

## 9. Purity and Unity

PURITY, Unity, Divinity--these should be the Watchwords of the millions in Indian villages; they alone can ensure material and spiritual well-being.

Men should take great care to see that their senses did not go astray and commit offences. Thinking evil, speaking evil and seeing evil invariably led to total ruin. For example, in Mahabharata, Duryodhana always had evil thoughts about the Pandavas and ultimately he brought destruction upon his entire family. Keechaka cast an evil eye on Draupadi, when the Pandavas were living incognito in Virata King's palace, and he paid for it with his life.

The Ramayana had the story of Kaikeyi, who listened to the evil counsel of Manthara, and so lost not only her husband but the regard and love of her son Bharata. No one today even likes to be known by these infamous characters--Duryodhana, Keechaka or Ravana. But though the names are not favoured, the bad qualities associated with them have not been given up by mankind.

Strive to give up evil thoughts, evil looks, vicious speech and the greed to give ear to evil counsel and slanderous gossip. People in the villages are more simple-minded and good natured than those in towns and cities. The atmosphere in the villages is less polluted. If villagers can cultivate purity in thought, word and deed, they can lead happy and contented lives.

Learn to live in harmony and unity. The village is to the villagers what the body is to the individual. Every organ in the body functions in cooperation with every other part. If the foot steps on a thorn, the eye feels the pain and sheds tears. If the eye notices a thorn or stone on the road, it warns the foot to avoid it. Villagers should develop the same sense of unity and share their joys and troubles as one organic body. There is nothing you cannot achieve with unity as your strength.

With purity and unity, you can disclose your divinity and develop genuine devotion to God. In Vagata you have an ancient temple venerated for centuries by your forefathers. You should conduct *bhajans* daily in the morning and evening and earn the Lord's grace. You should fill your hearts with love and make your lives holy and purposeful. When everyone works in this spirit of unity and charity, this village would become a model for all the rest.

*Discourse at a large gathering at Vagata village, where Sai Sevaks had been running a relief kitchen for feeding the drought-stricken people of the region, on 22-5-1986.*