

35. The Royal Road

THE resolutions made at this Conference, the rules and regulations framed here for the Units of the Organisation, must be taken by you as the Royal Road to the Divine Presence. They render the journey smooth and quick. As children of Bhaarath, you have to foster the ideals of its ancient culture guarding it by the discipline these rules prescribe. So far, as a result of mental and intellectual weakness, you are finding it impossible to adhere to those ideals and to observe the vow and restrictions that they impose. Though we have been laying down many rules, and restrictions and guidelines during the last five years for the proper working of the Units, and emphasising their importance, they have been more misused than made-use-of for the betterment of the Organisation.

As a result of misuse, you find yourselves helpless in cleansing the blemishes in your own minds and eradicating the evils rampant in society. The brightness of the sky is hidden by a thick fog; so too, the fog of evil and vice darkens the heart and breeds atheism and other diseases. This has made you forget the very purpose of your existence, as well as of the Organisation, which has been established to help you. Take note of this while yet you may.

Some men enter into even *Aadhyathmic* (spiritual) Organisations and secure places of importance there, with various ambitions and plans. They believe, often sincerely, that their own plans are the best and their methods are the best, spiritually. Many might do this on account of sheer ignorance of the purpose and plan of the Sathya Sai Organisation, which they enter. But, ignorance is no excuse!

***Aathma* has no birth or death, nor it grows or weakens**

The nature of electricity is still a mystery; but man has devised a thousand ways of benefitting by it. Electricity is found everywhere, in nature; but, it: can be collected, stored and utilised only through certain contrivances designed by man. The spiritual *Aathma Shakthi* (inner divine power) that is also everywhere is stored in a body and passed through the thin wires or nerves, it illumines and directs activity. These activities have to be oriented towards *Aanandha*, and not attachments to temporary pleasures. The Life Principle that flows as intelligence through every cell and nerve is also a reflection of the *Aathma*.

That which is born has also to die; coming implies going. That which has no birth has no death either. The *Aathma* has no birth, no death, nor can you say, it spreads or grows, or weakens. It has no history, *it is*, that is all that can be said about it. It is ever Intelligence, ever Bliss. There is the urge to desire a thing; that is named *Ichchaa Shakthi*---but, it too is a derivative of the *Aathma Shakthi*, the Divine that is your core. Realise it as such and do not demean it by desiring deleterious objects.

Desire, so sublimated, is the basis of *Prema* (Love). It is the fruit of the tree of God-ward directed *Ichchaa shakthi*. The fruit has the bitter rind (*Maaya*) and the hard seeds (the cognition of distinctions); these have to be discarded, and the sweetness tasted. That sweet juice is the *Aanandha* the *Aathma* confers. Of course there are a few fortunate individuals who imbibe the juice itself, without the labour of peeling off the rind and picking out the seeds. Prahlada was of this kind---unaffected by *Maaya* or by the folly of 'awareness of distinctions'. From his very birth, he knew only the sweetness of the Name of the Lord, of the juice of the fruit from the Tree of Love.

Each one of you has to pass through three stages

No boy can join college, the moment he steps into school. Several stages have to be reached and got over---the Primary, the Middle, the Secondary, the Higher Secondary, and the Intermediate; so too, we have in the spiritual path, the stages of Work, Worship, Wisdom and finally, Sacrifice. Sacrifice is when the ripe fruit falls from the tree, sacrificing its affection and attachment, weaning itself away from its support and sustenance. Work is for the physical level; worship for the mental and wisdom for spiritual. You have to pass through the three stages, each one of you. When I say you, there are three you's! The one you think you are---namely, the body, the physical person; the one others think you are, the mental you, your passions, emotions, impulses, attitudes, beliefs, feelings; and the one you really are, namely, the *Aathma*, the Spirit, the real Reality of your Personality.

Now, you must examine whether the Unit for which you are responsible is in the primary stage or any higher stage. Judging from the fact that this is the fifth year, we can assert that the Organisation is now in the Middle School stage---a stage during which discipline has to be vigilantly observed, so that the High School and College stages might prove beneficial. The larger the number of storeys you wish to erect, the deeper the foundation has to be laid. You are planning to construct the supremely majestic tower of *Aathma*-Realisation, and therefore, great attention has to be paid to the provision of a solid foundation of faith and discipline, of dedication and surrender. Examine your own activities in these Units and judge for yourselves, whether such a foundation is being laid therein.

Follow the path laid down by saints

Man has increased his capacity of construction and destruction a million-fold, by means of *yanthras* (machines) he has put together. An atom bomb causes destruction which several armies cannot accomplish. So too in the spiritual field, the latent forces in man can achieve the stupendous task of piercing the mystery of the Universe, through the *manthras* he had discovered. *Manthra* means 'potent formula'. Man makes *yanthras*; *manthra* makes man! The maker of *yanthras* is called a scientist; the knower of *manthra* is called a saint. When you follow the path laid down by the saints you can be sure of success, for, they have laid it with the purest of intentions, and with the noblest of ideals.

The Lord is neither in Heaven, nor in Kailaash or Vaikuntha or *Swarg*. To believe that He is manifest only in one place or location and to journey thither is a superstition much to be deplored. He is everywhere, in every one, at all times. He is the witness of all, in all. He is the energy that fills space and time., and He is the energy that manifests as causation. The Organisation must implant this 'Truth in the minds of the members and spread this Truth, without fear and fumble. It must reveal man to himself, as a visible, moving embodiment of Divinity, in whom God shines, through whom God beckons.

God is to be worshipped in and through man. This is the message that you have to put into daily practice. This is the main plank of the programme you have to carry out. You should not import the tactics and tricks of political power-hunting into the Units. Nor should there be any trace of dislike or distrust, on the score of nationality, language, caste, economic status, scholarship, age or sex. Revere the *Aathma* and derive *aathma-aanandha* (spiritual bliss) through Love.

God is the origin of all languages

Why attach false values to these exterior symbols? Why develop prejudice for the reason that a man was born on the other side of a political boundary, or calls on God in another language? God is the origin of all languages. Boundaries shift and are subject to revision, resettlement, and change. Twenty years ago, when some one from Bombay asked a farmer of Puttaparthi, where he belonged to, he got the reply, 'I am from Madras State.' But, Madras State has since broken into Aandhra State, and Thamil Nadu, so that the Aandhras and the Thamilis have started developing antagonistic loyalties and a new narrow ideal.

These are man-made differences, and should not interfere with God-ward activities. God has made the Universe as one single home for one single family. Each State is but an apartment in that mansion. Members of the Organisation must extend Love and Respect to persons belonging to any State, any religion, any caste or community, and speaking any language.

To give you a small example: It happened just a week ago. A few years ago, in 1965, both Bangala Desh and Pakistan (they were both one State then) invaded India; recently, Bangla Desh sought refuge with India, since Pakistan decided to hold it down by terrorising the people! The people of Bhaarath did not in the least remember the enmity of the people of Bangla Desh in the past against them in their hour of mortal distress. They welcomed them with brotherly Love, and helped them with food, shelter and clothing, and saved millions of them from extinction.

Love ignores logics, *Seva* respects no syllogism

One can understand the spirit of renunciation and the depth of tolerance that is inherent in Indian noble response. Whoever is afflicted with calamity, at whatever time under whatever conditions, your heart must react without delay in sympathy shown in some practical manner. No one should be condemned as trash; even a little stick can serve as a tooth-pick! God has not made any man, wholly bad or wholly good; your likes and dislikes are inducing you to label them as such.

Office-bearers of the Organisation, strive to establish yourselves more firmly in your own Truth, and strive to demonstrate in your behaviour that you are aware of the Truth that all men are sparks of the same Divine-Spirit. I consider *Seva* (service) as the most important activity of the *Samithis*, for it is the highest *Saadhana*. Do not entangle yourselves in pros and cons, in arguments for and against, whether this way or that, they are the consequence of wrong or perverted scholarship. Love ignores logics; *Seva* respects no syllogism. Try to observe the rules that have been framed through Love, to canalise the Love that you are required to cultivate. I have said this so often that all of you know my mind already--- " Start the Day with Love. Spend the Day with Love. Fill the Day with Love. End the Day with Love. That is the Way of God."

The *Samithi* is the heart and units are the limbs

First, it has been decided that the Sathya Sai Seva Samithi will hereafter be the key unit, of the Organisation. Units like Sathya Sai Sathsang, the Sathya Sai Baala Vikaas, the Sathya Sai Study Circle, the Sathya Sai Bhajana Mandali, and the Sathya Sai Seva Dhal will be subordinate to the *Samithi*, and supervised by it. The *Samithi* is the heart, and the units are the limbs. The limbs cannot act independently, as if they are a law unto themselves.

During the Third All India Conference, the *Mahila Vibhaag* (the Unit in charge of women's activities) was separated from the men's sections; but, they were not affiliated and placed under the guidance of the *Samithis* concerned. Of course, the *Vibhaag* can have its own Chairman and

Secretary, but both have to follow the advice and suggestions of the Chairman of the *Seva Samithi*, and the rules laid down for the *Samithi*.

Each town shall have a single *Samithi* (organisation and unit); it shall not have more than one. It may have within its jurisdiction a hundred *Bhajan Mandalis* or a hundred groups engaged in various other activities. But, there shall be only one *Samithi*.

Limits and activities of the *Samithi*

Baala Vikaas (child progress section) and Seva Dhal---these are only limbs of the *Samithi*. But, Baala Vikaas, we have decided, will be the special activity of the *Mahila Vibhaag* alone. For, women can in a unique way, deal with children lovingly, affectionately, intelligently, and enthusiastically. The Baala Vikaas shall take in children in the age group of 5 to 12. From the age of 12 up to 18, children shall be in the Junior Seva Dhal. From 18 till 30, they will serve in the Seva Dhal, and after 30 they are entitled to become members of the *Seva Samithis*, especially those who evince dedication and a high sense of service.

When the Baala Vikaas movement spreads, and children are ready to join High Schools, High Schools can be opened to receive them and continue their education on lines in tune with the ideals of the Organisation, and with the establishment of Sathya Sai colleges, the process will be completed entirely under Sathya Sai auspices. Thus, the resurgent culture of Bhaarath will be built on strong foundations. Men teachers can run Baala Vikaas classes; but, they can have only boys as pupils.

Another course of action that was decided upon today is this: You all know that books are being written by all kinds of people in all manners of style and content, urged by all types of fancy, mostly with an eye on personal profit. But, hereafter, this shall stop: no book shall be published on Sai Literature as suits the fancy of the writer or the publisher. There is a Registered Body named the Shri Sathya Sai Education Foundation. The manuscript has to be submitted to the Foundation, and published through the Foundation in the manner approved by them. For, books transform or deform the faculties of man. Many write books with no relevance or experience, relying solely on their imagination and so, people are left in the wilderness, unable to separate fact from fiction, truth from falsehood.

Flow of information must be unbroken and steady

Again in almost all the languages of India and in English, we have a number of periodicals, under different *names*---*Shaanthi*, *Prashaanthi*, *Sudha*, *Sanaathana Saarathi*, etc.---causing confusion and complications. So, we shall have only a single monthly magazine in each language called everywhere, *Sanaathana Saarathi*. From now on, it will not be possible for these periodicals to be published according to the will and pleasure of people. If they are left as they are, there is likelihood of lowering of standards and even financial loss for the parties, and consequent distress. So, it has been decided to place the *Sanaathana Saarathi* of each linguistic area, on sound footing, both financially and in the range and authority of content.

Another important matter: The Organisation is not yet organised effectively! Reports of activities from the Units do not reach the *Samithi*, the *Samithis* are not reporting to the District Presidents and they in turn fail to inform the State Presidents, who are unable to present a full picture of the activities of the State to Me. The flow of information from below and of instruction and inspiration from above must be unbroken and steady.

Adherence to these rules will strengthen the Organisation, which has as its aim the fostering of Bhaaratheeya culture as the example for the whole of humanity. This Organisation believes that the *Aathma* in each is the *Aathma* in all and that the God that each worships is the God that all worship. You cannot insist that in the *Bhajans* only songs on Sathya Sai should be sung! Fanaticism of that kind I very much dislike and condemn. For, all names and all forms denote Me only! You betray your ignorance of My truth when you stick to any one of My names and avoid the rest. When you have identified the *Aathma* principle and experienced its Glory, you pass beyond the realm of rules; but, until then, limits and lines of conduct have to be honoured.

Use of the symbols of the Organisation

The State Presidents have to pay immediate attention to this further point. In some States, peoples have started publicising the manifestations of My Power, and converting themselves into propagandists with a view to making a profit out of the transaction. There are some Units doing this type of business, still existing inside the Organisation. You must decide to dissociate these Units from the Organisation. Using our Name, many collect donations and contributions; so, those who are not aware of the norms of this Organisation are being misled and deceived. Efforts must be made to remove from the Organisation any one, however rich, however renowned as a scholar, however influential and important in society, if he transgresses the rules of Organisation. This must be done as soon as the transgression is known. In Kerala and in Mysore States, this has to be done without delay and without compunction.

The symbol of the Organisation is "the Harmony of Religions, the Unity of all Faiths, the Acceptance of all Approaches." I find that this symbol is now being indiscriminately used in badges, letter heads, wedding cards, etc. and it is also being adapted and changed according to individual fancy by the users. This is creating confusion; for, there is no one identifiable symbol for the units of the Organisation or for the Sathya Sai Seva Dhal, etc. You must resolve to adopt the same design for letter heads used in official correspondence, the same symbol for badges all over the country. If you travel along the royal road of faith and discipline, you can reach the Royal Palace which you long to enter.

Understand the basic similarities of various religions

Four stages are mentioned in the spiritual progress: *Saalokya* (being in the Palace), *Saameepya* (being in the immediate Presence), *Saaruupya* (being privileged to be clothed with a share of regal authority) and *Saayujya* (becoming King oneself). In the Bible, Christ is said to have announced first, that he was Messenger from God, later, that he was the Son of God, and finally, that "I and My Father are One." Then, there is the further declaration of Identity with the Holy Ghost, too. In the Quoran too, similar ideas are propounded. The Sathya Sai Organisation has to seek out chances of studying and substantiating these basic similarities and promote love and mutual co-operation.

These rules we are laying down might appear to some of you as knife-thrusts or hammer-strokes; but, they are meant to heal, and to weld. Bow to them and observe them in action sincerely--- your path will be soft and smooth, like a path strewn with floral petals. I bless you that you adhere to them and receive the benefits of discipline and devotion.

Madras, 23-12-1971

See all as but expressions of the same God, as appearances on the same screen, as bulbs lit by the same current, though of manifold colours and wattage.

Feel that you and they are able to talk and walk, think and act because of the God within.

Differences that strike you while you cast your eyes are illusory; you have not yet developed the vision that makes you apprehend the unity which is the truth of all the seeming diversity, that is all!

The fault is in you, not the world. The world is One; but, each takes it to mean what pleases him most!

Sri Sathya Sai