

## 23. Nearer and nearer

EMBODIMENTS of the Supreme *Aathma!* Look at the condition of the people of this ancient land, Bhaarath, today. Afflicted by multiplying wants, with no faith in experience beyond the sensual, scorning the sacred scriptures of their forefathers, weakened by fear, anxiety, and lack of confidence in the capacity to overcome these, having no knowledge of the Source of Strength and even denying the' existence of a Source which can be tapped in prayer---they are revelling in untruth, injustice, and unrest. Tossed in restlessness themselves, they do not allow others any rest or peace. Here, in days gone by; *Karmakshethra* was *Dharmakshethra*; the Field of Action was also the Field of Righteousness. But, now, declaring that Action and Righteousness cannot coexist, these people are bringing disgrace on the very name of Bhaarath.

Of course, many lovers of the glory that was India are trying to revive it through means and methods their mental and intellectual resources indicate. But, unless one removes the disease from the root, no amount of care bestowed on branch, leaf and flower can save the tree. The pests are to be found deep down, inside the roots. They have attacked and impaired the two tap-roots of Indian *Culture*---*Braahmanyam* and *Brahmacharyam*. We must also have again in this land the *Braahmin*, so known because he is set on the path of *Brahman*, the Supreme Absolute. We must also have the revival of the ideal student life earnest, humble, celibate, concentrated study. This Navabhaarath Gurukul, where we have assembled for this Conference is an example of student life, sought to be set on proper lines. The seekers of *Brahman* and the scholars of the texts on *Brahman* have lost their status and honour, because they did not live according to the truths they expounded.

### The two classifications of *Dhaiva*

Character, conduct, daily behaviour, attitude towards others---these are all-important, for *Dharma* (righteousness) is essentially Social Morality. The *Shruthi* (holy scripture) says, *Dharmo Vishwaasya Jagathah Prathishtah*---"on *Dharma*, the World is installed." *Dharma* endows man with joy and keeps away grief. Every being in the world, whether it is aware of it or not, is dependent on *Dharma*, for peace and happiness. All triumphs, whether acknowledged so or not, are earned only through *Dharma*.

*Dharma* is classified as general and special by the sages: general, including the virtues of truth, love, charity, etc., which every one has to cultivate and cherish; special, meaning those duties that are incumbent on one, as a result of his social obligations, professional status, etc., like the special *Dharma* of the *Braahmin* house-holder to maintain the Sacred Fire through ritually prescribed ceremonials. The *Vedhas* lay down the ceremonies; they speak of the intimacy between the *Braahmin* and the rites of fire worship.

### Individuals are limbs of the Society

You are aware that, at the present day, both in India and outside, there is a wave of spiritual discontent surging in thousands of hearts and, as a consequence, we have eager groups who give up everything worldly and seek God and Godly preceptors. But, many do believe that this search concerns only the individual and that society need not get involved in their yearning or their endeavours. This is as foolish as saying that one need not worry about the darkness prevailing outside the walls of his residence. The individual and society are intertwined inextricably. There must be illumination, for both. *Aanandha* (divine bliss) must surge out of the individual and fill the lake of society, and from thence, stream into the Ocean of Grace. Society is just a name for a

group of individuals; but, it has no corporeal body. Individuals are the limbs, that nourish and support the 'corpus' called society.

Society shapes the individual, provides the arena for his development and sets the ideals he should plant before himself. When the individual is stronger, more intelligent, more service minded, and more efficient as a worker, society benefits; when society is more aware of its role and of the need to cleanse that role with humility and wisdom, the individual benefits.

Sai has resolved to transform the individual and society by promoting this mutual regeneration, by the action of one on the other; hence, the formation of this Organisation, and the establishment of its Units in all countries, for the sublimation of the human into the Divine.

I have however to tell you that the units of this Organisation have not advanced much in the task that is expected. You must identify the reasons for this and infuse into yourselves the needed enthusiasm and effort. Lay your hands on the true situation and discover the remedies for curing the malady that is diagnosed. Whatever is considered by you as good when done by others in your case, endeavour to do them in the case of those others yourselves. Do not advise, exhort and direct others, without yourself following that advice. Again, many of you get discouraged when you meet with cynicism or criticism.

#### **Getting involved in Sai Organisation will induce faith**

One person came to Me some days ago and asked, "Swaami! Are all the many thousands who are concerned with this Organisation imbued with devotion and dedication, with full faith in the *Vedhas* and *Shaasthras* (spiritual sciences), in the efficacy of righteousness and the Glory and Grace of God?" I told him that the very process of sharing in the activities of the Organisation and getting involved in its activities will induce faith and bolster devotion and dedication, and make them better and more useful citizens and happier and more peaceful individuals. Then, I asked him, to which organisation he belonged. When he mentioned that he was from a political organisation that had a membership of about 5 million, I asked him, "Is every one of them a true patriot? Do they all tread the path without deviation? Are they dedicated to the Nation? Or to Power? Or to places of Profit? Why, I find that though you wear homespun as per the rules of your organisation, you have as underwear, a banian manufactured in a foreign land? Your loyalty to the ideals of the organisation which you serve is mere superficial show."

#### **Bear calumny and criticism with courage**

Sathya Sai Seva Organisation has to be unique, in this sense, that it is free from the slightest taint of hypocrisy, and the attempt to rationalise faults and failings. In the name of Social Service, many institutions and organisations thrive in this land but, consider, for a moment, the social service that is rendered by the Sathya Sai Seva Units in this East Godhaavari District. Spontaneously, members have come forward in thousands to this place where the Conference was arranged and, offered their services freely, sincerely and efficiently, to such an extent that the Organisers have not spent a paisa as wages for all this work---clearing this vast area, erecting these imposing sheds, laying down cables and pipes, and a host of other exhausting and expensive undertakings, so that the thousands of delegates that have come from all the States of India can have comfortable lodgings and satisfying boarding. They engaged themselves in this *Seva* with no desire for publicity; they simply followed a spiritual urge to do *Saadhana* in this form.

This is the genuine *Karmayoga* (path of dedicated action). *Karma* motivated thus will cleanse the mind, faster and better than other *Saadhanas*; the cleansed mind can reflect more clearly the Light of Wisdom; the Light of Wisdom will reveal the Truth and man will be saved from the consequences of the ignorance haunting him. Selfless, sincere service is therefore to be welcomed and practised. Each act of service is a step toward the Goal of Liberation.

The Objectives, Rules and Regulations that the Organisation has laid down have to be scrupulously observed by you all, whatever be the difficulties whatever be the reaction of others. Bear calumny, criticism and neglect with courage; do not allow these to affect your equanimity.

The good that you do will guard you; have that faith rooted in your mind. Do not exult when your desire is fulfilled; do not be dejected when it is not realised. Faith must be built on stronger foundations. Believing one moment and doubting the next, is like living and dying alternately. Faith is the very breath of *Seva*; doubt is death. One who wavers is as useless as a living corpse.

### **You have a duty to uphold and foster *Dharma***

When you join the *Seva Samithi* (Sai Organisation) and share in its activities, you are doing so not for the sake of Swaami, nor for the sake of the people, but the sake of the *Dharma* which you have a duty to uphold and foster. Attachment to *Dharma*, practice of *Dharma* and its varied manifestations of *Seva* (Service) and *Prema* (Love), can alone help transform *Maanava* (human) into *Maadhava* (God). The destruction of the insidious poison of egoism is essential for the restoration of health and happiness of the mind. Unless you tap the inner spring of joy in your own *Sath-chidh-aanandha* (Being, Awareness, Bliss) principle you cannot be established in *Aanandha* (Divine Bliss). This is the best way for you to offer the highest possible *Seva* to the Motherland. For, India is since millennia the *Yogabhumi* (the land of Divine communion), *Thyaagabhumi* (the land of Detachment) and *Karmabhumi* (the land of Godward-leading Activity).

Vivekaanandha asked Max Mueller in London, when he met him at a Dinner given in his honour by that great Savant of Oriental Scholarship, "When do you propose to visit India?" And, the answer was, "How can I ever think of returning from India, once I reach that holy land? I would rather leave my ashes there, than come back. In the whole world, India is the only Heaven." He declared, "What is not in India is nowhere" by which he meant that what India does not teach is not worth learning. When those who have delved deep into the sacred scriptures of our land adore it like this German Scholar, how foolish are the sons and daughters of our Motherland to decry in their blindness her Glory and the Grandeur!

### **Duty, Discipline and Devotion are essential for everyone**

I find that even you, who have come here as delegates selected by the members, do not strictly observe the disciplines enjoined on you. What shall we then say of the rest? Remember, Duty, Discipline and Devotion, all three, are absolutely essential for every one in our Organisation. You may have Devotion, you may discharge the Duty entrusted to you. But, unless you are saturated in Discipline, the other two are useless. Many of you rushed forward when I walked along the passage this morning and tried to reach out your hands for touching My Feet, falling over others while so doing. This is definitely an instance of devotion outrunning discipline. Discipline must regulate and control, not only your activities as members of the Organisation but, every activity of your life.

I have been telling you since years "Duty is God." Work is Worship. But, it is clear that you have not as yet taken this to heart; you have only received into the ear. Duty involves loyal adherence to the rules and regulations framed for the efficient working of the Organisation. Look upon them with a pure vision, a steady mind, and an attitude of reverence in the heart.

Do not talk ill of any one with contempt, do not think of any one as low or mean. Christ declared, "All are One; be alike to everyone." Hating an individual, or institution, or a religion is a low act. The *Aathma* (Soul) is immanent in every one; it is the spark of Divinity which gives him light, love and joy.

Do not be content by addressing gatherings from platforms, "Brothers and Sisters" that becomes merely histrionics, unless you feel the Brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God. When you have not felt in your heart the *Aanandha* of realising that *Ishaavaasyamidham Sarvam* (All this is enveloped in God), *Ishwarah sarvabhoo-thanaam---*(God is installed in the heart of all beings), or *Vaasudhevas sarvaamidham* (All this is God), you do not deserve to speak those words, while addressing others.

### **With every Conference you must arrive nearer the goal**

You long, to receive from others gratitude, love and respect; but, when the occasion arises for you to offer these, you hesitate or refuse. This is wrong. For, this is no one way traffic! Give and take. That is the rule. Assess in this Conference how far you have put into practice the rules framed in the Fifth All India Conference; examine where you have failed or succeeded only partially, and why. Unless this is done, gathering in Conferences like this is a mere waste of time, energy and money. The money could be spent to greater advantage in feeding the poor or helping them in some other way. With every Conference, you must arrive nearer and nearer the Goal or else, it becomes misuse of time, money and energy.

All over the land, we have now *Bhajan Mandalis* (Spiritual Congregations), Study Circles, *Mahila Vibhaaghs* (Women's Sections), *Seva Dhal* and *Seva Samithis* (Service Corps and Organisations) besides Schools, Libraries etc., studding the entire area. Certain of these who have strayed away into wrong lines, regardless of the ideals placed before them, have to be guided back into the Path. More than everything else, Baala Vikaas (Child Development) classes have to be multiplied so that the children may be saved and trained, to shine as true inheritors of *Bhaaratheeya* Culture. May the Culture of India which is fast going dry in the land of its origin be restored to its pristine power and purity through your loving and loyal efforts. I bless you that you may be endowed with success.

*Raajahmundry, 4-1-1974*

*Karma is the sincere discharge of one's duty, as laid down in the scriptures and as beneficial to our standard and status.*

*Through karma done for some benefit in view, man progresses towards karma with no benefit in view, so that he does it as a rightful obligation, undeterred by defeat or unaffected by success.*

*He does karma, regulated by dharma (virtue). Then, his consciousness is purified and elevated and can help him to become*

*aware of his Reality as the Self which includes all, Brahman  
(Omniself).*

***Sri Sathya Sai***