

1. Worship In The Mind

When I was at Uravakonda studying in the high school, you know I came away one day and threw off my books and declared that I have My work waiting for Me. The Telugu scholar described the incident of that evening to you all in his speech. Well, that day when I came out publicly as Sai Baba, that first song I taught the gathering in the garden to which I went from the Telugu pandit's house was:

Manasa bhajare guru charanam

Dustara bhava sagara taranam

I called on all those suffering in the endless round of birth and death to worship the Feet of the Guru (spiritual preceptor), the Guru who was announcing Himself, who had come again for taking upon Himself the burden of those who find refuge in Him. That was the very first Message of Mine to Humanity. *Manasa bhajare* —Worship in the mind!

I do not need your flower garlands and fruits, things that you get for an anna or two; they are not genuinely yours. Give Me something that is yours, something that is clean and fragrant with the perfume of virtue and innocence and washed in the tears of repentance! Garlands and fruits you bring as items in the show, as an exhibition of your devotion; poorer devotees who cannot afford to bring them are humiliated and feel sorry that they are helpless; they cannot demonstrate their devotion in the grand way in which you are doing it. Install the Lord in your heart and offer Him the fruits of your actions and the flowers of your inner thoughts and feelings. That is the worship I like most, the devotion I appreciate most.

Re-education of man persists in all eras

In shops, things are kept in separate packets, and each one specialises in some particular article or sets of articles. But in an exhibition, hundreds of shops join to make all varieties of things available, and there is a great deal of window-dressing, arrangement, and display. I have been all these days generally giving individual advice, like the packets available in shops, and giving answers to individual questions. This 'speech' today is a new experience for you. I am addressing a gathering today, but even though it may be new to you, for Me it is not new. I have given advice to large gatherings before, though not in this Appearance. Whenever the Formless becomes One with Form, It has to fulfil the Mission, and It does so in various ways. But the one purpose, the re-education of Man, persists, whatever the era.

The first sixteen years of this Life have been, as I have often told you, the period when divine child sport predominated, and the next sixteen is being spent mostly in miracles in order to give joy to this generation. Joy and contentment are short-lived sensations; you have to catch that mood and make it a permanent possession: bliss (*ananda*). After the thirty-second year, you will see Me active more and more in the task of spiritual instruction — teaching erring humanity and in directing the world along the path of truth, righteousness, peace, and love (*sathya, dharma, santhi, and prema*).

Not that I am determined to exclude plays and miracles from My activity after that. I only mean that reestablishing *dharma*, correcting the crookedness of the human mind, and guiding humanity back to *Sanathana Dharma* (Eternal Universal Religion) will be My task thereafter.

Do not be led away by doubt and vain argument; do not question how and whether I can do all this. The cowherds of Brindavan also doubted whether the little boy (Krishna) who grew in their midst could lift Govardana mountain and hold it aloft! The thing needed is faith, and yet more faith.

Secret of spiritual success

Once Krishna and Arjuna were going together along the open road. Seeing a bird in the sky, Krishna asked Arjuna, "Is that a dove?" He replied, "Yes, it is a dove." He asked Arjuna, "Is it an eagle?" Arjuna replied promptly, "Yes, it is an eagle." "No, Arjuna, it looks like a crow to Me. Is it not a crow?" asked Krishna. Arjuna replied, "I am sorry, it is a crow beyond a doubt."

Krishna laughed and chided him for agreeing to whatever suggestion was given. But Arjuna said, "For me, Your Words are far more weighty than the evidence of my eyes; You can make it a crow, a dove, or an eagle, and when you say it is a crow, it must be one." Implicit faith is the secret of spiritual success.

The Lord loves not the devotee but his devotion, remember. The Lord's Grace is like rain, pure water, falling equally everywhere; but its taste gets changed according to the soil through which it flows. So also the Lord's words are sweet to some, bitter to others. The Lord's ways are mysterious; He blessed Vidura with the words, "Be destroyed" and Dussasana with the words, "Live for a thousand years;" He meant that Vidura's 'I' will be destroyed and that the wicked Dussasana would have to suffer the ills and tribulations of this world for ten centuries.

You do not know the real reasons behind the actions of the Lord. You cannot understand the motives of other men who are almost like you in everything, actuated by the same motives and having the same likes and dislikes! But yet, how easily you discover the motives of One who is far, far above the level of humanity! How glibly you talk and judge something that is as strange to you as atmosphere to a fish!

Pains indicate birth of new life

There are four types of persons; the 'dead', who deny the Lord and declare that they alone exist, independent, free, self-regulating, and self-directed; the 'sick', who call upon the Lord when some calamity befalls them or when they feel temporarily deserted by the usual sources of succour; the 'dull', who know that God is the eternal companion and watchman, but who remember it only off and on when the idea is potent and powerful; and lastly, the 'healthy', who have steady faith in the Lord and who live in His comforting creative presence always.

You proceed from 'death' to 'life' and from 'illness' to 'health' by the experience of the buffeting of the world. The world is a very essential part of the curriculum of man; through the agony of search is born the infant, wisdom. The pains are worthwhile; they indicate the birth of new life. From *asanthi* (restlessness) you get *prasanthi* (absolute peace), from *prasanthi* to *prakanthi* (bright spiritual illumination), and from *prakanthi* to *Paramjyothi* (Supreme Divine Radiance). It is like the alternating of night and day, this recurrence of joy and grief. Night and day are twin sisters; both are necessary to increase the fertility of the soil, to activate and refresh life. They are like summer and winter.

There are some who ask Me, "Baba! Make this summer less hot!" But in the heat of summer the Earth takes in the needed energy from the Sun, so that when the rains come, she may yield a plentiful harvest.

Shine forth in your real nature

‘Cold’ and ‘heat’ are both in the Plan of God, and yours is only to know this and treat both as valuable. Thorny plants and thornless plants are both there in nature; the wise man knows the value of both. He plants the thornless one and surrounds it with the thorny ones, so that what he fosters is left unharmed. Activity can save, as well as kill; it is like the cat that bites; it bites the kitten in order to carry it in its mouth to a place of safety; it bites the rat in order to kill and eat. Become the kitten, and work will rescue you like a loving Mother. Become a rat, and you are lost.

God draws the Individual toward itself; it is the nature of both to have this affinity, for they are the same. They are like the iron and the magnet. But if the iron is rusty or covered with layers of dirt, the magnet is unable to attract. Remove the impediment; that is all you have to do. Shine forth in your real nature, and the Lord will draw you into His Bosom. Trials and tribulations are the means by which this cleansing is done. That is why Kunthi prayed to Krishna, “Give us always grief, so that we may never forget Thee.” They are like the dietary and other restrictions that the doctor prescribes to supplement the effect of the drug of remembrance of God (*namasmarana*).

Do not give up spiritual practice

Sai is beloved to all people, so you can take up any name that gives you joy. Tastes differ according to the temperament and character one has earned by generations of activity as a living being in this world. The proprietor of a coffee house goes to the nearby druggist for a pill to ward off his headache, and the druggist, when he gets a headache, goes to the coffee house for a cup of coffee, which he thinks will cure him. Men are like that: the tastes of people differ. The wise one says, “In God is All (*Sarvam Brahma mayam*)”; another, a yogi, says all is energy; a third, who is a devotee, says all is the play of Bhagavan (the Lord). Each according to their taste and according to their progress in spiritual practice. Do not hurry or ridicule them, for they are all pilgrims trudging along the same road.

Spiritual exercise is most required to control the mind and the desires after which it runs. If you find that you are not able to succeed, do not give up the spiritual exercise but do it more vigorously, for it is the subject in which you did not get passing marks that requires special study, is it not? Spiritual exercise means inner cleanliness as well as external cleanliness. You do not feel refreshed if you wear unwashed clothes after your bath, do you? Nor do you feel refreshed if you wear washed clothes but skip the bath. Both are needed, the external as well as the internal (the *bahya* and the *bhava*).

Children believe your words when you say that the policeman will catch them or the ghost will beat them. They are full of fear, fortitude, and faith! But having grown old and stuffed your heads with all kinds of doctrines and dogmas and theories and arguments, you have now to use your discrimination) and discover God the hard way. This I will tell you, there is no escaping it; all creatures have to reach God some day or other, by the long route or by the short route.

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One wish leads to another; one bond brings about ten others. It is in the very nature of human desire, for the joy one gets through its satisfaction is imperfect, limited, temporary, pregnant with grief.

You sow bitter seeds and pray for a harvest of sweetness. You wail over the soil, the plant, the rain. What can they do? The seeds themselves are diseased, defective.

Sri Sathya Sai