors of that very heritage! I won't agree with people who dismiss them as superstitions; for, they gave those who believed and acted according to the belief, the most precious treasure of *Aanandha* and *Shaanthi*. They helped to pull out the poisonous fangs of *karma*, fangs which inject greed, egoism and hate.

They taught man to do *karma* (action) as a sacred duty and leave the result to Gods thus avoiding two evils- the evil of pride and the evil of frustration---pride that the act was a success, frustration when it did not succeed. It also contributed some positive good; the *karma* was done well, as well as the individual can execute it, for all *karma* was transformed into worship of the Supreme. Man was saved by this emphasis of *Nishkaama Karma* (Selfless action), from unending desire and inexplicable sorrow. Now like water, man flows ever downward, and at the least disappointment, he breaks into bits and drops.

### **Faith in the Divinity of man has to be restored**

Once again, that attitude must be implanted in Man. He has acted the role of clown or servant or an extra much too long; it is time he took on the role of a Hero for which he is destined, and equipped. So like the garland maker who selects flowers of various hues, sizes and fragrances for preparing a garland, the Prashaanthi Vidhwan-mahaasabha too has selected these *Pandiths* and prepared a Garland. The purpose of this Sabha is to remind every one of the role of the Hero he has to play. Of course, I am the sustainer of the flowers, not the garland maker! The heroism of the wise man has gone from this land; and the weakness of the ignorant has overwhelmed the people. This has to be corrected. Sloth has taken the place of earnestness; hesitation has halted courage. Even in other lands, the sense of values has to be restored and faith in the Divinity of Man has to be restored. That is the task for which I have come.

Even the *Pandiths* who have great scholarship have no happiness; the scriptures that they have mastered are designed to confer peace of mind, contentment and unshakable joy, but, the repositories of that scholarship are a very discontented group today. They have the umbrella in their hands, no doubt, but it does not protect them against rain or shine! So, even they have to be made aware of the excellence of the knowledge they are carrying, and its curative property. Know thyself---not the Sun and Moon---is the specific for man's ills.

### **Act up to your professed declarations**

Watch the mind, just as you watch the cable through which the current flows. Do not establish contact with the mind; it is as bad as contacting the cable. Watch it from a distance; then only can you derive *Aanandham*; search for the cause of *Ajnaanam* (ignorance) just where it resides. Then you will find that the Mind in association with *vishaya* (sense objects) is the cause. Cut it off from the vision of *vishaya* and *jnaana* (wisdom) dawns.

There was a person who proclaimed himself a *Sthithaprajna* (established in super-consciousness) and an adept in *Yoga*. He went into *Samaadhi* in a trice and sent his *Kundalini Shakthi* (inner cosmic energy) to the *Brahmarandhra* (crown of the head) ! Then he got himself buried in the river bed; but he rose after a few days and started asking for Cash contributions from onlookers! It was a descent from the sublime to the ridiculous. You must guard against that. Be consistent; act up to your professed declarations. The members of the Prashaanthi Vidhwanmahaasabha

have to share their learning and their experience and their joy with the people, that is their elementary duty. For this, they are not to receive any monetary benefits, for they are only doing their duty, increasing their own joy, sharing their own enthusiasm.

I am sure this Sabha will move from victory to victory, for it is contributory to My Work. This huge auditorium was erected, would you believe it, in 15 days! It was all done by the *Bhakthas*; not a single cooly was employed. The Chithravathi river helped a good deal, for it supplied the sand with which the place was filled. No Government, no force of authority could have achieved this so soon; only devotion can inspire this consistent *shraddha* (firm faith). It is all the effect of *Sankalpa* (Will). The *Sankalpa* is there and so, the Mahaasabha also will carry on its great task, unhindered.

*Prashanthi Nilayam, 20-10-1963*

*The body is the cart and the mind is the horse that drags it. No food is given to the horse, which is really the more valuable of the two. Give the mind and its culture the importance it deserves; then only is life worth living.*

*Sathya Sai Baba*

## 29. Loka Kalyaanam

ONE meaning of *Karma* which is popularly accepted is that it is one's destiny, or fate, the inescapable "writing" on the brow, which has to work itself out. There is no escaping it. But people forget that it is not written by some other hand. It is all written by one's own hand. And the hand that wrote it can also wipe it off. The husk, with which the paddy is born, can be removed by effort; the *Maayaa* (worldly illusory power) which persuaded you to write all that destiny can be conquered in an instant and then, the entire page can be wiped away.

Men are spinning cocoons for themselves; they suffer because they are unable to come out of it into the world of light. They are like the monkeys caught by the wandering beggar, dancing at the end of the rope and begging paisa from those sitting

round the ring. Shankara said that he would willingly offer the monkey (mind) to Shiva so that He may teach it tricks which please Him and use it for getting alms for Himself. That is to say, Shankara proposed to fill his mind with thoughts of God, so that the monkey would be tamed and made to serve God's purpose. You too must make the mind the servant of God, not the slave of the senses.

### Criterion to determine the *Dharma* of each person

You must have watched a bird sitting on a branch that waves in the wind. It is unafraid, because it has more confidence in its wings than in the branch; it knows that any moment, it can take to its wings and leave off the perch, the uncertain perch. The branch is *prakrithi* (objective world) and the wings are the *anugraha* (grace) of the Lord. Develop strength of wing and sit on any tree. You won't come to harm. But, if you trust *prakrithi* and rely only upon the protection it gives, you fall.

Mullapoodi Naaraayana Shaasthri and Vaajapeyam Venkateshwara Avadhaani both spoke now of the difficulty of demarcating what exactly is *dharma* (duty) and what the criterion is to determine the *dharma* of each person. Well, the *dharma* that you have to follow is *to be* what you profess to be. This is an easy and intelligible test. If you feel and believe that you are a Brahmin, then you have to follow the *dharma* as laid down for a Brahmin. If you feel and are convinced that you are the *Aathman*, then your *dharma* is the *Aathma dharma* (divine-oriented duty). If you feel and are certain that you are the body, then, the *Deha dharma* (body-oriented duty) is the *dharma* for you.

But, every one must imbibe higher values and consider himself as *Aathma* and follow the *Aathma dharma*. That is the mission for which I have come. That is the work of the *Vidhwanmahaasabha*. Wherever the ants may be, sugar will be placed near the entrance leading to their colonies. All men are Mine; so the whole world has to be saved from the consequences of ignorance or limited knowledge. I will get all My people near Me, for they are Mine and I am theirs. Then I will start teaching and training them, until they become entirely ego-free.

### Devotees seldom know what is good for them

For the last 25 years, it has all been sweetness, kindness, soft persuasion; hereafter, it will be different. I will drag them, place them on the table and operate. That is to say, I have no anger or hate; I have only Love. It is Love that prompts Me to save them, to open their eyes, before they get deeper into the morass.

The Organisation that was inaugurated yesterday will approach the people, those who are as yet ignorant of the great teachings of *Vedha* and *Vedhaantha*, who have not enough capacity to digest it and assimilate it into their system; so it will be given in small easily assimilable doses, with love and sympathy. Each one of those *Pandiths* will contribute some share to the eradication of *Ajnaana*. The watchword will be "*Thamaso maa jyothir-gamaya*," .... "Lead me from darkness to light"---the ancient *Vedhic* prayer. It will be lighting the lamp in village after village, lighting little lamps from these big lamps.

This work has to be done; but the rulers won't take it up, nor do the ruled ask that it be done. Unless the child starts wailing, the mother will not feed it. But, this Mother is different. She knows that the child must be fed and when it is to be. The advent itself was according to My *Sankalpa* (Resolve); every step in this *Avathaara* is due to My own *Sankalpa*; not due to the prayer or petition of devotees. The devotees seldom know what is good for them.

### **Foster the *Vedhas* and ensure world prosperity**

Since Brahmins are the custodians of the *Vedhas* and the *Shaasthras*, fostering the Brahmin will foster the *Vedhas* and the *Shaasthras* and ensure *Loka Kalyaana* (world prosperity). There are some who say that the Brahmin has monopolised the *Vedhas* and *Shaasthras* and that he is misusing that monopoly for his aggrandizement; it is said that the *Vedha* is a huge conspiracy by a clique of Brahmins for promoting the wealth of that community. This is very far from truth. Look at all the rules and regulations, the prohibitions and denials which the Brahmin has to observe; they were all laid down for the Brahmin by Brahmins themselves. Eating, drinking, moving about, sleeping, conversing, working, giving, receiving, earning, spending---all the various activities of living are controlled by hundreds of restrictions. This does not convey the impression of a clique bent upon enjoying at the expense of the rest of the community. Moreover, the regulated life of the Brahmin and the rites, vows, fasts, and *Japam* which he undertakes as part of his duty are intended to benefit the whole world, for securing *Loka Kalyaanam*. As a matter of fact, you must encourage more and more Brahmins to keep up the traditional way of regulated life. That is also one of the purposes of the *Vidhwanmahaasabha*.

Goddess Bhavaani gave a sword to Shivaaji and sent him on Her work of restoring *Dharma* (righteousness). This *Shiva-Shakthi* is giving into the hands of these *Pandiths* the sword *dhairyam* (courage) and asking them to go forth in order to re-educate our people and remove their *ajnaana*. Shivaaji's sword was always used on behalf of .... *Dharma* only. Once, when Shivaaji with his army paid a visit to the *Aashram* of Samarth Raamadhaas, his soldiers invaded the field opposite and plucking the sugar cane, they ate off the entire crop. Besides, when the owner protested, they beat him off with the cane itself. Shivaaji heard about this and he not only punished the soldiers for the theft but, on the recommendation of his Guru, he made the land of the peasant tax free for all time!

These *Pandiths* know the medicine for the *Bhavaroga* (worldly disease); learn it from them and begin taking it. Attend the meetings which they will address in the villages wherever your District Committee arranges. Accept whatever good they give. Become the soldiers of *Prashaanthi*, to drive away the Chinese from your hearts, those who are undermining your awareness of the *Aathma*. Honouring them is honouring Me; neglecting them, is neglecting the *Vedhas* and *Shaasthras* and it is as foolish as neglecting Me.

*Prashaanthi Nilayam, 21-10-1963*

### ***30. Purusha and Purushotthama***

MAN has known about everything else, except death. Why should a person die? Of what benefit is it to die? Why does he die? The answer is in order that he may not die again. He is born, so that he may not get born again. Having been born, man earns and acquires land, riches, materials, grain, articles of comfort and luxury, which he feels will give him happiness and which therefore become the objects of his struggle. But, the object of realising God is forgotten. You may ask: "Why should any one seek company, do good deeds, direct his mind towards good thoughts?" You are listening to Me and what do you get when you so listen? You agree that I am giving you *Aanandham*, is it not? Well, what do you give Me in return? Give Me the *Aacharana* (following, observing) of what I am telling you; practise what I teach, that is enough. That is all I ask.

Man should not die like a cat or a dog. He should leave the world better and happier than when he came into it. He must get away, full of gratitude for the chance given to him to see God in everything that he saw, heard, touched, smelt and tasted. He must remember the Lord, with his last breath.

#### **Never allow your attention to stray away from God**

To get that recollection, a lifetime of practice is needed. When you are at the steering wheel of the car, you may be hearing the talk going on inside the car and even join in it; you may be doing many other things, but, your attention will always be on the road ahead. When the mother returns from the well with three pots one over the other on her head, talking to her companions, her mind is concentrated on the baby in the cradle which she has left at home. So too, when you are engaged in the various duties and obligations of the world, never allow your attention to stray away from God, the Goal. Be always attentive to the signs of His Glory and His Mercy and His Omnipresence. A soldier is the result of many years of intense training; his courage and coolness on the front line are the product of several years of calculated exercise and discipline. As Raani Narasimha Shaastri said, it is only after years of intense study that one can appear for an examination and the results are not announced immediately; you have to wait some more time for that. So, cultivate the habit of remembering the Lord with every breath; then only can you remember Him with the last breath.

There was an old man lying on his deathbed. I think he belonged to the Kannada country. While in his last moments, he could only blabber some word, which his children could not understand; they called in a doctor and asked him to give oxygen or something so that the words might become clear; they surmised that he was announcing to them where exactly he had kept the money he had earned. So, they did everything to get the words correctly. They could distinguish only one sound, ka! So they asked whether he meant *kanaka* (gold) *karu* (calf), *kanaja* (granary) *kasabarika* (broom)! When the broom was shown, he nodded his head and died. So, he had to take birth as a broom!

#### **Death is a consummation which is inevitable**

You should not die like that man; you must die like Bheeshma. He lay on the bed of arrows while he taught the *Shaanthiparva* to the Paandavas, and he died with Krishna before him and in his heart. Death is considered as something to be afraid off as something that should not be spoken about in happy circumstances! But, death is neither good nor bad. You have no choice in

the matter. You can't get it sooner if you welcome it; nor can you avoid it if you condemn it as bad. It is a consummation which is inevitable; from the moment of birth, the march to the cremation ground has started. Some reach the place quicker than others, some go by a round about route and arrive late. That is the only difference, between man and man. But, yet, man walks about as if death is but a distant calamity. When some neighbour loses

his child, you console him saying that it is alia dream, that children are born and die because they are creditors who have come to realise old debts incurred in previous births, etc., etc. But, when you lose a child of your own, you do not console yourselves by the same arguments. They are only for the consumption of others.

### **What dies is the body, not its occupant**

Arjuna addresses Krishna as *Purushotthama*, for He only is Supreme amongst the Purushas. *Purusha* means He who is in this *Pain* (fortified town), namely, this body. Each body has the *Purusha* in it and the entire Universe has the *Purushotthama* immanent in it. So, after all, what dies is the body, not the occupant of the body, the *Purusha*. The faith that you have the *Purusha* in you, will cleanse the mind of all evil and the senses of all evil propensities. The vessel too must be clean, not merely the drink. Without that, *smarana* or *dhyana* done for however long periods they may be, will not yield fruit. That is why the *Vedhas* were entrusted to the Brahmins, along with rigorous rules of discipline. Without minds cleansed by that discipline, the study of the *Vedhas* is a barren exercise.

When a man was about to die, the wife asked, "What is to happen to me?" The parents asked the same question; the children asked, "What is to happen to us?" Even the servants asked piteously, "What is to happen to us?" The dying man looked around helplessly and asked all of them "What is to happen to me?" He should have foreseen the event, if he was wise and prepared himself with an answer to that question. Then he could have died in peace and seeing him die so calmly, his children too could have benefited.

Now, a fashion is spreading in conversation; "Oh! It is all God's Grace," when something you consider good happens to you. If it happens to somebody you don't like, it is not God's Grace evidently, for God is specially yours and not the other fellow's. When something you dislike happens to you, why don't you take that also to be a sign of God's Grace? Resign yourself into God's hands; let Him give success or failure, what does it matter? He may be bent upon toughening you, or it may be for your good in the long run. How can you judge? Who are you to judge? Why judge? Do your best and keep mum. Fix your mind on this attitude.

### **Death will not give advance information**

You don't know when the cameraman is going to click. Mathew, who takes photographs at the Nilayam, at least jumps about in front of you with the camera pointed at this place or that; but, Death will not give any advance intimation, or say, 'Ready' and wait until you are ready. Therefore, be ready always, so that you may produce a good impression with His Name on your lips and His Form in your cleansed heart.

You do not now realise your good boon in getting Me as the Guide. I shall not rest until I reform all of you. The basement for My work has ' been completed: now, the structure will rise upon it. I go round the whole world alone, with no paraphernalia and no publicity, because I am established in My own Glory, in My own Truth. I have *Aathmic* relationship with all, and so I am always succeeding.

To protect the crop, the weeds have to be removed and manure must be applied; that is the work of these *Pandiths of the Vidhwanmahaasabha*, instruments that were long unused and neglected. Join this great work; it is the chance of a lifetime for you.

*Prashaanthi Nilayam, 20- 10- 1963*

*The ills of the country are due to under-nourishment; not so much under-nourishment of the body, but under-nourishment of the spirit, want of spiritual exercise, neglect of spiritual regimen.*

*Allowing the malady the fullest scope, people are engaged in reciting the names of the drugs in the pharmacopia! They do not make any attempt to take the drug in.*

*The means of conveying into every home and village the life-giving waters of the spirit have all dried up or got choked up. That is the reason why under-nourishment, with all its attendant symptoms of debility, nervous disorder and mania is so rampant today.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*



## 31. The Geetha balance

*MANY Pandiths* and scholars have explained the Geetha in many ways to you all these days; if you ask Me, I will say that the Geetha is like a balance, scales, needle and all. The scale on the left is *shloka* 7, of the second chapter, speaking of "*Kaarpanya dosha*." The fulcrum is the 22nd *sloka* of the Ninth Chapter, beginning with "*Ananyaaschinthayantho maam*;" and the scale on the right is the *shloka* in the eighteenth chapter, speaking of "*Sarva-dharmaan parithyajya*." See how apt the fulcrum *shloka* is; it speaks of single- minded attention, steady, like the needle of a well-adjusted balance! Really, the Geetha begins with two scales and a fulcrum, the two armies, of Righteousness and Unrighteousness, with Krishna the Teacher in the middle! We have the two scales of *Loukika* and *A-loukika* (worldly and other worldly), clamouring for attention and respect, *jnaana* (spiritual knowledge) alone can remove the *ajnaana* (ignorance) of Arjuna, that is the *Sankalpa* (Will) of the Lord.

The *Jnaana* has to be put into practice. Otherwise, it is useless. Once the deer of the forest gathered in a great assembly and discussed their own cowardice in the face of the pursuing hounds. They argued, "Why should we, who are equipped with fleeter feet and sharp antlers, be afraid of these insignificant dogs?" At last, a resolution was moved and passed that no deer should henceforth flee before hounds but, even while the cheering was going on, they heard the distant baying of the hounds and, not one stayed there; all had fled as fast as their legs could carry them! The resolution could not be put into practice!

### **Karma has to be done as it is one's nature**

Now these *Pandiths* are well versed in the art of teaching and explaining the sacred scriptures to the people; what is lacking is training for the people in the art of listening to them and following their suggestions for spiritual advancement. The art of engaging in *karma* (action) without getting involved is the thing that has to be learnt, *Karma* has to be done, because it is part of one's nature, not out of any external compulsion. Suurya (Sun) is a *Sahaja karmachaari* (worker by nature), He draws the vapours of water high up to form clouds which pours back as rain; no one taught Him to do this. When you do the *sahaja karma* (action dictated by nature), it won't be a burden. It is when you go contrary to it and do something out of the way that you feel the misery.

The police constable's life is not *sahaja* (natural); so, he feels happy when he comes home, and doffing his uniform, gets into ordinary clothes. When the baby wails, all rush towards the cradle because its *sahajakarma* is to smile and be contentedly happy. So too, *karma* done for the profit arising therefrom accumulates consequences which bind a man. It increases in size like a snowball, but *karma* done without any thought of the fruit therefrom, keeps on diminishing and leaves you free from all consequence.

### **One cannot escape from doing karma**

The *Dharma-karmas* (virtuous actions) have to be done; there is no escape. Fleeing to the forest is no solution, for it only gives the situation a new turn. Your body may be in the jungle, but, your mind will wander in the market-place! There was a *saadhaka* (spiritual seeker) once who was initiated by a *Yogi* into some *manthram* (holy words); he wanted to meditate on it undisturbed and he found his home too full of distraction. He fled to the forest and discovered a convenient tree, under which he could meditate. Before long, the birds roosting on its branches

started to clamour aloud and they showered on his head their droppings. He was greatly incensed. "Have I no place where I can commune with God", he cried. "Children at home; birds and bats in the jungle! I shall immolate myself, get born under better auspices and then, start *saadhana* afresh," he decided.

So, he collected a pile of fuel and making a pyre out of it, lit it and was about to ascend it, when he was interrupted by an old man who accosted him. He said, "By all means, carry out your decision; but, just as now the wind blows from here towards those huts where we live; so, please wait until the wind turns its direction, for, the smell of burning human flesh does not agree with us. Or, if you are in hot haste, you can shift to some other place and avoid being a nuisance to us, poor folk." The *saadhaka* felt he had no freedom even to die. So, he returned home, and decided to brave it all there itself. He understood that *karma* has to be carried through in the objective world itself and there is no use trying to shake it off in a huff. From the *A-shaanthi*---the confusion and travail of the world---one has to snatch harmony and peace.

### **Be in the world, but not of it**

Vishnu is described as "*Bhujaga shyanam*" (lying on the snake) and also as *Shaanthaakaaram!* The *bhujaga* (snake) which has *visha* (poison) represents the *vishaya* (worldly desires) and when you rest upon it, instead of allowing it to envelop you, you can afford to have *shantham* (peace). Let your boat be on the waters, but do not allow the waters to enter the boat. Be in the world, but, not of it. That is the secret of a successful life.

Desire leads to ultimate ruin. It can never be destroyed by fulfilment. It grows upon each satisfaction and becomes a monster that devours the victim him self: so, try to reduce your desires, go on reducing them. There was once a pilgrim who accidentally sat under the *Kalpatharu* (a wish granting tree)! He was terribly thirsty and said to himself, "How I wish some one gave me a cup of sweet cool water!" And, immediately, there was placed before him a cup of deliciously cool water.

He was surprised, but, drank it nevertheless. Then, he wished for a meal of tasty dishes, and he got it in a trice. This led to a wish for a cot and a bed and when he wished his wife was there to see all this wonder, she appeared in an instant. The poor pilgrim mistook her for an apparition and when he exclaimed, "O she is an ogress!" she became one, and the husband shook in terror, crying, "She will now eat me up," which she promptly did!

The chain of desire binds one to the point of suffocation. Control, curb your tendency to wish for this and that. Tell the Lord, "You are enough for me. I do not wish for anything else." Why pine after golden jewels? Pine for gold. The Geetha teaches the lesson of *Sharanaagathi* (unconditional surrender to the Lord); wish for His Will to prevail, not your wish to succeed. This is what Krishna meant when He said, "Be a *Sarvaarambha parithyaagi* (one who renounces all self-centred actions)."

### ***Sharanaagathi* is the main gate to attain *Mukthi***

Death is but a passage from this life to the next; it is the change from old clothes to new, as the Geetha says. But, some cynics laugh at the comparison and ask, what about the death of new-born infants, children, youths and middle-aged persons? Their bodies cannot by any stretch of meaning be classified as *jeerna*, (worn-out)! Well, the clothes might not be old, but the cloth out of which they were made must have been from very old stock, so that though new clothes were prepared out of it, they had to be discarded soon. Again, there are some crooked men who refuse

to believe in a previous life, because they cannot recollect the events! These people cannot recollect the events of one particular *Magha Shuddha Dhashami*, say, 5 or 10 years ago, though they are certain they were alive on that *Dhashami*! Forgetting the events of that day does not mean that they were not alive at all; it only means that they did not pay any special heed to them, they had no *lakshyam* (objective) or special reason to keep it in memory.

*Sharanaagathi* is the main gate to enter the mansion of *mukthi* (liberation from birth-death cycle). It has four floors- *Dhyaana*, *Karma*, *Bhakthi* and *Jnaana* (meditation, activism, devotion and spiritual knowledge). Each floor rests upon the one beneath and the topmost one cannot be reached without ascending the first three. Remember this when you hear people arguing about the relative superiority of the *yogas* or labelling themselves as 'this' or 'that' in the *Aadhyaathmik* (spiritual) field.

### **Human life is superior even to the life of gods**

The Geetha does not refer to any problem of family or social life. It teaches the spiritual aspirant the Path that leads to perfect communion with the Divinity inherent in himself. The reason why Bulusu Appanna Shaasthry extolled this human life as superior to the life not only of beasts but even to the life of the Gods, is that man alone can strive to squeeze out of his experience of this objective world, answers to questions on his own origin, significance and goal. Raamachandhra Shaasthry indicated the measures for clearing the mind of enmeshing obstacles so that the answers might be reflected therein. And the third *Pandith* who spoke today, Maddulapalli Sathyanaaraayana Shaasthry made it clear from the *Shaasthras* that *the world has Shaantham, Aanandham and Jnaanam* (Peace, Bliss and Spiritual Knowledge) as its fundamental base, real Reality. What is needed is to remove the shade that is hiding the effulgence, the screen that covers the truth from view. The Prashaanthi Vidhwanmahaasabha has been designed by Me for this very purpose.

*Prashaanthi Nilayam, 24-10-1963*

*Try to break the coconut, as it comes from the tree; the shell is covered compactly by a coat of fibre. You cannot break the nut by hitting with a crow-bar even; take off the fibrous armour; breaking it is very easy. When you take a coconut to be offered in the temple, you take it, after removing the fibre; then, you offer it to God, breaking it into two halves. This is the symbol for destroying the ego and surrendering to the Lord.*

*So you have to remove the fibre of desire for sense-objects and then, go before the Lord devoid of kaama and krodha (desire and anger); there you declare that you are ego-less by breaking the coconut into two. You will be accepted then, not before.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*

## 32. *Thath-Thwam*

PERI Venkateshwara Shaasthry and others by their speeches, relieved you from hunger; now, it is My turn to sharpen your yearning, which is the hunger of the mind for the higher joy. When *Dharma* declines or rather, when those who have a duty to regulate their lives according to *dharma* lose faith in it, then, its restoration cannot be taken up by all and sundry. A broken bridge on a highway cannot be set right by amateur skill and the momentary enthusiasm of the villagers around. The very authority which laid down the road and planned the bridge has to initiate repair. The Lord has come again on this Mission; He has collected the engineers and contractors and the labour for the purpose. He is now set on the task.

When Krishna knew that Brahma had taken away and hidden the cows and calves and the cowherds and boys, the whole lot of them that had gone out of their homes into the pastures, He created anew, the same number, the same types, the same persons, cattle and all, and nobody suspected for one full year that the genuine was hidden and that it was the duplicate that was in the village everywhere. All that was thus created was *Krishna thathwa* (true nature of Krishna), just as all that was hidden by *Brahma* Was also *Krishna thathwa*. You too are *Krishna thathwa*; what other *thathwa* is there, really?

### **Everyone must be conscious of *Krishna thathwa***

Even now with Me, My *Maayaasrishti* (creation out of the void), is for some definite purpose; just as it was then. Then it was to purify and sanctify the *gopees*; now, too, the aim is to purify and sanctify. *Nara* is limited and deluded; when that limit is crossed and when that delusion is gone, he is *Naaraayana* and he shines in his *thathwa*.

Every one must be conscious of this *thathwa*, which is his reality. To make each one conscious of it is the aim of those who come for *Dharmasthaapana* (revival of righteousness). In the *Mahaabhaaratha*, the most noteworthy theme is this *Dharmasthapana*. When the *Paandavas* were exiled into the forest, it is as if the five *Praanas* (life breath) of *Dharma*, the sustaining forces of *Dharma*, were exiled. *Dharmaraaja* is the *Praana* of the Right Conduct, *Bheema*, of the Protective Might of *Dharma*, *Arjuna* of the Faith and Devotion needed as its foundation, *Nakula* and *Sahadheva*, of the steadfast faith essential for the practice of *Dharma*. When the *Paandavas* went to the forest, *Hashtinaapura* was reduced to *Asthinaapura*---a city of bones, without flesh and blood.

You call Me *Dharmamuurthi* (personification of Virtue). No, each of you is a *Dharmamuurthi*. But, you have strayed away; to bring you back to the status that you have lost, that is My aim. This *Prashanthi Vidhwanmahaasabha*, which has been established here this *Navaraathri*, will be doing just that job. Today, its aims and objects as well as the methods of working were discussed and settled, it is your *Sabha*; you can make use of it, in proportion to your *bhakthi* (devotion) and your *shakthi* (capacity). The deposits which these *Pandiths* have made in *jnaanam* and *thapas* (penance) are yours; draw cheques on them and they will give you the riches, without question.

### **The sowing part of the work has begun**

*Pandiths* and scholars of *Vedhas* and *Shaasthras* have been suffering a lot, due to neglect by society. But, that is not the result of their having studied the *Vedhas*; it is because they have not put what they have learnt into action. Every one must wait till the fruit is ripe. It will take time for the growth of the tree, for its blossoming, for the fruits to appear, to ripen and to be filled

with sweet juice. Pluck it before time and you have to throw it away. Why? To become a graduate and take a degree, one has to struggle with the alphabet at first, then read words formed by the letters, then study sentences and finally complete texts.

The fruition of their studies has come now, after all these years, when the *Pandiths* have secured this medium for sharing their joy and their wisdom with their brothers and sisters. The *Pandiths* have been allotted districts and a selected few will be supervising the programmes in each district. The District Committees will arrange meetings and invite the *Pandiths* for the three-day sessions of the Sabha.

### **The light is in you, you are the light**

This is the sowing part of the work, sowing the seeds of the *Karma kaanda*, the *Upaasana kaanda* and the *Jnaana kaanda*, of *Vedhaantha*, of *Dharma Shaasthras*, of the Glory of God as described in the *Raamaayana*, the *Mahaabhaaratha*, and the *Bhaagavatha*. You have to look after the fields, tend the young crop, feed it with manure of *manana*, and rid it of pests, and harvest the happiness that comes from eating the nourishing grain. That is the real agriculture for you. Chance to share in this agriculture will come only to a few, the few who are endowed with the merit of many lives.

First, the Sabha will be concerned with Andhra Pradesh and later, it will reach out into the Karnataka and Kerala States, and then into all the States of India, and within a short time, even outside India. Already, there are quite a few *Sathya Sai Sanghas* outside India and they are pressing for the extension of Swami's Grace in this form too to their places.

The first profit from such a Sabha is that you will be able to tend and develop something that is specially India. I am saying this, because you understand only the language of profit. Whatever you are asked to do, the first question is, "How much will be the profit?" This greed for *laabha* (profit) has made you sink in *lobha* (greed)! The highest profit is the arrival through this road back at the place from where you came, your *Swasthaana*.

Brahma who was born in the lotus that arose out of the navel of Vishnu wondered how he came to be there and it seems he searched and searched for the place from where he came. He could not trace it at all. But, by some little thought, you can know, from where you came, or, rather, what your real nature is. Then what remains is the attempt to attain it. That is what is meant by Liberation, or *Moksha*.

Simple faith in the words of the wise is more profitable than years of study and discussion. Meditate on such a *Mahaavaakya* as "*Thath-thwam-asi*" (That thou art) and as you go on revolving it in your mind, meanings will dawn upon you, without the help of any commentary. Commentaries only tend to confuse you. Think of the '*Thath*' (Divinity); analyse the '*thwam*' (yourself); and then, you will be convinced that '*asi*' (equality) is the only solution. You are in the Light; the Light is in you; you are the Light---these are the steps.

*Prashanthi Nilayam, 25-10- 1963*

*You can be free from fear only when you are confident of the strength of the foundation. You do not see your breath or weigh it; but, breath is the very sustenance of life. The unseen is the basis of*

*the seen. If you are caught up in the meshes of the seen, you cannot know the importance of the unseen.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*

### ***33. It will not last***

THE greatest wonder of all is that nobody knows himself nobody struggles to know about himself, even among those who spend their lifetime in knowing about others. Your Self is something subtler than water or air or even *aakaasha* (space). It must go into the eye so that you may see; it must move into the hand so that it may hold; it must move into the feet so that you may walk. The senses are inert materials; the 'I' must operate so that they may function.

That "I" is *Brahman*, mistaken to be separate! In the *Thretha Yuga*, *vaanaras* were made to act and talk like *naras* (humans); in the *Dhwaapara Yuga*, *nara* was transformed into *Naaraayana* (God) by the Grace of Naaraayana; in the *Kali Yuga*, the declaration is made that *Nara* is Naaraayana

Himself. The *Ghata-aakaasha* (space in the pot) and the *Matha-aakaasha* (space in the monastery) are identical with the *Mahaa-aakaasha* (Vast sky space); only the *upaadhis* (disguises), *ghata* and *matra* keep up the illusion of separateness. The senses are the villains, they instill the delusion that you are the *upaadhi* (body). Curb them as the bull is curbed by the nose-ring, the horse by the bit in the mouth, the elephant by the goad. When the Paandavas were traversing the Himaalayas towards the end of their careers, Dharmaraaja was still affected by mental anxieties and so he prayed to Krishna to spend some time with them. On His departure from their dwelling, Krishna gave Dharmaraaja a note, which he was to read to himself whenever he was affected by joy or grief. The note read: "*Eppudoo undhadhu*" (This will not last). That is one method by which mental agitations can be calmed.

#### **You are in this world under sentence**

Take life in the world as a compulsory duty imposed on you. You are now in jail under a sentence for crimes committed in a previous birth. The Superintendent assigns various duties-cooking, drawing water, hewing wood, etc. You have to do the work assigned to the best of your ability, without any expectation of reward. If you behave well, cause no trouble, and do the assigned duties without demur, then some days may be written off your sentence and you may be released sooner, with a certificate that you are reliable and good. This attitude will give you practice in *nishkaamakarma* (Selfless action), which is very valuable for curbing the senses.

When you talk of God to some people, they ask, "We will believe, only if we can see Him." When the Vidhwanmahaasabha *Pandiths* go to the villages for their mission of spreading the truths of the *Vedhas*, this question will crop up. Then you have to ask them: "I won't believe that you have pain unless I can see pain with my eyes." God is Bliss, how can bliss be shown and seen? Whether others believe or not, 2 plus 2 is equal to 4, You may agree or refuse to agree, but, that is a fact, proved by the experience of all those who agree. So too is the fact of God.

#### **Live in constant thought of God**

You must live in the constant thought of God as well as of another fact, Death. The body is the car in which you are riding to death. You may meet death any moment, while riding; some tree or lorry or ditch or slush will bring it. Remember Death Remember that time is running out every moment; then, you will not be tempted to waste time in idle talk or vain pursuits or wanton mischief or vulgar entertainment. Travel in the car carefully, slowly, with due regard to the needs of others on the road; do not greedily try to overtake others, or compete in speed, know the

limitations of the vehicle and the road! And then, you will not meet with any accident. Your journey will be a happy experience for you and the rest of the people.

Jonnalagadda Sathyanaaraayanamurthy in his speech was exhorting you to teach, to reform, to reconstruct and do many other things. But, not all can enter upon such tasks, First, self; then, help, improve yourself, teach yourself, reconstruct yourself---and, then proceed to solve the problems of others, That reconstruction is quite easy, provided you inquire calmly into your own personality---"Am I the body, or the senses or the mind or the *Buddhi*, etc.?" You heard in the *Burrakatha* (folk tale) on Shivaaji, how Goddess Bhavaani gave the sword to him. This *Shiva-Shakthi* will give you the *Jnaanakhadga* and the *Subodhakhadga* (the sword of spiritual knowledge and spiritual instruction) that will destroy the forces of *Ajnaana*. Take it and become wise and happy.

*Prashanthi Nilayam, 26-10-1963*

*Activity results in either joy or grief, due to the attachment with which it is done. "I" and "mine" are the two fangs of the serpent; pluck them out, then, you can safely handle it and play with it.*

*You need not give up activity. As a matter of fact, you have to be intensely active.*

*In this Karmabhumi (the land of sacred action), it is only through karma that you can transcend karma.*

*Birds and beasts are not aware of this secret; man alone can select and accept the karma that is most profitable for liberation from the chain of karma.*

*Sathya Sai Baba*



### 34. Sankalpa

KALLURI Veerabhadhrashaasthy declared now that the *Swaadhyaaya Jnaana Yajnas* (ritual sacrifices for Self enlightenment); which started on the 20th had ended; but, there is no *samaapthi* (conclusion) for the *yajna*. All life is a *yajna*; when does the *yajna* meet its *samaapthi*? I shall tell you. *Sama* means *Brahma*; *aapthi* means *praapthi*, attainment, reaching. When Brahman is attained, that day, that moment, the *Yajna* which is Life can be said to have ended; not until then. This *samaapthi* marks only the end of these rituals. Carry on the *yajna*, wherever you are, by means of *shravana*, *manana* and *nidhidhyaasana* (listening, contemplation and deep meditation).

Shaasthy today described the story of Rukmini Kalyaana. Now, this is not simply the story of a marriage. It is the union of *Purusha* with *Prakrithi* itself. The Brahmin intermediary is the symbol of *Vedhic* authority through which alone the merging of the two is known. Rukmini is the *Jeeva* (individual self) and Krishna is the *Paramaathma*. She is suffering from the rules and restrictions imposed by *Prakrithi* (objective world); *Ahamkaara* (egoism) is her brother; Worldliness is her father. But, on account of her *sadhaachaara* (good conduct), her mind rested on God. So she was able to plan a method of reaching God.

#### **One is born to serve out one's sentence**

Her prayers, repentance, yearning and steadfastness were rewarded. Her observance of the age-old code of good conduct at last saved her for she went out for the *Gowri puuja* (Worship & universal mother Goddess), before the marriage rite. In that temple she was immersed in the worship of God and so she was liberated from the bonds by the God who was lying in wait! The parents and the brother and all the relatives objected but, an individual is born to work out his destiny, not to act a role in some one else's drama. One is born to serve out one's sentence; when the sentence ends, one is free. You shall not remain in prison, on the pretext that a dear comrade is still in! Just think of this fact: Rukmini had not met Krishna before; there was no preliminary wooing. The soul yearned and it won. They had met in the realm of the spirit.

This is no ordinary marriage, though the people who write about it and describe it in *Harikathas* (divine stories), speak of it as the romantic adventure of a wilful girl and a young care-free bravado! It is merging of *thath* with *thwam* (That with This). The same thing, if it is near, is referred to as this, and if far, is referred to as that; this is there (that is when it is not here but there). *Thath* is the same as *thwam*, only it is far; why is it far? Because it is beyond the reach of the intellect, the senses, and words.

To communicate one's experience of the Godhead, words are inadequate; in fact, even the attempt is beyond the fortunate sage. Two pilgrims were passing through a forest and sitting under a tree, they were talking about the debt Man owed to several "mothers." One of them detailed a list of such "mothers," the *Maatha* that gave birth, the *Go-maatha*, the *Bhu-maatha*, and the *Vedha-maatha* (mother cow, motherland and mother scriptures).

#### **Conception of Brahman depends on one's experience**

The talk drifted towards the importance of *Go-puuj*a (cow worship); and, they began discussing what exactly is meant by the word *Go*, which means a cow. There ensued a debate about its characteristics: a tail, two horns, four legs, an udder, etc. They rose up and wandered long to discover an animal with those items and at last espied a buffalo, which they worshipped to their

heart's content. So, the conception of *Brahman* also will depend on each one's equipment and experience, but, that does not mean, there are so many different *Brahmans*. A man is called Daddy, Son, Uncle, Grandfather, Cousin, Nephew and Husband---but, that does not make him more than one individual!

Our Vidhwanmahaasabha will establish this truth in the minds of all. It is not out for condemning any faith or attracting people into a new faith. It will be engaged in fostering the positive attitude in spiritual effort; encouraging, as *Sanaathana Dharma* (ancient, eternal, universal religion) has always done, all to move forward from wherever they are, in the direction of the Lord, whom they are free to picture in whatever Form they like. No harsh word is to be used when referring to another's faith, for, faith is a precious plant and harshness might make it wither. Know the truth; experience the *Aanandha* (bliss)---that is the Message that these *Vidhwans* (scholars) will carry.

Those who say that *Aanandha* is the essential nature of man have the responsibility to be full of *Aanandha* themselves. You enquire of another person the reason why he looks depressed; you are not worried if he looks happy. Why? Because depression is unnatural; it is against man's essential nature. Water is cool; that is its nature. So, the hot spring in front of the temple of Bhadrinaath by the side of the ice-cold Alakanandha is looked upon with wonder. Be yourself what you tell the other man to be. People will follow only the man who speaks out of personal experience.

### ***Shaasthras are based on Saadhaks' experience***

Some people were on this bank of the river and since they were strangers they sought information whether the river could be crossed at that point and how. A lame fellow said, "It is dangerous to cross at this point; go further down." They did not believe him, for he could not have waded through! A blind man said, "You can cross; only, keep more to the left for some distance and move to the right afterwards." They did not follow his advice, for he could not have known; he must have been led by some one else. At last a man came, who volunteered to take them across. "I have crossed often; I live on the other bank and I own lands on this side." So, they followed him with confidence and they could reach the other bank safe.

A little child is taught names and facts by the elders; it calls a thing a dog; another thing a tree; a third thing, a stone. It says, when asked, that is a man. How does it know? Because it has been told so. The characteristics of animals, plants, trees, birds and men have been taught by the elders and it believes them and takes them on trust. Then why cannot you believe also in God? You are told that also; from thousands of years you have been told that there is God with many characteristics by which you can visualise Him.

The *Shaasthras* (spiritual sciences) declare that the signs of God are such and such. The *Shaasthras* are based on the experience of *saadhaks* (spiritual aspirants) and they have as much authenticity as any thing else. Many things are taken on trust, depending on the reliability, the impartiality, the attainments of the people saying them. The *rishis* (sages) are impartial; they have no intention to deceive or mislead.

### ***Prema alone can understand prema***

If you feel that you too must have the experience or else you will not believe, well, come and experience. There is no use simply coming one day and going away the next day, saying, "I have seen Sathya Sai Baaba. He wears a fine long gown and He has wonderful hair." If you spend the

time lounging in the hotels here or playing cards, or listening to tales, how can you understand? Determine to discover, decide to learn, dive deep, and then you will know.

Thousands have come now and in the years gone by; many have no desire to know; many who have the desire are unaware of the fact that they must pay more attention to actual experience of the mind, not to the sense impressions. You may be staring at something, but, if your mind is not focussed on it, you cannot cognise it. If your body is in this auditorium, your ear in the hotel and your eye all round the compound, how can anything be learnt? *Prema* alone can understand *prema* (love).

*Prema* is the manner of speaking; Truth is the substance; *Dharma* (virtue) is the language; *Shaanthi*, the result aimed at. As a matter of fact, I am *Premaswarupa*. I do not need any rest in My efforts to give you *Aanandha*. All this *yajna*, this gathering of *Pandiths*, this Vidhwanmahaasabha is for your *Aanandha*.

### **Join this great task of *Dharmasthaapana***

If all this arrangement is done somewhere else, what a great noise it would have made! People would have scoured the land with lists of likely donors, and worried this man and that, and finally boasted of their achievements. But, here, only just a few know about this. It was all a case of the *Sankalpa* (Will Power) working itself by the force of its own goodness. And, what do you bring to Me? Only, tears! Tears of grief when you come and tears of *Aanandha* when you go!

I am unattached to any event or plan. I am not worried at all by fear of failure, for, I know that My Plan must succeed. This Prashaanthi Vidhwanma-haasabha too is not something new; it is *Sanaathanam* (eternal). Only, it is now once again set on the age-old Mission. This work of *Dharma-sthaapanam* (establishment of righteousness) is being done over and over again. You have now the chance to share in it; so, join this great task, and make your lives worthwhile.

These evening discourses of *Pandiths* and My own *sambhaasahna* (discourses) have to stop from tomorrow; for, I must start meeting those of you who have brought huge loads of grief, discontents, difficulties and problems for My attention. That is also My Work and I shall gladly attend to it.

*Prashaanthi Nilayam, 28-10-1963*

*Have a time-table for spiritualsustenance, just as you have now for physical sustenance.*

*A breakfast of pious repetition of Lord's name (japa) and meditation (dhyaana), a lunch hour ritual worship of the Lord (puuja), 'tea and snacks' of reading scriptures or sacred books (pravachana) in the afternoon and a light dinner of devotional music (bhajana) in the early hours of the night.*

*If you follow this regimen, you can sleep soundly and wake up refreshed.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*

### 35. *Amirtha Vaani*

THEY speak of two types of *Karma*: *Dhahika* and *Daivika* (physical and spiritual). But, this division is absurd and even dangerous. All acts and activities are spiritual, the body is but an instrument for spiritual progress and attainment. Modern education emphasises the physical and neglects the spirit, which is crucial. It teaches that joy derived through the senses alone are worth while; it does not give even a glimpse of the deeper and more lasting joy derivable through the spirit which is your real self and it is, in essence, *aanandha*, *shaanthi*, *jnaana*---*Sathyam*, *Shivam*, *Sundharam* (bliss, peace, spiritual knowledge---Truth, Goodness and Beauty).

You must have noticed that I never address you as '*Bhakthulaara*' for how can you be only that? You *are Bhagavaan*, you become that by just shedding *the avidhya* (ignorance) that makes you imagine that you are limited. That is why I address you either as *Shaanthi Swaruupulaara* , or *Aanandha swaruupulaara*, or *Divyaathma swaruupulaara* (Embodiments of Peace or Bliss or Divine Soul). That is your real nature, but, you are not even told who you are. Your misery is traceable to this failure to know yourself.

Educators today do not teach the ways and means of crossing the sea of misery, of facing success and defeat, of remaining calm and collected. The brain is stuffed with information, the hands are trained in skills, but, the senses are not tamed, the intelligence is not curbed, the mind is allowed to run amok. That is the cause of the tragic crisis in the world today.

#### **Do karma full of joy and enthusiasm**

You have been born in this *Karmakshethra* (land of spiritual activity) and your duty is to engage yourself in continuous uninterrupted *karma*. Do not get bogged in gloom and sloth; do *karma* full of joy and enthusiasm, as if each act is an offering at the Feet of the Lord. *Bhaaritha desh* (India) is the Guru's *peetham* (seat of Spiritual Teacher) of Humanity; that is the role it has played and has to play; but, as consequence of undue attachment to the senses and the world, fostered by blind admiration and snobbish imitation, the role has been forgotten, to the great loss of ourselves and of the rest of humanity. The restrictions, regulations and rules of guidance for individual family, community, nation and humanity are either not remembered or brushed aside as obsolete. The joy, peace and contentment that one gets by observing them are themselves witnesses of their worth.

The *Pandiths* and scholars who have assembled here, for the *Prashaanthi Vidhwanmahaasabha* being inaugurated now, have therefore a great responsibility for they must hold fast to the *Prashaanthi* (total peace) that the study and practice of the *Vedhas* and *Shaasthras* has conferred upon them; they must also share that *Prashaanthi* with all humanity. They must be bold, free and happy always, for they know that this is all an unreal dream. They know the goal of life and they are marching steadily towards it with every passing minute.

#### **Grief is the greatest friend of man**

All that is *padhaaritha* (matter) must be transformed into *paraaritha* (spirituality); that is My plan. *The jnaana* which the *Vedhas* and *Shaasthras* have given to these people must be distributed. At present these scholars have no self-confidence, because they are losing faith in what they themselves have hitherto considered invaluable. They send their children to technical courses and secular studies, for they are heavily pinched for the means of livelihood. What is the good in having an umbrella that allows the Sun to burn you and the rain to soak you, they have started

asking! But, the *Vedhic* treasure-house has vast riches, which is urgently needed today. It is to conserve, develop and utilise it more fully that this Sabha is inaugurated now.

The *Vedha* is the basis of *dharma*, which is like the Mother in its loving care for man. *Bhaaritha bhuumi* (India) is *Yoga bhuumi*, *Karma bhuumi*, *Thyaaga bhuumi*, not *Bhoga bhuumi* (Land of spiritual union, spiritual activity, renunciation and spiritual enjoyment). The Kauravas failed because they stuck to empire and greed for power, and fixed their minds on *bhoga* (enjoyment). The Paandavas secured Divine guidance and won, because they stuck to spiritual joy, ascetic self-control and simplicity and sincerity. To follow the same path is the sign of wisdom. That is the Path of *Dharma* (virtue) from which mankind has strayed away. Grief is the greatest friend of man, for it opens the eyes and shocks you into the search for the secret of *shaanthi* and *santhosha* (peace and happiness).

### **There is no need for tears or despair**

A monkey put its hand into a pot of nuts and tightened its fist full of the food, but, it could not take its hand out of the narrow neck because the fist was too big for it. Unless the nuts were dropped back into the pot and the fingers released, the hand could not be got out! That is the situation of man today. His greed is giving him great pain but he has not discovered the fact; so he clings to his possessions and tries to pull his hand out; that gives him great pain. There is no use blaming the nuts or the pot. The fat, It is in the monkey itself. *Prakrithi* (Nature) is the pot and the sensory objects are the nuts.

A bird sits on a tiny twig, in perfect confidence! Where does it get the confidence from? Not from the twig; but, from the wings which can take it aloft at the slightest sign of danger. The twig is *Prakrithi* (objective world) Sit on it lightly, gaily, confidently; but, rely more on the wings, namely the Grace of the Lord who can lift you aloft, away from *Prakrithi* at the slightest premonition of danger. The twig is not very reliable but, the wings are always there to save you.

The revival of that *dharma* is a task which the rulers have not planned for; it is a programme which the people are not keen upon. Then, who has to take it up? It was said that I have taken up this Form in answer to the prayers of *saadhus* (noble souls) and others. There are some mothers who feed the baby only when it starts crying; the more considerate and loving type of mother knows when the baby is hungry; she need not be called to its side by a loud wall. This Mother is that type of Mother. I have come, because I felt I had to come. I resolved upon this. There is no need now for tears or despair, either among the repositories of the *Vedhic* wisdom or among the good, who suffer from the cruel winds of *adharma* (vice). This campaign will succeed; it will not fall. The welfare of the world will be ensured through the fostering of the Godly everywhere, and more particularly of these reservoirs of the ancient wisdom of this land.

*Dashara Discourses, November 1963*

*Love is God. God is Love. Where there is Love, there God is certainly evident. Love more and more people, love them more and more intensely; transform the love into service, transform the service into worship; that is the highest saadhana.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*

### 36. Gift of spiritual knowledge

EVEN in this holy place of Shrishailam, such a jubilant and auspicious celebration has not taken place since years. In this land where *thapas* (penance) alone is valued as significant, in this *Karma bhuumi* (land of spiritual activity), there is no reason why *ashaanthi* (confusion and turmoil) must spread; it is all due to the multiplication of wants and desire for sensual pleasure, instead of spiritual contentment. Even the starting of a *Nithya Annapoorna Annadhaana Sathram* (Place for gift of food to the poor) here by the Akhila Bhaaratha Aarya Vyshya Sangham today, is a sign of the decline of faith and strength. There should not be any need to feed; the cry of "give" "give" ("*dehi! dehi!*") should not be heard in this land of *Annapoorna*, of plenty and prosperity. This place of must be approached in the hue spirit of humility and prayer. Picnic parties and tourists have no place here.

There are many legends regarding the temple at Shrishailam. Mallikhaarjuna is the white, fragrant, *Nirmala* (pure) God, the Grace-showering Shiva, who bends in mercy at the slightest yearning of the devotee. *Bhramaraamba* (the consort), is the Bee, hovering on the fragrant *mallika* (jasmine), drawn by the *makarandha* (honey) of the flower, the true representative of the *bhaktha* (devotee).

#### Legends the fore-fathers have treasured

Do not laugh at the legends that your fore-fathers have gathered and treasured. They have invested the place with sanctity and elevated the thoughts and fancies of generations of men. This shrine has consoled and comforted thousands and thousands of pious persons, year after year. Shankaraachaarya was here and he sang of the holiness of this place and the calm he enjoyed here. He has installed a *chakra* (sanctified holy symbol) which, I may tell you, is in a small cave by the side of Paathaala Ganga.

The desire to do service to the poor and the hungry is good; but, it is taking a turn towards building up institutions and collecting funds and seeking donations. While this is being done, egoism increases; envy spreads; feelings of inferiority and superiority spring up; the mental peace one had is spent while one is caught in this affair. All the struggle falls on one man, though there may be a committee. And, when the institution is finally built, a sense of possession develops and though all institutions are the Lord's and nothing can rise or exist without Him, people forget it and claim all the credit.

There are certain dire possibilities which I want all social workers to guard against. First, cleanse your own minds and then start advising others. Earn mental peace and strength for yourself and then try to secure them for others. Learn the secret of lasting happiness yourself and then, endeavour to make others happy. Seek the real limb, not the artificial limb. Get the doctor who would assure, "here-after your will not fall ill" and not the doctor who gives some relief to the present attack.

The atmosphere of holy places should improve. The nature of *Sanyaasis* (monks) requires drastic correction. Too many of them are involved in householder functions; too many of them are after worldly fame and riches. All this will be done by Me as part of *Dharmasthaapana*. The Prashaanthi Vidhwanmahaasabha about which Veerabhadhra Shaasthy spoke is one of the instruments for this revival of *dharma*.

## Man needs food more for the Spirit

More than food for the stomach, man needs food for the spirit. The "*anna*" (food) that *Annapoornadhevi* (Goddess of Nourishment) gives is not food, rice and curry. The *bhiksha* (alms) that She is asked to give is *Jnaana bhiksha*, not the handful of rice that you think it means. It is *Jnaana bhiksha*, *Prema bhiksha*, *Bhakthi bhiksha*, *Anugraha bhiksha* (alms of spiritual knowledge, love, devotion and grace). Seek Her Grace to get more *jnaana*, more *prema*, more *bhakthi* and more of Grace. Do not lower the standard of service when serving pilgrims in this holy place; place emphasis here on *bhakthi*, *vairaagya* and *jnaana*. Do not encourage pomp and insincerity here, of all places. If some one, out of sincere devotion, gives a naya paisa, accept it as if it is a crore, do not accept a crore if it is given with a view to parade wealth or advertise detachment.

I am laying the foundation stone of the new block of this *Sathram* (pilgrims rest-house), and I bless that you may so act that the significance of the name *Annapoorna* is not neglected. You have My Blessings in full measure; join hands, all of you in this task and make it a success soon. Do not feed indiscriminately, and make this an asylum for idlers. Feed only those who come with yearning to spend some days in this holy atmosphere; then only will people be grateful. Feed those who come here for doing *saadhana*, for living their lives in the Presence of God; feed those who are living examples of the joy that comes from spiritual effort.

*Shrishailam, 5-12-1963*

*The sages of ancient times divided karma into vikarma (that is intentionally done) and akarma (that is done without any intention to gain the consequence). Follow the latter and you will save yourselves from suffering.*

*All other activities---the earning of wealth, of reputation, of fame and publicity---result in suffering.*

*Sathya Sat Baaba*

### 37. *Sahaja and a-sahaja*

*SATHYA, Dharma, Shaanthi and Prema* (Truth, Virtue, Peace and Love) are the four pillars of *Sanaathana Dharma*, the four faces of the Ancient Teaching. Of course, these words are on the lips of every one, but, what they mean is something quite shallow and ineffective. To describe an incident just as you saw it happen, is 'truth'; to give water to the thirsty and food to the hungry is 'Dharma'; to suffer calamity in silence is 'Shaanthi' and to nourish wife and children is 'Prema'--*-that is the general Interpretation!*

But, this is all wrong. Truth is something that is not modified by time or space or characteristic. It must be the same for ever, unaffected and unchanged. Then alone is it Truth. It should not be proved false by some subsequent event or knowledge. *Dharma* is a body of principles that are fundamental to social stability and individual progress. There are various branches of *Dharma*---*Karthavya dharma*, *Vama dharma*, *Aashrama dharma* (obligatory duty, duties pertaining to status and stages of life), etc., but, the aim of all is to help man, stage by stage, towards liberation from grief and from the chain of birth and death.

See how grand the conception of each is compare this with the common meaning that has been so far given. Then, take the quality of *Shaanthi*. It denotes the capacity to bear success and failure, joy and misery, defeat and victory, with perfect equanimity. And, *Prema* is the quality of *Sarvasamaanatha* (equality of every one), of not only *Ahimsa* {non-violence} but the conscious acceptance of the duty of love, because every being is a spark of Divinity, as much of a spark as you yourself.

#### **All lies in the inspiration behind the act**

The first step in spiritual training is to curb the *Ichhaa shakthi* (power of desires), which prompts the senses to pursue objects, if the *iccha* (wish) is for God it is good; if for objective pleasure, it harms the individual, if a house is set on fire, it is incendiarism; if Hanumaan sets fire to Lanka, it is justifiable retribution and a good lesson. If a dacoit cuts off your hand, it is *himsa* (injury); if the doctor amputates it, he saves your life and so, it is *ahimsa* (non-injury). *Vishaya vaasana* (attachment to sense objects) makes an act low, *Bhagavath vaasana* (attachment to God) makes it sacrosanct. Daksha *yajna* (ritual sacrifice) was converted into a battle, because Parameshwara was not present; the Kurukshethra battle was transformed into a *Yajna*, because Parameshwara was present there. Arjuna dedicated himself at the Lord's Feet; Daksha scorned the Lord. That was the difference, and that is the explanation. It all lies in the *bhaava* (the motive), the inspiration behind the act and the word.

*Bhakthi* (devotion) is not like lime pickle, to be used only when you have fever; it is man's daily substance, the vitamin he must needs have for physical and mental health. The contemplation of God is the main rice dish; the rest are side dishes, appetisers, fillers. Take the tablets, the *Naamasmarana* (constant thought of the Lord) tablets, and all the experience of your daily life, the good and the bad, will be digested nicely. You don't eat paddy, do you? You have the sense to remove the husk and then boil the rice before you eat it. So also, why do you take in nature as it is? Remove the allurements it has to the senses, make it just an expression of the Divine Will and then assimilate it.

Do *Naamasmarana* with full faith and pure heart You forget your nature in the complex tangle of artificiality; you miss the *sahaja* (natural) when you are caught in the net of *a-sahaja*



(artificial). The natural is *prema, shaanthi, sathya, aanandha*. The artificial is hate, falsehood, war, grief and greed. You must discover the spring of your own truth; you cannot play truant for long; after many a birth, even if their number is a hundred, you have to reach the source from where you strayed. Your mind is steady when it is engaged in other activities; but, when it is focussed on God, it begins to waver. It does not like to stop its vagaries, which it will have to do, once God enters your heart. Tame it by *Naamasmarana*. That is the message which I have come to announce. Have the *Naamam* (God's Name) on your tongue, the *Ruupa* (Divine Form) in your eye, the *Mahima* (Divine Glory) in your heart---then thunderbolts will pass you quietly by.

Do *Naamasmarana* in some set manner, with full faith and pure heart. When the country is endangered, it is as bad as when the body is endangered. The Name will give you courage to save the Mother. If all of you strengthen your moral qualities, and develop faith in God and *Sanaathana Dharma* (eternal religion), calamity can never visit this land. Let all *Aasthikas* (believers in God) proclaim the value of meditation on God. I shall bless that endeavour; I know that will save you and save the country. That is why I am blessing you on this note of joy.

*Shrishailam, 6-12-1963*

*The consequence of karma can be wiped out only through karma, as a thorn can be removed only by means of another. Do good karma to assuage the pain of the bad karma which you have done and from which you suffer now.*

*The best and the simplest karma is the repetition of the Name of the Lord; be ever engaged in it. It will keep out evil tendencies and wicked thoughts. It will help you radiate love all round you.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*

### 38. Project site, Puuja site

I LIVE upon the *Aanandha* that you derive when you sing the Name and glorify the Form of the Lord. That is My food, My daily sustenance. So, I have no need to talk to you; it is sufficient if I sit here and draw in the *Aanandha* that you feel when you do *Bhajana* (group singing of the glory of the Lord),

You have all gathered here from the distant corners of our country, from every state and every linguistic unit, in order to pool your separate skills of hand and head for the successful completion of this great task which will give food and happiness for crores of brothers and sisters for centuries. This is a great chance for all of you, a chance that comes to few, however skilled they might be. It is a rare chance that comes to few in any country. The lake that will fill this gorge with waters of the Krishna river when you build the dam across it, will be your *Nishkaama karma, a samudhra* (an ocean of selfless effort). You will all see it and feel its coolness, depth and strength. It will gladden you and inspire you and make you feel that your life has been worth while.

Don't go about this holy work in a haphazard way, without *shraddha* and *bhakti* (faith and devotion). You have to, by that *shraddha* and *bhakti*, curb this mighty river, which has carved its way through these hard rocks since the beginning of time, and you have to obstruct its speed and its rage for the benefit of man and beast. Man has, by his skill and daring, to make this wayward child of Nature halt for a while, and pass on.

#### **Canalise your passions into useful fields**

This task will become lighter if man curbs his own waywardness and his own egoism, anger, malice, envy, and greed and the roaring flood of his passions. Dam them in your own hearts, and canalise them into useful fields. Utilise the force of those qualities to gain better results from your efforts and *saadhana* (spiritual discipline). Grow in those fields the fruits of *Shaanthi* and *Prema*. That is the agriculture that aspirants know, and which you can also learn with ease. For it is an ancient science, which your own forefathers practised for ages. I have come to remind you of it and to tell you all of the need once again to follow that path.

Blood, phlegm, bile---these decide, by their proportion and predominance, the physical health of a man. So too there are three qualities that decide by their proportion and predominance the mental health of man. Just as you obey the rules of health for fear of falling ill, you have to practise certain mental restrictions and regulation so that you may have peace, contentment, joy, enthusiasm and faith. You have to apply the brake on the wayward mind so that it may not drag you into disaster. You have ever to work in the cool shade of two dreads: the dread of sin and the dread of God.

You do not remember that you are really and genuinely *Shaanthi* and *Aanandha*, that you are fundamentally (and therefore, mentally too) *Sathya, Nithya and Nirmala* (Truth, Eternal and Pure). The anxiety and fear which haunt you now are caused by this loss of memory. The intention of the Lord is that you should have *shaanthy and aanandha*, every moment of your life; but, you forget the springs that well up within you, that have their Source in the Divinity enshrined in your hearts, and pine for what you feel you have not.

### **Prescription for peace and contentment**

You may not have, all of you gathered here, the same Name and the same form, for the God whom you adore; you may differ in habits, customs, manners and styles of food and dress---but the *Aanandha* you derive from them is the same. Everyone of these has been designed by the wisdom of ages to give you security, safety and satisfaction. When the *padha* (word), is changed, the *padhaartha* (matter) remains the same; water is known by the word *paani* in U.P., *Thanneer* in Madras, *Neeru* in Andhra---but, the substance is the same. So, you may speak different languages or use different sound-signals and follow different habits of food and dress and even of worship and prayer. But, they are all, believe Me, instruments for your uplift and progress.

I shall give you one prescription which will give you the Peace and Contentment which you seek: It is *Naamasmarana* (remembering the name of the Lord). Install on the tongue any one of the thousand names of the Lord, current in any part of the world, among any community of devotees. Repeat the Name for some time at least every day as part of your duty to yourself, a discipline which will yield good results, a habit which you Should cultivate as a compensation for the hard toil that you do by your body from sunrise to sunset.

### **Spend a few minutes daily with God**

*Bhaa-ratha* (India) is the land where every one has *rathi* (attachment) to *Bhaa* or *Bhagavaan* (God); but, today, people are in fact losing that taste and that attachment. You may tell Me, "We are so busy, we have no time to spare." Well, I cannot believe it is true. I know that you are finding time, in spite of the hard work throughout the day, to attend cinemas, to engage in wayside chats, to promote and partake in factions, in quarrels and for many other distractions which add to the sum of your worries.

It is best you stay away from companions who drag you to such distractions that weaken and worry you; spend a few minutes every morning and evening in the silence of your own shrine or home, spend them with the highest of all powers that you know of. Be in His elevating and inspiring company; worship Him mentally; offer unto Him all the work you do; you will come out of the silence nobler and more heroic than when you went in.

Just consider---do you come out of the cinema theatre more peaceful, more heroic, purer, nobler than when you went in? No; your passions are aroused, your animal impulses are catered for, your lower nature is fed. Nothing else can give one that rich reward, which silence and prayer and communion with the Master can give. Not even a decent bank account, nor a string of degrees, nor the muscles of a prize fighter.

### **Spend money you earn usefully and wisely**

There is a story connected with the construction of the great temple at Kaalahasthi. It was built according to tradition by sage Agasthya, helped by Bhrigu and Bharadhwaaja. Every day when the Sun was about to set, Agasthya called every worker before him as he sat on the river bed and under his instruction, the two sages poured into the lap of each worker, sand taken from the bed; that was his wages! Now, that sand changed into gold in strict proportion to the work that the receiver had put in that day. If one did more work, he got more gold; if less, less. If one had wasted the entire day, it would remain sand, so far as that worker was concerned. There was no injustice, no grumbling, no favouritism. All worked in the presence of the All-seeing and so, all accepted the gold that was vouchsafed by the Almighty, for it was just his due, no more, no less.

It is work that is done in this spirit, the spirit of the constant presence of the Lord, that is honest; the Lord will reward by His Grace the work that is done sincerely and gladly, not work that is done for fear of superior officers, or *maistries* (foremen). If your hearts are pure, your work too would be pure.

Remember the grandeur of what you are engaged in, here. Remember the might of this river which you are persuading to obey you. That will make you humble and devoted. In the Prashanthi Nilayam, the *Bhakthas* themselves carried on their shoulders stone, mortar and sand, and as a result of the *seva* they did, we have now a big hospital and a fine *Paathashaala* and a huge auditorium. The entire building is saturated with their *Bhakthi* and so I said once, the patients are cured by the *aroma* of that devotion itself.

### **Be careful when you choose your friends**

You should use the money that you earn usefully and wisely. Crores of rupees are distributed at every project site to the workmen, but, at the end of it all, when the camp is broken and the people start packing, they have little to carry home! Do not fritter away your hard-earned incomes on tinsel, entertainment and temporary pleasure; think of your future, your children, your parents. Think also of the reaction these wasteful, attractions produce. Think of the harm they inflict on your precious character. Think of all those who are dependent on you for food and shelter and the love that you alone can offer them. Examine each item of expenditure with reference to these noble tasks. That is the sign of the wise man.

Do not admit into your mind the demon of *a-shaanthi* (restlessness). Direct all your cleverness and all your intelligence to the successful execution of the great drama which all of you are helping to present. It is His Drama, He is the Director, you are but a role, an actor, carrying out His Will, speaking words that He has put in your mouth, making movements as directed by Him.

It is all a matter of the company you fall into. Be careful when you choose your friends. Form small *Sathsangs* and meet regularly for *Bhajana* and mutual consultations about spiritual matters. Read some fine spiritual classics like the Bhagavadh Geetha. Fill your eyes with the Beauty of His Form, your ears with the story of His *Leelas* (miraculous activities), hearts with the sweetness of His Glory; inspire yourselves by seeing Him everywhere. Think of His Immanence in every hill and dale, every man and beast, every tree, bird and insect. You will be really thrilled by the joy of that vision. That will make your work as light as *puuja* and as satisfying.

### **Dwell on *Brahman* that binds all jeevas together**

The *vaanaras* (sub-humans) while building the bridge across the ocean, carried huge boulders on their heads, repeating *Raama-naama* all the while and that made the rocks weigh less; it is even said that they wrote the name on the stones and that made them float! Each time they hauled or lifted a stone, they sang *Raama-naama* in unison and so they were a happy lot, doing *puuja*; not work, which is unpleasant. Raama's Grace helped all to overcome obstacles. Take the name and make your work light; that is My advice to you.

Your officer here gave Me a garland of flowers just now; it is made up of two things- flowers that were buds yesterday, that blossomed today, and will fade before morn; and the thread that was, is and will be. The flower is *a-nithya* (impermanent); it represents the *jeevi* (living being), that is subject to birth, growth and decay; the thread is *nithya* (eternal), it is *Brahman* (Omni-being), on which all *Jeevis* are strung---"*suuthre mani ganaa ira.*" The *Jeevas*, like these flowers, are of different characteristics and natures and *vaasanas* (past impressions), but the

string is one uniform consistent base, the *Brahma Suuthra*, that binds all together, in one common creation. Dwell upon that unity for some time at least, every day, and that will save you from all types of *a-shaanthi* {agitation}.

You are engaged in the task of conferring *sukha*, *santhosha* and *sampath* (welfare, happiness and prosperity) to crores of people; I bless you so that you may complete the sacred task quickly and successfully, without the shadow of misfortune of interruption of any sort, and with no discordant note.

*Shrishailam Project Site---Address to the Workers, 6-12-1963*

*Without the control of the senses, man is like a horse without blinkers, like a bull that refuses to yield to the yoke; his saadhana is a waste of time and energy. The special feature of man's composition is that he has discrimination, detachment and synoptic intellect; he can discover Truth and be fixed in it, and gain unshakable peace.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*

### 39. *The turn of the key*

THE task now is to install *Dharma* in every heart, to shed light on every road, through the revival of *Vedhaantha*. The world is like a famished person, waiting for a feast; it is like the parched land waiting for rain. I have seen and felt the atmosphere of this land surcharged with discontent and dishonesty; I have seen it from Kanyaakumari to the Himaalayas. That is the reason why thousands like you seek *dharshan*, *sparshan* and *sambhaashana* (sacred sight, touch and talk). I am only surprised that thousands are denying themselves the chance.

Man 'is daily growing more and more greedy to know more about the lives of others, more extrovert, in fact. He wants to escape from himself, by interesting himself in others. He does not want to worry about the details of his own life, or the problems of his own rehabilitation. Of what benefit is all this burden of information that you seek to carry in your head, this knowledge of the various regions of the world, without a knowledge of the region of your own self, the centre of all the interest that you evince? It is no good wandering all over the world, contacting men of various races, and getting engrossed with earning and spending without being able to know your own identity!

#### **To win Bliss, *saadhana* with *vairagya* is essential**

The tree of the human body finds its fruition, when it yields *prema*. That sweet gift is the reason why it grew and had to be fostered. It drew its substance from the earth and the Sun. What does it give in return for the gifts it got from both these as well as from the human community *prema*. The fruit is sweet, but the rind can afford to be bitter. For the rind of anger, malice, envy, greed has to be peeled off, before it is put to use. Use the bitterness in you to preserve and develop the sweetness within yourself.

From the experience of saints and sages, you can realise that the joy got from the external world is infinitesimal when compared with the Bliss won through spiritual discipline. To win that Bliss, *saadhana* (spiritual effort) full of *vairagya* (detachment) is essential. When boring is done to draw water from the bowels of the earth, the pipe has to be kept free from air so that the water could rise up. If the air enters, the water will not rise. So too, be sure that attachment to worldly things does not mar your *saadhana*. *Prema* will not well up, if sensual pleasures and personal pride invade the Mind.

So long as life persists, you will be caught up in heights and depths, good and bad, rights and wrongs. Duality is inevitable. It is even necessary. A hero shines against a background of villains; *Prahlaadha's* faith had to be tested against the background of Hiranyakasipu's denials; the Paandavas demonstrated the strength of meekness only when they faced the savagery of the Kauravas. A city has pipes for the drinking water, as well as for sewage. Man has a system of arteries as well as veins, for the circulation of pure and impure blood. Both contribute to the health of the individual.

#### ***Yoga* is often turned into *Roga***

The fault is: You know that a thing is improper, but still you continue to do it, curbing your conscience and suppressing the nobler impulses. The world is all set for profit, as the quickest means of attaining joy. High profit, quick profit, easy profit---why, when measuring or counting, you don't start with "One," but say instead, "*Laabham*" (Profit). The next one is two, of course, but, the idea with which you start is "*Laabham*," not Service!

The problem should not be how to live glamorously so that you make others envy you, but how to live gloriously or better still, how to die gloriously!--so gloriously that you are not put to the humiliation of dying again. What do you take with you when you die? Mahamud of Ghazni instructed his Vazir to take his corpse to the burial ground with both his hands raised, so that people should see that he came with empty hands and went with hands as empty as when he came, though he had plundered the wealth of a hundred cities.

*Saadhana* has to be taken up under the direction of an expert, who knows your health and temperament well. Over-enthusiasm and irregularity are both to be avoided. If *viveka* (discrimination) plays false, *saadhana* (spiritual practice) is a snare; a little forgetfulness of the limits of heating may spoil kiln of bricks; a few extra handfuls of washing soda will ruin a bundle of clothes in the wash; a few extra words with the neighbour regardless of time, and a whole potful of rice is overboiled and wasted. Vigilance, care, circumspection---these are very important for the *Saadhaka*. *Yoga* is often turned into *Roga* (disease), for lack of continuous self-examination.

### **Attach yourself to the Larger Self**

A man weeping, because he has been bitten by a cobra in his dream, can be cured by just being woken up! No doctor is needed. So, too when Arjuna who was suffering from *ajnaana* (ignorance) was given *jnaana* (spiritual knowledge), he recovered and did his duty. The pain and the snake will both disappear if the dreamer is awakened. He is only imagining that a snake bit him.

When you invite a blind person for dinner, remember that you have to lay two plates not one for one guest only. For, he will be certainly accompanied by a guide. The blind man is Arjuna and the guide is *Sujnaana*. *Sujnaana* (good knowledge) will lead him aright. Both are in the same person. Only, *Sujnaana* has to take charge and lead.

Turn the key to the right, it is unlocked. Turn to God and righteousness, the lock opens, the chain falls away. Turn it to the left, you become bound; the bolt falls in; the chain holds fast. It is just a question of the point of view---outlook or Inlook? Out-query? In-query?

For all this, the prime need is Faith. Faith in yourself! You can move mountains in the social level, if you conquer your mind in the individual level. Curb your powers and make them run along useful channels; that will result in Joy for you and others. To get that faith, know your Truth. To know that, attach yourself to the Larger Self, of which you are a part, by constant *Naamasmarana*.

*Speech at Dhronaachalam, 8-12-1963*

*To get the attitude of surrender, of dedication, you must have Faith in God.*

*This world is His play; it is not an empty dream; it has purpose and use. It is the means by which one can discover God; see Him in the beauty, the grandeur, the order, the majesty of Nature. These are but shadows of His Glory and His splendour.*

*Upaasana (adoration of God), leads to the knowledge that He is in all; when you experience that there is no Second, that is jnaana!*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*



## ***41. Fine arts and the finest arts***

INDIA is the *Moolasthaanam* (sanctum sanctorum) of *Sathya, Dharma, Shaanthi and Prema* (Truth, Virtue, Peace and Love); she has been holding forth these ideals and emphasising their practice since centuries. Bhaarith means the land that has *rathi* (attachment) to *bha* or *Bhagavaan*; it means that the people here are God-loving, not so much God-fearing. If you love God, you have to love Man also. This teaching that *Sathya* is the basis of *Dharma* which lays down individual and social duties and obligations, and that *Sathya* is also the root of *Prema and Shaanthi*---this is the unique feature of Bhaarith. *Sathya* is enough; no other God need be worshipped.. Here, in the *Gurukulams* and the *Rishiaashrams* (hermitages), the emphasis has always been on practice, on *Aachaara* and *Vichaara* (conduct and deliberation). Use your reason; it is God-given gift. Satisfy yourself whether the prescription will cure you; then, follow also the course of discipline which is recommended with the particular drug. Then you gain *Aanandha*, full, free, undiminishable. That is the teaching which the people of Bhaarith have been receiving from the cradle to the grave for ages.

Sundharamurthy had arranged a "grand" procession for Me from his Institute to this Stadium, for, this day he is celebrating the Silver Jubilee of his Institute! Let Me tell you this now itself: I do not like this pomp and show. I do not derive any joy out of it.

### **Do not waste money on pomp and show**

Pomp, such as this, has become a fashion now, even among ascetics and monks who ought to know better. They profess poverty and simplicity and yet, they allow or encourage their disciples to waste much energy and money on pomp and pageantry which serve only to develop the egoism of themselves and their followers. The emphasis on show makes a thing hollow of all meaning. The misery of the present age is largely due to this empty ritual of insincere demonstrations.

You should all resolve to maintain the honour and dignity of the country, which is your responsibility. Bhaarith is entitled to be the Guru (preceptor) of the world. Her's is no mean history. This is the land of Krishna, where the *Vedhas* and the *Upanishadhs* saw the light, where Shankaraachaarya established monasteries for the propagation of the *Sanaathana Dharma* (eternal religion). This land will be saved, for it has a mission to perform, which no other can fulfill.

Don't yield to silly fears that this or that country will endanger its freedom. That is impossible. The *Avathaar* of the Lord has come and the effect will be safety for this holy land. Live the life that was held forth as the ideal by the sages of the past and happiness is ensured. That kind of life will give internal contentment and quiet calm.

### **Festival of the *Aathma* is more magnificent**

Prayer is a more powerful force than military re-enforcements: if made with a sincere heart it will be certainly answered. It will strengthen the hands of the people of this land more than any other source of encouragement.' It will join the hearts of the people more than lectures or pamphlets can do. What is the use of trying for the unity of mankind or the union of this continent or that, with so many factions and misunderstandings festering this country? Become united yourselves sincerely and firmly, before advising others to close up their ranks. Repent for the faults of partisanship committed by you and begin a new chapter of brotherly co-operation.

Sundharamuorthy and his friends and coworkers are happy today because of the 'Silver Jubilee'. It is a festival for the Institute: but, I consider the Festival of the *Aathma* to be more magnificent. The *Aathma* has an eternal festival! It is *Aanandhaswaruupa*(*bliss-filled*). It is beyond time and so does not calculate the passage of time. How Can man celebrate a festival, let Me ask, while he is afflicted by *Deha bhraanthi*, *Indhriya bhraanthi*,

Mano bhraanthi and *Loka bhraanthi*? He believes the falsehoods (*bhraanthi*) that are named the body, the senses, the mind, the world! He pursues them and tastes joy and grief; and, when a certain number of years is passed in the pastime, he celebrates a festival!

### **Man is a compound of animal and angel**

This is *maayaa* (illusory power) within *Maayaa* (the great worldly illusion). I have not come to announce to you that this Institute has finished twenty-five years of existence. I am concerned with the spiritual arts, *the finest* arts, rather than the fine arts. I want that Sundharamuorthy should depict in dance spiritually elevating subjects, like Raadha and Krishna and their sublime relationship that is beyond the ken of man. He must give up themes such as drunkards, evil men, power-drunk personalities and clowns, which cater to vulgar tastes. Adjust all items of dance and dramatic representation to the spiritual urge in man; foster it, fertilise it and take people a little nearer to the Goal.

Man is a compound of animal and angel, we can say. He has in him the wolf, the monkey, the bullock, the jackal, the snake, the peacock, the bear---and he has beneath all these, the pure Spark of Divinity too. It is the duty of all who cater to the senses of man to transform the low values now pervading, and transmute them into higher values. The rulers too must canalise the enthusiasm and imagination of the people along healthy lines.

*Bangalore, Shivaajinagar, 14-12-1963*

## 41. Samadhrishti

THOSE who live in Malleswaram have made good arrangements for celebrating the Annual Festival of the *Bhajana* (community singing) that they have been conducting here. *Bhajana* always gives *aanandha and shaanthi*. See that it is not used for increasing your egoism, or mutual recrimination, or envy or pride, as very often happens. Be humble, be calm, be tolerant. Co-operate with all and treat every one with courtesy and kindness.

*Bhakthi* is not a uniform to be worn on Thursday evenings, when you gather for *bhajana*, and to be laid aside when the *bhajana* is over. It must mean the promotion of an attitude of humility, of revering parents, teachers, elders, and others; it is a mental outlook, an attitude that is ever-present. It is the sustenance of the heart, just as food is sustenance for the body. Like the needle of the compass always pointing to the North, never deviating from that direction, returning to it, readily, gladly, quickly, whenever it is shaken off that line, so too the *bhaktha* (devotee) must face the Lord ever, must be happy only when he is set towards Him.

### The spiritual *Thriveni* leading to *samadhrishti*

Many people think of God only when grief overtakes them; of course, it is good to do so; it is better than seeking the help of those who are also equally liable to grief. But, it is infinitely better to think of God in grief and in joy, in peace and strife, in all weathers. The proof of the rain is in the wetness of the ground; the proof of *bhakthi* is in the *shaanthi* the *bhaktha* has, *shaanthi* which protects him against the onslaughts of success as well as failure, fame, dishonour, gain and loss.

*Bhakthi* is the river Ganga. *Vairaagyam* (detachment) is the river Yamuna and *Jnaana* is the river Saraswathi of this spiritual *Thriveni* (confluence of three rivers). *Jnaana* is the through-train; you just board it, that is enough; it takes you direct to the destination. *Bhakthi* is the through-carriage; though it may be detached from one train and connected with another, if you get into it, you need not worry; so long as you stick to your place, it is bound to take you to the destination. *Karma* is the ordinary train; if you board it, you have to disembark, climb in and climb out at every junction, load your luggage and unload it, and do a good lot of work to reach your destination.

*Bhakthi* alone is enough, even to acquire *jnaana*. It ends in *Samadhrishti* (seeing only *Brahman* in all) and it destroys egoism. *Jnaana* too gives you these. Naaradha once offered to teach the *Gopees* (illiterate cowherd women), the principles of philosophy, *Vijnanaanabodha*, as he called it. Krishna agreed. But, they said. "We do not care for your learning and your discourse. We see Krishna everywhere and in everything and so, we have no hate or envy or malice. We have *Samadhrishti* and we have no *ahamkaaram* (egoism). We believe this is enough for us." Naaradha found that what they claimed was correct; so he left discomfited.

### You are not travelling Godward

Now, most of you are leading a double or treble life; *Yogam* (practising union with God) in the morning, *bhogam* (enjoyment) the rest of the day and *rogam* (suffering) at night. You seek *Aanandha* outside you and suffer from the ulcer of desire inside you. You utter one thing with the tongue and carry out the opposite with the hand. You claim to be seekers of *Jnaana* but you are attached to the delusion you have cultivated. You have a ticket for Calcutta but you are travelling in the train headed for Bombay! With the body which is your ticket, *Vijnana*, and

*Vairaagya*m (world knowledge and detachment) t as your luggage, you are travelling not in the train which goes Godward but in the train leading to *Prakrithi* (objective world). This is the pity!

The roots must go deep, deep down to the level of underground water. The trees that grow on the bunds of canals are green with thick foliage. Your roots must also go deep into the Divinity that will keep you green whatever the dryness of the weather or heat of the Sun.

### **You can recognise God in your own self**

This is the Age of Profit. The question that any one asks when he is asked to do a thing is, "What is the profit?" "How much is the profit?" "How sure is the profit?" Well. Let Me also ask, "Of what profit is all this feeding and growing, this striving and struggling, this earning and saving and spending, this losing and gaining, this speeding in cars and planes, if by these means you do not get peace in the mind, joy in the heart?"

All these activities only serve to hide the real nature of the individual, to overwhelm it under a mass of trivialities, to suppress the natural influence of the real Truth of Man. Develop a love for God, then you can recognise Him very near you, in your own Self. That is the assurance I am giving to all of you.

*Malleshwaram, Sathya Sai Bhajana Mandali,*

*15-12-1963*

*The conquest of the ego is a very hard task; years of persistent effort are needed to get success in this endeavour. For getting a Degree you struggle in the University for a number of years, poring over books night and day, how much more difficult is this examination, success in which guarantees lasting happiness, and escape from the weary round of birth and death.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*

## 42. The Divine Voice

NARAKAASURA is present in every one as *kaama*, *krodha*, *lobha* (lust, hate, greed) and as *bhaya* and *dhukha* (fear and grief), which are against the very nature of man. Just as an umbrella with inferior cover, cannot protect you from rain, but only one with a waterproof cover, so too in this stormdriven world incessantly flushed by-torrential rain, an umbrella with *kaama-proof* and *krodha-proof* covering is required. The five *bhuuthas* (fire, earth, water, ether and wind) cannot harm one who is equipped with such protection. The five *Durgas* (fortresses) in which Narakaasura is said to have taken refuge are the five elements. There is great *Avyaktha shakthi* (latent power) inherent in every one and when that *shakthi* is made *vyaktha* (explicit), man deserves to be called *vyakthi* (individual). When that is made manifest, the *asura* (demon) will automatically be destroyed. Your reality is *Aathma*; your quality is *Aanandha*. What does it matter to you if the Narakaasura of the *Puraanas* is killed, by Krishna and Sathyabhaama. For you, Krishna is *Paramaathma* (Super or Omni Self) and Sathyabhaama is *the jeevi* (individual self). *Paramaathma* destroys the evil propensities with the active collaboration of *jeevi*: *jeevi* defeats evil with the active Grace of the Lord.

### Make *kaama*, the servant of Raama

India is the repository of spiritual power: but now, scarcely any one practises the disciplined life which is the mark of that power. Even now millions go on pilgrimages; millions of copies of sacred texts and spiritual lore are bought and read-thousands of ascetics and *gurus* are scattered over the land and they receive the homage of the people. But yet there is no peace in the heart, no food ill the stomach, no clothes to keep the cold off the body. India which is *Annapoorna-swaruupa* (the granary of the earth), has now to go about with begging bowl for food for her children. This tragedy is caused by ill-discipline, by want of self-control, by what can be called *A-swaa-raajya* (the absence of Self-Government, Government of the Self).

Sathyanaaraayana, when he acted the role of Sathyabhaama in the drama, remembered always that he was Sathyanaaraayana, though he was also aware that he had a part to play in the drama and he played it well. It would be a failure if he forgets either his *Sathyanaaraayana-hood* or his *Sathyab-haama-hood*. So, too, act in the world but remember your genuine Self. When humanity forgets that this is a play and starts assuming it real, the Lord comes down to remind them of it. Otherwise, when the execution scene is enacted heads will fall; when Lanka is set on fire in the drama, the theatre itself will be consumed. Do not take the world more seriously than it deserves.

There is space for only just one throne in your heart. But, now you are inviting too many to sit on it or you try to put two thrones there, one for Raama, and one for *kaama*; or, when you find it difficult, you are inviting Raama and *Kaama* to squeeze themselves into that one seat! Or, you install *Kaama* and want Raama to sit down below as his henchman! No wonder Raama deserts you. Make Raama the deity on the throne and utilise *kaama* as His servant---there is no harm.

### Cultivate the inward look

The mother-cat, it is said, takes hold of the new born kitten and shifts it from place to place, seven times, within few days of its birth, so that its eyes might open and it might see! The kitten gets proper vision after going through seven transfers but, man does not get the vision (*viz.*, that he is in reality the deathless, birthless, infinite *Aathman*) even after he is shifted from womb to womb a million times! This is the tragedy of ignorance and sloth.

You have heard of the story of Gajendhra *moksha*, the elephant caught and dragged by the crocodile, appealing helplessly to the Lord and the Lord sending down the *Sudharshana Chakra* (discus) to slay the tormentor and save the beast. The story has a deeper meaning, which has universal appeal. The wild elephant is *the jeevi* (the individual), full of sensual greed and blind with delusion. It enters the tank of *samsaara* (flux), of the objective world. There the crocodile of egoism grasps its leg in the vice of its teeth and pulls it down deeper and deeper into the mire of *Samsaara*.

### **There is a definite process for God-realisation**

The individual struggles by itself for a long time until pride is exhausted and its faith in its own powers is spent. Then, it appeals in complete *sharanaagathi* (surrender) to the Lord and what does the Lord send? *Sudharshana*. Mark that word, What does it mean? *Sudharshana*---Good sight! Beneficial outlook! A vision that is correct, conducive to lasting joy, namely, the inward look, away, from the sense objects, *Aavrittha Chakshu*. As soon as that sight is cultivated, egoism is destroyed and the *jeevi* is freed.

Live and act in the world, by all means; but, deal with *samsaara* as you apply collyrium to the eye. The eye is not blinded by the collyrium, it is rendered more efficient, more charming, that is all. So too, *samsaara* (worldly life) must make your *saadhana* (spiritual effort) more efficient and more pleasing to yourself and others. Be like the lotus which though born in mud rises higher, through the waters, on the region of sunlight. It requires both mud and water for its existence but, it knows their real value; so it does not allow itself to be contaminated by either.

A great sage once fell in with a gang of non-believers in an atheist settlement. They crowded around him and plied him with impertinent queries and insisted that he must show them the God in whom he believed. The sage promised to do so, but, asked for some milk, before he could demonstrate God. The vessel of milk was brought; he sat silent for a long while, stirring the milk with his finger. The crowd got exasperated at the delay and at his silence. They asked him what he was at; he replied that he was only trying to spot out where the butter was, top, middle or bottom? The crowd shouted that it was everywhere, in every drop of milk and that he could see it only when the preliminary process of churning was done. Then, the sage answered, "Well, the Lord too is immanent in every atom of this Universe. He can be perceived and experienced only when the preliminary spiritual exercises of *saadhana* are done. There is a definite well-known process for God-realisation also, just as there is a definite well-known process for butter realisation.

*Prashanthi Nilayam, December 1963*

*I want devotees to improve their behaviour and character. It is no good attending the temple and sharing loudly, with cymbals in your hands, in the singing of devotional songs there. They are but external signs of enthusiasm. God watches the bhaavam (the thought power behind), not the baahyam (the outward pomp)*

*Sathya Sai Baba*