31. Divinity through Love

Men and women of many faiths
From the four comers of the world
Have gathered here with love and humility
Unmindful of comfort or discomfort,
Enduring numerous travails,
All for the sake of Baba's grace!
Dispelling rampant atheism
And instilling faith in God
Sai's all-embracing love
Is transforming mankind
And leading them to the Divine.

EMBODIMENTS of Divine Love! Although physically there are no basic differences among human beings, many differences can be seen in their practices, their thoughts and feelings. Every nation is an aggregation of human beings. Differences in the life-styles of human communities in the various nations are quite significant, though the natural environment over the globe as a whole is not so varied. This is a significant characteristic of the human predicament.

Truth is one. It is beyond mind and speech. It transcends the categories of time and space. Innumerable seekers have pursued different paths to recognise this Truth. There are notable differences among the seekers of Truth. These differences do not affect the nature of the universe. On the contrary, these differences must be viewed as different stages in the understanding of the Cosmic process. It is the existence of these differences that has prompted the continuous search for a unifying principle.

The ultimate Truth is one

The six schools of Indian Metaphysics (the *Shat-darsanas*) have been offered to us by the great seekers of the past. Little attention is being paid today to these sacred teachings. Although the spiritual paths indicated by these different *Darsanas* appear to be different, their goal is common and the ultimate truth proclaimed by them is one and the same. Because of the differences among the various sects and communities in the country and growth of materialism among the people, the tenets of the six *Darsanas are* not being seriously pursued. The materialist doctrine has gripped the world so much that the greatness of Indian metaphysics is not being appreciated. Even the climate for a proper consideration of this philosophy does not seem to exist.

The materialist doctrine proceeds on the assumption that *Chaitanya* (Consciousness) is a product of sensory experiences and that the evolution of Consciousness is dependent on and is based on the evolution of matter. Inanimate matter is the basis for the materialist doctrine. Matter is finite. The *Vedic* doctrine repudiates the view that consciousness can arise out of physical senses which are limited by their origin in matter which is finite and limited. In total opposition to this materialistic doctrine, the *Adhyatmic* (spiritual) view was projected to demonstrate the falsity of the concept of the primacy of matter over consciousness.

Man and Nature

For the spiritual view, the basis is the Atma (Spirit). The Atma is infinite. The Vedantic doctrine proclaimed the infinite nature of the Self and pointed out that matter is both inert and finite. The Sruti declares: *"Tripaadhasya-amrutam divi."* Consciousness constitutes three-fourths and one-fourth is inert matter. Thus, it is consciousness that animates matter and not matter that gives rise to consciousness. This is the essence of the spiritual concept. *"0ordhva moolam Adhah-saakha"* says the Gita. (The roots are high up, the branches of the Cosmic tree are below). This is further confirmation of the view that the material universe has emanated from the Universal Consciousness.

It is *Chaitanya* (Consciousness) that activates Jada (matter) and not matter that gives rise to consciousness. Modern technology has produced fantastic devices, harnessed new sources of energy and turned out spacecraft for exploring the moon and other planets in outer space. But can all these instruments operate by themselves? No. Behind them lies human ingenuity and intelligence. Greater than all the machines is man.

Man is consciousness incarnate. It is this consciousness that makes the machines move and it is indisputably clear that inert matter cannot create consciousness. Man is the highest object in creation. Man should not be a creature of instincts like the animals, which are subject to Nature, but should become a master of Nature. He should progress from *the Nara* (human) to the *Narayana* (Divine). An intelligent human being should not regard himself as bound by *Samsara* (worldly attachments). It is not the world that binds man. It has neither eyes to see nor hands to grasp. Man is a prisoner of his own thoughts and desires. In his attachment to the ephemeral and the perishable, man forgets his inherent divinity and does not realise that everything in the universe has come from the Divine and cannot exist without the power of the Divine.

Divinity in the Cosmos

The Cosmos is a projection of the Eternal, Infinite Reality *(Brahman)* and is not separate from the *Brahman. "Sarvam Vishnumayam Jagath"* (The universe is permeated by the Divine). When this truth is recognised, it will be obvious that all that one perceives or experiences is a manifestation of the Divine. Every tree is a *Kalpavriksha* (wish-fulfilling tree). Every place of work is the shrine of the Divine. Many imagine that they are engaged in spiritual exercises to realise this sense of oneness with the Divine. Various spiritual exercises or different forms of worship may give some feeling of personal satisfaction, but will not result in God-realisation. God needs nothing from anyone. God does not seek offerings, nor is pleased by them. The Divine is not different from you. It is your likes and dislikes that separate you from God. When you get rid of desires and aversions, you will realise your inherent divinity. All the spiritual exercises one does or rituals one observes in offering worship can serve only to purify the mind and eliminate the ego. Mankind should strive for the ideal of human unity by recognising the divinity that is present in every human being.

Sins and repentance

There is an age-old practice among Christians to pray to God for forgiving their sins. In the churches, it is the practice for devotees to confess their sins, make cash offerings and obtain absolution from the pontiff or the priest. The belief in redemption through repentance and offerings to the Divine is prevalent in India also. These practices are based on misconceptions

about the Divine. There should be an earnest enquiry into the nature of the Divine and people should try to get rid of superstitious beliefs which have no basis in Truth.

It should be noted that the spirit of enquiry was prevalent among the ancient Greeks centuries before Christ. Socrates was a great teacher who promoted the spirit of enquiry among the youth of Athens. Socrates was so much wedded to the pursuit of truth that he preferred death in his home city to making good his escape with the help of his disciples. He set no value on life, property or possessions.

Jesus and the rich man

Jesus also set no value on wealth or position. Once a rich man came to Jesus when he was in the house of Martha and Mary. The rich man told Jesus that despite all his wealth and possessions he was not having peace of mind. He was harassed by many worries and appealed to Jesus to show him a way out. Jesus told him: “There is a simple way but will you follow it? You have been accumulating riches and your worries have grown with them. What are you going to do with all this wealth, which some day you will have to leave behind? Distribute it among the poor and the needy and all your worries will go. Accumulate instead the wealth of God's grace through love of your fellowmen."

This is the message that has to be understood today. What people should seek is the earning of God's love. All other forms of wealth, including the wealth of scholarship, are valueless.

By chastising the rich and ministering to the poor and the diseased, Jesus taught his disciples a new way of life based on faith in God. Starting his ministry as a Messenger of God, Jesus finally declared: “My Father and I are one." St. Paul, who was in the beginning an inveterate critic of Jesus, became the first propagator of the Christian faith after having a vision of Christ in a dream in which Jesus told him: “Every man is a spark of the Divine. When you hate me, you are hating yourself and hating God." Paul had to face many ordeals in propagating Christ's message. The early Christians were subject to persecution by the Roman rulers. In course of time the Christian faith established itself in Rome, which became the seat of the Catholic church.

"Kingdom of Heaven is within you"

Christ declared that God can be realised only through love. Once a high priest in Jerusalem called Jesus and asked him: "Are you King of the Jews?" Jesus replied: "I do not say so." The priest told Jesus: "You are leading the people astray by your wrong teachings. You are telling them that everyone can enter Heaven only through you." Jesus said that he had been telling the people to seek the Kingdom of Heaven. The priest asked: "Where is that Kingdom?" Jesus replied: "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you, within everybody. When this is my teaching, how can I be accused of claiming that the Kingdom of Heaven can be attained only through me?" How did Jesus get the courage to speak in this fashion? It was because he was proclaiming the truth. Truth is born of love, which comes from faith in God.

Where there is confidence, there is Love.

Where there is Love, there is Peace.

Where there is Peace, there is Truth.

Where there is Truth, there is Bliss.

Where there is Bliss, there is God.

In Bharat there is a belief that Divinity exists in the three forms of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara. No one has seen these deities in their different forms. These forms have been conceived to develop faith in certain ways. The Trinity are symbolically present in everyone. The heart has been equated with *Easwara.*

This means that the heart symbolises the *Atmic* principle in man. This refers not to physical heart but to the spiritual heart. The heart represents divinity as well as the Love principle. The *Atma* is unbounded and hence Love also has no limit. Men in their narrow-mindedness may set limits to their love, but love as a Divine quality is infinite.

"You are the Divine"

The mind has emanated from the heart. It is all-pervading. *Manomoolam idam jagath.* ("The mind is the basis of the Cosmos"). The mind symbolises Vishnu. The word Vishnu means that which pervades everything in the universe. As the mind has emanated from the heart, the Vishnu principle has come from the Easwara principle. Brahma is said to have emerged from Vishnu. In man the Aham (ego) has arisen from the mind and Brahma is symbolic of Aham. This is the esoteric interpretation of the Trinity.

It means that the Trinity are present in everyone. The heart is *Easwara,* the mind is Vishnu and the "I" is Brahma. When you regard the self as Brahma, your thoughts and actions will not go astray. The mind will be a means of liberation, when it is rid of the impurities residing in it. All spiritual exercises are designed only to cleanse the mind. When the mind becomes pure, the divine is experienced spontaneously.

The Divine is not separate from you. You are the Divine. This conviction must grow in you. In the beginning you regard yourself as a mere human being. Then, you reach the stage when you realise your potential divinity. Finally you reach the stage when you realise your divinity. These three stages could be noticed in the career of Jesus. At the outset, he declared: “I am a Messenger of God." Then, he said: “I am the Son of God." Finally he affirmed: “I and my Father are One." Through this process, Christ achieved oneness with the Divine.

You must embark on the journey to unity with the Divine from now itself. Time waits for no one. Concentrate all your efforts on the realisation of God. The primary requisite is the elimination of the ego. Without getting rid of the ego, the bliss of divinity cannot be experienced. Ostentatious worship is of no use. Wealth, power and position are of no avail in the spiritual quest. They cannot confer peace or remove the fear that haunts man all the time. Only the man of faith is completely free from fear. Hence, develop faith in God and lead a God-directed life. You may pursue your studies or avocations without giving up your faith in God. What is happening now is that men are forgetting God in the pursuit of wealth. They are seeking *annam* (food) instead of Atma. When the Atma is realised all other things will be got without any great effort.

Bear in mind the three maxims

The man who has realised the Self has redeemed his life. That man is blest who is conscious of his faults. The one who sees the good in others is equally blest. Show love towards all.

People from many countries have gathered here today. Wherefore have they come here? They are not wanting in wealth. They do not lack comforts. They enjoy many things in their countries. But they do not experience real bliss, which can come only from spiritual realisation. And it is for this they have come. You have to turn your minds towards the *Atma.* The *Atma* is infinite. You have to get rid of the ideas of "mine" and "thine." Regard yourselves as the children of one

God, who is the universal protector. Bear in mind three things: Love of God, fear of sin, observance of social morality.

One who has no love of God, easily commits sin and loses all moral values. Love of God promotes the fear of sin and makes one lead a moral life. These triune principles are like the Divine Trinity. They will promote *Thrikarana suddhi* (purity in thought, word and deed). Whatever is done with such purity will be conducive to God-realisation. Above all, cultivate love. it is love that has brought you all here. Strengthen that love. Love is God. Live in Love. You may choose any form of worship or pursue any spiritual path you like. Whatever delights your heart will please God. Follow the dictates of your conscience, fill your hearts with love and immerse yourselves in the bliss of the Divine.

Christmas message presented to an unprecedented

gathering of Overseas and Indian devotees in the

Poornachandra Auditorium on 25-12-1987.